

in the depth of his own person, but also in that union that is proper to the world of persons in their psychosomatic constitution. Certainly this is a union of communion. The concentration of knowledge and love on God himself in the trinitarian communion of Persons can find a beatifying response in those who will become sharers in the "other world" only *through realizing reciprocal communion commensurate with created persons*. And for this reason we profess faith in the "communion of saints" (*communio sanctorum*) and profess it in organic connection with faith in the "resurrection of the body." The words with which Christ affirms that in the "other world...they will take neither wife nor husband" stand at the basis of these contents of our faith, and at the same time they require an adequate interpretation precisely in its light. We should think of the reality of the "other world" in the categories of the rediscovery of a new, perfect subjectivity of each person and at the same time of the *rediscovery* of a new, *perfect intersubjectivity of all*. In this way this reality means the true and definitive fulfillment of human subjectivity and, on this basis, the definitive fulfillment of the "spousal" meaning of the body. The total concentration of created, redeemed, and glorified subjectivity on God himself will not take man away from this fulfillment, but—on the contrary—will introduce him into it and consolidate him in it. One can say, finally, that in this way the eschatological reality will become the source of the perfect realization of the "trinitarian order" in the created world of persons.

5. The words with which Christ appeals to the future resurrection—words confirmed in a singular manner by his own resurrection—complete what in the present reflections we are used to calling "the revelation of the body." This revelation penetrates in some way to the very heart of the reality we experience, and this reality is above all man, his body, the body of "historical" man. At the same time, this revelation allows us to pass beyond the sphere of this experience in two directions: before all else, in the direction of that "beginning" to which Christ appeals in his dialogue with the Pharisees about the indissolubility of marriage (Mt 19:3–9); in the second place in the direction of the "other world" to which the Teacher calls the attention of his listeners in the presence of the Sadducees who "say there is no resurrection" (Mt 22:23). These two "extensions of the sphere" of the

experience of the body (if one may say so) are not completely beyond the reach of our (obviously theological) understanding of the body. *What the human body is in the realm of man's historical experience is not completely cut off from these two dimensions of his existence* revealed by Christ's word.

6. It is clear that what is at issue here is not the "body" in the abstract, but man, who is both spiritual and bodily. When we continue in the two directions indicated by Christ's word and attach ourselves to the experience of the body in the dimension of our earthly existence (that is, in the historical dimension), we can make a certain theological reconstruction of what might have been the experience of the body on the basis of man's revealed "beginning" and also what it will be in the dimension of the other world. The possibility of such a reconstruction, which extends our experience of man/body, indicates, at least indirectly, *the coherence of the theological image of man in these three dimensions*, which come together in constituting the theology of the body.

## 69 *General Audience of January 13, 1982* (*Insegnamenti*, 5, no. 1 [1982]: 81–85)

1. "IN THE RESURRECTION they will take neither wife nor husband, but will be like angels in heaven" (Mk 12:25; cf. Mt 22:30). "They are equal to the angels, and, being sons of the resurrection, they are sons of God" (Lk 20:36).

The words with which Christ appeals to the future resurrection—words confirmed in a unique way by his own resurrection—complete what in the present reflections we are used to calling "revelation of the body." This revelation penetrates, so to speak, to the very heart of the reality we experience, and this reality is above all man, his body, the body of "historical" man. At the same time, this revelation allows us to pass beyond the sphere of this experience in two directions: first in the direction of that "beginning" to which Christ appeals in his dialogue with the Pharisees about the indissolubility of marriage (Mt 19:3–8); then in the direction of the "future world" to which the Teacher directs the minds of his listeners in the presence of the Sadducees who "say there is no resurrection" (Mt 22:23).

2. Neither the truth about this “beginning” about which Christ speaks, nor the eschatological truth can be reached by empirical and rationalist methods alone. Yet, is it not possible to affirm that man carries these two dimensions in some way in the depth of the experience of his being, or, rather, that he is in some way on the way toward them as toward dimensions that fully justify the very meaning of his being a body, that is, of his being “carnal” man? Then with regard to the eschatological dimension, is it not true that death itself and the destruction of the body can give to man an eloquent meaning in reference to the experience in which the personal meaning of existence is realized? When Christ speaks about the future resurrection, his words do not fall into emptiness. The experience of humanity and especially the experience of the body allow the listener to unite with these words the image of the new existence in the “future world,” for which earthly experience provides the substratum and basis. A corresponding *theological reconstruction* is possible.

3. For the construction of this image—which corresponds in its content to the article of our profession of faith, “I believe in the resurrection of the body”—a great contribution is provided by the awareness that there is a connection between earthly experience and the whole dimension of man’s biblical “beginning” in the world. If in the beginning God “created them male and female” (Gen 1:27), if in this duality with respect to the body he also planned in his foresight such a unity by which “they will be one flesh” (Gen 2:24), if he joined this unity to the blessing of fruitfulness or of procreation (see Gen 1:29), and if now, speaking before the Sadducees about the future resurrection, Christ explains that in the “other world” ... “they will take neither wife nor husband”—then it is clear that here we are dealing with a development of the *truth about the same man*. Christ points out man’s identity, although this identity *is realized in a different way in eschatological experience than* in the experience of the very “beginning” and of all history. And nevertheless, man will always be the same, just as he came forth from the hand of his Creator and Father. Christ says, “They will take neither wife nor husband,” but he does not affirm that this man of the “future world” will no longer be male and female as he was “from the beginning.” It is thus evident that the meaning of being, with respect to the body, male or female in the

“future world” should be sought outside of marriage and procreation, but there is no reason to seek it outside of that which (independently from the blessing of procreation) derives from the very mystery of creation and thereafter also forms the deepest structure of man’s history on earth, given that this history was deeply co-penetrated by the mystery of redemption.

