

STUDY 6

Baptism as Incorporation into the Body of Christ

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BAPTISED INTO ONE BODY

Paul the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians:

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12–13).¹

We are used to thinking of a group of persons as a ‘body’ of people, as in the expression ‘body corporate’ (a legal entity for conducting business), or ‘body politic’ (denoting the State as the sum of its citizens). Similar usage was found in the ancient world, though it was rare.² We may be tempted, then, to interpret Paul’s use of the word ‘body’ here to mean an aggregate of its individual parts. That is far from what Paul is saying. His usage here may well be as strange to us as it was to those in his own day.

This will be especially true for those of us whose thinking begins and ends in effect with the church—an aberration that pastors are prone to no less than congregation members. We hold a position in the church and have some responsibility for it. We want to promote and prosper its cause. So church-experience and church-thinking—at its worst descending into ‘club’ mentality—can come to govern who we are and what we do. We experience the church as a coming-together of persons. So this is what we

¹ Unless otherwise stated, all scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version.

² A. M. Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* (Longmans Green and Co., London, 1937), p. 35, says:

For the word *σῶμα* [*sōma*] in pre-Christian Greek, whether classical or biblical or hellenistic, did not mean a ‘body’ of people or a society, in the manner of the English use of the word ‘body’ or the Latin use of the word ‘corpus’ as a social metaphor. Such a use is never found in Greek literature, or in the LXX or in the papyri. The word could mean a man (dead or alive), or a slave, or a mass or bulk of some substance, or a body of literature. It did not suggest a group of persons.

J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* (SCM Press, London, 1974), pp. 41–50, counsels caution: ‘There is a certain amount of evidence that the word was already in use purely metaphorically in a collective sense’ (p. 49). Robinson gives some instances, as does Eduard Schweizer, ‘σῶμα’, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 7 (ed. Gerhard Friedrich, tr. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1980), pp. 1036–41 and 1054–5, but these have a very different feel from what we find here.

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think of when we hear the word ‘body’ applied to the church—a body of people. When we hear that called ‘the body of Christ’ (1 Cor. 12:27), we take it to mean something like the gathering of people who are associated with Christ and have him as their cause that they promote.

Thinking in this way, we would expect Paul to say: ‘For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with *the church*’. But Paul does not say that. What he says is: ‘. . . so it is with Christ’—that is, the person Jesus. To say that individuals are parts of a person is virtually incomprehensible to us—‘a very violent use of language’.³ Whether we comprehend it or not, Paul is directing our attention not to who we are and what we do, but to the person Jesus: ‘to call the Church τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ [*to sōma tou christou*] was to draw attention to it not primarily as a collection of men, but primarily as Christ Himself in His own being and life’.⁴

No doubt Paul came to this through the words of Jesus to him on the road to Damascus: ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ Saul was not persecuting Jesus—he was persecuting those who belonged to Jesus. But as far as Jesus himself was concerned, Saul was persecuting him—such was the identification of himself with them and they with him. Thus Paul was later able to say: ‘when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ’ (1 Cor. 8:12).

While the most obvious reference of ‘the body of Christ’ is to the person Jesus who lived, died and rose again, and is living now, we have other ways of rationalising or objectifying this confronting reality. We posit an ethereal something we call ‘the mystical body of Christ’, which connotes perhaps a spiritualised communion of souls, disconnected from both the historical person of Jesus and from our own earthy existence.⁵ Or we may seek to pin down ‘the body of Christ’ to be coterminous with the bread of the Lord’s Supper. Karl Barth states the obvious:

There are not two or possibly three bodies of Christ: the historical, in which He died and rose again; the mystical which is His community; and that in which He is really present in the Lord’s Supper. For there are not three Christs. There is only one Christ, and therefore there is only one body of Christ.⁶

Any references to ‘the body of Christ’ then, whether in connection with the church (as in Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22–23; 5:23–24, 29–30; compare 1 Cor. 12:27; Rom. 12:4–5), or in the context of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 10:16–17; 11:24, 26, 29), must be taken to refer to the human body of the person Jesus who lived, died and rose again and is living now—however incongruous that may appear to us. How are we to understand this?

³ Robinson, *The Body*, p. 50.

⁴ Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 35.

⁵ This is not to say that all who use such an expression take it this way. See e.g. A. Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, p. 118: ‘all attempts to distinguish in the relevant passages between the personal [historical] and the mystical body of Christ are inevitably doomed to failure’ (quoted in Robinson, *The Body*, p. 47).

⁶ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4, pt 1, ‘The Doctrine of Reconciliation’, eds G. W. Bromiley & T. F. Torrance, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1956, p. 666.

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ONE DIED FOR ALL

Paul says: ‘all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death’ (Rom. 6:3). It is first and foremost the crucified body of Jesus into which we have been baptised. ‘Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death’ (Rom. 6:4). We have also been baptised into his resurrection,⁷ and that has implications for how we ‘walk in newness of life’ (Rom. 6:4) here and now, but in Romans 6 our participation in Christ’s resurrection still lies in the future: ‘For if we *have been* united with him in a death like his, we *will* certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his’ (Rom. 6:5). The key point at which we are identified with Christ is in his body on the cross: ‘you have *died* to the law *through the body of Christ*’ (Rom. 7:4)—that is, the body that was crucified:

And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled *in his fleshly body through death*, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him (Col. 1:21–22).

If we ask how this has come to be, again in terms of what we have done to occupy this position—whether by believing, or being baptised, or having sufficient assurance that this is so, or by living appropriately—then we will be on the wrong track. It will then always become a question of whether we have believed strongly enough, or been baptised in the right way, or have been able to dispel all doubts, or have managed to live up to it. Let us leave that be, and remain focussed on the action of Christ. What did Jesus say about this?

Jesus spoke of his death in this way:

‘Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.’ He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die (John 12:31–33).

When would Jesus ‘draw all people’ to himself? It was at the time when he was to be ‘lifted up from the earth’. When was he ‘lifted up’? At the time of the ‘death he was to die’. Some commentators say that Jesus being ‘lifted up from the earth’ has a reference to Jesus’ rising from death and being exalted in the heavens, and that people would be drawn to Jesus in that.⁸ But John is specific in saying that being ‘lifted up’ refers to ‘the kind of death he was to die’. This is certainly how it was taken by Jesus’ hearers at the time: ‘The crowd answered him, “We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up?”’ (John 12:34). They took it that being ‘lifted up’ meant being killed, and a Messiah who died was for them a contradiction in terms, since the Messiah was to reign forever (as in 2 Sam. 7:13, 16), and they were not at that stage counting on any resurrection. So the drawing of all people to Jesus happened at the time of the crucifixion. Again, let us just note this, without necessarily trying to understand how it might be so.

⁷ See Col. 2:12: ‘when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead’.

⁸ George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 36 (2nd ed.), Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1999, pp. 214–15; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1981, pp. 598–9.

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What were all people being drawn into there on that cross? Jesus said it would be into nothing less than ‘the judgment of this world’, in which ‘the ruler of this world’ (in this instance Satan, ‘the accuser of our brothers and sisters’—see John 14:30–31; 1 John 5:19; Rev. 12:10, TNIV) would be ‘driven out’. God’s judgement on this world, in which all of humanity’s sin and evil would be finally dispatched and dealt with, was to take place in the body of Jesus on the cross. The dimensions of that alone are so staggering as to defy computation. But in that action, Jesus was saying—by some divine cosmic embrace of unimaginable identification in love—Jesus would hold to himself ‘all people’. He would take us with him into that terrible ‘judgment of this world’, so that the judgement is effected upon us no less than upon him. But, since we are held there by him ‘who knew no sin’ yet was made ‘for our sake . . . to be sin’ (2 Cor. 5:21)—the one in whom alone ‘there is no sin’, and for whom therefore ‘it was impossible for him to be held in [death’s] power’ (1 John 3:3, 5; Acts 2:24)—it is carried through in such a way that we are ‘raised . . . up with him’ (Eph. 2:6), and emerge with him from that judgement freed from the shackles of sin and immune from the devil’s accusations. In this is the power to ‘walk in newness of life’ (Rom. 6:4) here and now.

This reality, as it encompasses all humanity, of God’s reconciling love in Christ was what constrained Paul in his ministry to the nations:

. . . the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them (2 Cor. 5:14–15).