4. In his original situation, man *is thus alone*, and at the same time, he *comes to be* as male and female: the unity of the two. In his solitude “he reveals himself” to himself as person to “reveal” at the same time the communion of persons in the unity of the two. In the one as well as the other state, the human being constitutes himself as image and likeness of God. From the beginning, man *is* also a body among bodies and in the unity of the two, he *comes to be* as male and female, discovering the “spousal” meaning of his body in the measure of his being a personal subject. Subsequently, the meaning of being a body and, in particular, of being male and female in the body, is linked with marriage and procreation (and thus with fatherhood and motherhood). Yet, *the original and fundamental meaning of being a body*, as also of being, as a body, male and female—that is, precisely that “spousal” meaning—*is united to the fact that man is created as a person and is called to a life “in communione personarum.”* Marriage and procreation do not definitively determine the original and fundamental meaning of being a body nor of being, as a body, male and female. Marriage and procreation only give concrete reality to that meaning in the dimensions of history. The resurrection indicates the closure of the historical dimension. And so it is that the words “when they rise from the dead, they will take neither wife nor husband” (Mk 12:25) not only express clearly what meaning the human body will not have in the “future world,” but allow us also to deduce that the “spousal” meaning of the body in the resurrection to the future life will perfectly correspond both to the fact that man as male-female is a person, created in the “image and likeness of God,” and to the fact that this image is realized in the communion of persons. That “spousal” meaning of being a body will, therefore, be realized as a *meaning that is perfectly personal and communitarian at the same time*.

5. When we speak about the body glorified through the resurrection to new life, what we have in mind is man, male and female, in all

the truth of his humanity, who *together with the eschatological experience of the living God* (with the vision “face to face”) *will experience precisely this meaning of his body*. This will be a completely new experience, and yet, at the same time, it will not be alienated in any way from the experience man shared “from the beginning” nor from that which, in the historical dimension of his existence, constituted in him the source of the tension between the spirit and the body, mainly and precisely with reference to the procreative meaning of the body and of [its] sex. The man of the “future world” will find in this new experience of his own body *the fulfillment* of what he carried in himself perennially and historically, in some sense, as an inheritance and even more so as a task and objective, as the content of ethos.

6. *The glorification of the body*, as the eschatological fruit of its divinizing spiritualization, will reveal the definitive meaning of what was from the beginning to be a distinctive sign of the created person in the visible world, as well as a means for reciprocal self-communication between persons and an authentic expression of truth and love by which the *communio personarum* is built up. That perennial meaning of the human body, to which the existence of every man, burdened by the heritage of concupiscence, has necessarily brought a series of limitations, struggles, and sufferings, will then be revealed again and will be revealed at once in such *simplicity and splendor* that everyone who shares in the “other world” will find in his glorified body the fountain of the freedom of the gift. The perfect “freedom of the sons of God” (Rom 8:21) will nourish with this gift also all the communions that will constitute the great community of the communion of saints.

7. It is all too clear that—on the basis of man’s experiences and knowledge in temporality, that is, in “this world”—*it is difficult to construct a fully adequate image* of the “future world.” Nevertheless, at the same time, there is no doubt that with the help of Christ’s words at least a certain approximation to this image is possible and reachable. We make use of this theological approximation, professing our faith in the “resurrection of the body” and “eternal life,” as well as faith in the “communion of saints,” which belongs to the reality of the “future world.”

8. In concluding this part of our reflections, we should note once again that Christ’s words reported by the Synoptic Gospels (Mt

22:30; Mk 12:25; Lk 20:35–36) have a decisive meaning, not only for what concerns the words of Genesis (to which Christ appeals in another context), but also in what concerns the whole Bible. These words allow us in some way to reread in a new way—that is, in all its depth—the whole revealed meaning of the body, the meaning of being man, that is, an “incarnated” person, of being, as a body, male or female. These words allow us to understand the meaning, in the eschatological dimension of the “other world,” of that unity in humanity which was constituted “in the beginning” and which the words of Genesis 2:24 (“The man will...unite with his wife and the two will be one flesh”), pronounced in the act of man’s creation as male and female, seem to direct, if not completely, at least, in any case, especially towards “this world.”\* Given that the words of Genesis were the threshold, as it were, of the whole theology of the body—a threshold on which Christ based himself in his teaching about marriage and its indissolubility—one must admit that his words reported by the Synoptics are like a new threshold of this integral truth about man, which we find again in the revealed Word of God. It is indispensable for us to dwell on this threshold if we wish our theology of the body—and also our Christian “spirituality of the body”—to be able to use it as a complete image.

## B. PAULINE INTERPRETATION OF THE RESURRECTION IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15:42–49

### Final Victory over Death

**70** *General Audience of January 27, 1982*  
(*Insegnamenti*, 5, no. 1 [1982]: 227–31)

1. DURING THE PRECEDING AUDIENCES we reflected about Christ’s words about the “other world” that will emerge together with the resurrection of the body.

\* Translator’s note: The “skeleton” of this sentence is: These words allow us to understand the meaning...of that unity in humanity which was constituted “in the beginning” and which the words of Genesis 2:24...seem to direct...towards “this world.”