All of this happened without our say-so—before we were even born. It applies to all for whom the word of the gospel is met by faith but, as Barth says:

We must be clear that the community is not made the body of Christ or its members members of this body by this event, by the Spirit of Pentecost, by the fulness of His gifts, by the faith awakened by Him, by the visible, audible and tangible results of the preaching and receiving of the Gospel, let alone by baptism and the Lord’s Supper (as so-called ‘sacraments’). It is the body, and its members are members of this body, in Jesus Christ, in His election from all eternity (Rom. 8²⁹, Eph. 1⁴).⁹ And it became His body, they became its members, in the fulfilment of their eternal election in His death on the cross of Golgotha, proclaimed in His resurrection from the dead.¹⁰

However it happened, the total identification was effected, such that we could say with Paul:

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:19–20).

We do well at this point simply to pause and say, ‘What love!’

⁹ ‘For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family’ (Rom. 8:29); ‘just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love’ (Eph. 1:4).

¹⁰ Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4, pt 1, p. 667.

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YOU HAVE COME TO FULLNESS IN HIM

As if this is not enough, there is more! Not only does Paul say ‘we were all baptized into one body’—which we have been saying is the body of the person Jesus who was crucified and raised—but also ‘we were all made to drink of one Spirit’ (1 Cor. 12:12–13). Being given ‘to drink’ speaks of being filled, to overflowing. Jesus had said:

‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.”’ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive (John 7:37–39).

This was to be when Jesus was ‘glorified’ through the action of the cross and resurrection. So, on the day of Pentecost, ‘All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 2:4), with a view to their ministry of witness to Christ (see Acts 1:8),¹¹ and this being filled continued after that, not only to others but also to the same people who had been filled originally (see Acts 2:38; 4:8, 31; 5:32; 8:17; 9:17; 10:44; 13:9, 52; Eph. 5:18¹²).

The body of Christ, then, is the body that is continually being filled. Paul said:

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross . . . For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority (Col. 1:19–20; 2:9–10).

The fullness is in Christ, granted to him by the Father, and we are filled from his fullness:

He [the Father] put all things in subjection under his [Christ’s] feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who all in all is being filled (Eph. 1:22–23).¹³

Many translations here have ‘the fullness of him who fills all in all’, but *πληρουμένου*, *plēroumenou* is passive (or middle) voice, which indicates that here Christ is being filled. Where Christ is doing the filling (as in Eph. 4:10), Paul uses the active voice.¹⁴ The question is, by whom is Christ being filled? Some answer by saying that Christ is being filled by the church¹⁵—as if the church supplies what is lacking in Christ and so fills out his potential. This is reflected in the common thought, attractive among those whose thinking begins and ends with the church, that:

Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours¹⁶

¹¹ The endowment of the Spirit in John 20:22–23 is similarly with a view to gospel ministry.

¹² *πληρουόσθε*, *plērousthe*, present imperfect (continuous) tense: literally ‘go on being filled’.

¹³ Literal translation in Robinson, *The Body*, pp. 65–6.

¹⁴ See Robinson, *The Body*, p. 68.

¹⁵ See J. Armitage Robinson, *St Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians*, Macmillan, London, 2nd ed., 1909, pp. 42–5.

¹⁶ Teresa of Avila (1515–1582), see:

<www.journeywithjesus.net/PoemsAndPrayers/Teresa_Of_Avila_Christ_Has_No_Body.shtml>
(accessed 11th May 2009).

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—when this is taken to mean that Christ is dependent on us for God’s purpose to be accomplished (contrast Acts 17:25, where God is not ‘served by human hands, as though he needed anything’; and Eph. 1:11, where it is God ‘who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will’). Rather, Christ is filled in and with all things by the Father:

The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands (John 3:35).

So Jesus said, concerning the Spirit:

He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you (John 16:14–15).

Hence, ‘From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace’ (John 1:16):

The fulness with which Christ is filled by God is now filling those who are ‘in’ Him.¹⁷

Thus the New English Bible translates Ephesians 1:22–23:

He put everything in subjection beneath his feet, and appointed him as supreme head to the church, which is his body and as such holds within it the fullness of him who himself receives the entire fullness of God.

Accordingly, Paul is able to pray that those to whom he is writing may be filled ‘up to the measure of all the fulness of God’ (Eph. 3:19),¹⁸ and looks towards the time when ‘all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ’ (Eph. 4:13).¹⁹

ONE BODY IN CHRIST

In the light of Christ’s identification of himself with us, and of us with himself, in his death and resurrection—in his self-emptying and being filled—we may need to reconsider how we think of and conduct ourselves as human beings, and as a human race. Underlying much of our sinful thinking and acting is a preferred sense of being separate, independent, and over against one another as persons, each with our own independent patch of ground on which we stand, from which we attempt to relate with one another, often in a somewhat prickly fashion.²⁰ Is this how things really are? If we, along with all things, have been created by God through Christ and for Christ (see Col. 1:16), what does this mean for how we see ourselves and relate with each other?

¹⁷ Robinson, *The Body*, p. 68.

¹⁸ Literal translation in Robinson, *The Body*, p. 71. Compare other references to being filled—Rom. 15:13, 14; Phil. 1:11; 4:18; Col. 1:9.

¹⁹ See further: G. Bingham, ‘The Fullness of God & Man’, *Monthly Ministry Studies* 2004, available from NCTM website at: <www.newcreation.org.au/studies/pdf/MMS_2004.pdf>.

²⁰ For more detailed treatments of these themes, see Martin Bleby, *Power in Relationships: Issues of Love and Control* (NCPI, Blackwood, 2008), especially pp. 47–52; and *The Gift of God: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper as Sacraments of the Cross* (NCPI, Blackwood, 2007), especially pp. 6–7.

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Geoffrey Bingham takes a cue from the title of Edward Farley's book *Ecclesial Man*.²¹ He uses the word 'ecclesial' to seat human togetherness back beyond natural human sociality into its origin and destiny in the 'community' that is the triune God:

Was Man created as 'ecclesial'? We need to understand what we mean by the question. We have no problem in seeing that Man is gregarious, that he likes to live in a community congenial to him. Apart from some who believe they like to live alone, human beings are generally social. So for that matter are many insects, animals and birds who are social in habit. God created the birds and the fish to develop into swarms. Ants and bees are extremely social. Some birds and animals like to relate to human beings, especially those which we call 'domestic animals'. Wild birds and animals have their own domestic communities for the most part.

So is Man simply gregarious by nature? This is generally true. Yet we are saying more. We are saying that as God is, so too is Man. He has been created to be true community, reflecting the unity God knows within Himself. Further, we are saying that the communion which is in the Godhead is what Man is created to reflect. We are saying that before Man was affected by the serpent in Eden, he lived in true community. The propensity for this had been given in creation. And he lived that community life by his union with the Creator. We are saying that as God is ecclesial according to His Triune being and His perichoretic unity and love, so Man—created in His image—will be no less community by nature. We can say that God is essentially Community and that Man—His image—must likewise be ecclesial, that is, 'of the perichoretic human nature', and hence a world community.²²

So when Jesus prayed: 'that they may all be one' (John 17:21), he was praying that we would be taken back—and on—to all that we were made for. This would come by our incorporation into the triune life of God:

As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (John 17:21–23).

It would take all the love action of the cross—the crucifying and the raising up; the judgement and the blessing; the emptying and the filling; the cleansing from sin and the adoption into sonship—to bring this about. That is why Jesus prayed this prayer just before he went to the cross. And it was answered.

The oneness of Gentile and Jew is just one instance of the breaking down of barriers between persons—barriers that had for a season been upheld by the law of God given to Moses—through the great cleansing action of the cross effective for all nations:

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it . . . for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father (Eph. 2:13–16, 18).

²¹ Farley, Edward, *Ecclesial Man: A Social Phenomenology of Faith and Reality* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1975), cited in the bibliography of Geoffrey Bingham, *The Beloved Community of God: Yesterday, Today and Forever* (Redeemer Baptist Press, Castle Hill, 2002), p. 244.

²² Bingham, *The Beloved Community of God*, pp. 108–109.

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Jews are still Jews, and Gentiles are still Gentiles, and it remains true that ‘salvation is from the Jews’ (John 4:22)—‘to the Jew first and also to the Greek’ (Rom 1:16; compare 2:9–10)—but Jews and Gentiles are now one in the Messiah Jesus. Men are still men and women are still women, and there is such a thing as headship and submission, but husband and wife are ‘one flesh’ after the order of Christ and his church (see Eph. 5:21–33). Masters are still masters and slaves are still slaves (employee–servants), but now both belong together to their Master in heaven (see Eph. 6:5–9; Col. 3:22–4:1). As in the life of the Godhead, differentiated unity gloriously prevails. It is in the light of this that we read 1 Corinthians 12:13 and its parallels:

For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).

In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all! (Col. 3:11).

To be brought together in this way, with all the barriers of sin removed, can be confronting, and may leave some of us vulnerable. Is this unity an all-in free-for-all, rather like a rugby scrum, where the strongest prevail? Bonhoeffer counsels: ‘We belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ’. He went on to say:

Because Christ stands between me and others, I dare not desire direct fellowship with them. As only Christ can speak to me in such a way that I may be saved, so others, too, can be saved only by Christ himself. This means that I must release the other person from every attempt of mine to regulate, coerce, and dominate him with my love. The other person needs to retain his independence of me; to be loved for what he is, as one for whom Christ became man, died, and rose again, for whom Christ brought forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Because Christ has long since acted decisively for my brother, before I could begin to act, I must leave him his freedom to be Christ’s; I must meet him only as the person he already is in Christ’s eyes. This is the meaning of the proposition that we can meet others only through the mediation of Christ. Human love constructs its own image of the other person, of what he is and what he should become. It takes the life of the other person into its own hands. Spiritual love recognises the true image of the other person which he has received from Jesus Christ; the image that Jesus Christ himself embodied and would stamp upon all men.²³

We belong to each other because we belong to Christ. On this score, there is no room for either inferiority—‘I do not belong to the body’ (1 Cor. 12:15, 16)—or superiority—‘I have no need of you’ (1 Cor. 12:21).

This said, because we are in the one who ‘laid down his life for us’, then we ‘lay down our lives for one another’ (1 John 3:16), as Paul did for those in Corinth who slighted him:

... you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together (2 Cor. 7:3).

²³ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, SCM Press, London, 1954, pp. 11, 25–6. First published 1939 under the title of *Gemeinsames Leben*, translated from the fifth edition (1949) by John W. Doberstein. See Bleby, *Power in Relationships*, pp. 82–92.

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We cannot get any closer to anyone than that. On this account Paul wrote to the Colossians:

I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church (Col. 1:24).

Was there something 'lacking' in what Jesus suffered on the cross? Surely not. But Paul is trusting that in taking on what sufferings come to him on account of the church in Colossae, because he belongs to Christ, they may be spared some of the sufferings that would otherwise come to them:

Paul is not saying that he is making up anything lacking in the sufferings of the head; rather, that, of the overflow of Christ's afflictions which is ever pouring into the Church, he is glad to absorb in his flesh what should be the share of his Colossian brethren and to fill up in *their* stead (*ἀνταναπληρῶ* [*antanaplērō*; *anti* meaning 'in place of']) the tax of suffering still outstanding to them. The whole thing is done for the sake of the Body, in which his especial stewardship as an Apostle is to fill out the word of the Cross for them, to be the means of channelling to them the fulness of life-through-death by which Christians are 'made full' in Christ (Col. 2.10) 'up to the measure of all the fullness of God' (Eph. 3.19).²⁴

Much more could be said.²⁵ In this study we have done little more than seek to dispel some cherished notions, and indicate a few pointers.

²⁴ Robinson, *The Body*, pp. 70–71.

²⁵ For instance, Karl Barth sees even wider implications of this reality for the church's mission to the whole world:

The New Testament never expressly uses the term body of humanity as a whole . . . It uses it only of the Christian community . . . A saying like I Cor. 12²⁷ ('Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular') is obviously not a part of missionary preaching . . . But it is open to question whether the same can be true of the saying in I Cor. 12¹² in which Jesus Christ Himself is called a body. For how can we proclaim His death and resurrection to Jews and Gentiles as their own death and the promise of their right and life without proclaiming Him as the Head and Representative and Mediator of all men, the 'last Adam'? . . . As *σῶμα* Χριστοῦ it is not an end in itself. . . How can it be the body of this Head if it tries to be a house with closed doors and windows, if it tries to exist like a ghetto, if as the body of Christ it wants to be defined by its own limits? (Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 4, pt 1, p. 665).