

These minor remarks and suggestions can in no way diminish the excellent quality of Weinfeld's work, which contains a number of strong points. The book is, therefore, heartily recommended to anyone interested in the study of Deuteronomy.

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Yorke, Gosnell L. O. R. *The Church as the Body of Christ in the Pauline Corpus*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991. 176 pp. Cloth, \$42.50; paperback, \$23.50.

Gosnell L. O. R. Yorke, formerly from Atlantic Union College and now chairman of the Theology Department of Eastern Africa University in Kenya, gives us in this book a revision of his doctoral thesis submitted in 1987 to the Faculty of Religious Studies of McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

The issue of concern in this book is whether the body of Jesus Christ or the human body was the metaphorical referent for the Pauline definition of the church as the "body of Christ." Pauline scholars are divided on the subject. Most of them say the referent is the "once broken and now divine" body of Christ. On the other hand, R. Gundry, H. Ridderbos and a few others seem to show "a more excellent way": the human *sōma* is used by Paul as the term of comparison to define the church as the body of Christ.

Gosnell Yorke seeks to solve this undefined situation. To accomplish it he takes a new "systematic grammatico-historical and exegetical" look at the related data. This kind of study has not been done in the past. Yorke's conclusion is that the human *sōma*, not Christ's personal body, is used consistently "as the *tertium comparationis* for the church as *sōma*." This conclusion rules out any mystical or physiological understanding of the church as Christ's *sōma* and Christ as the *kephalē* of the church.

The book contains seven chapters: the state of the question, the somatic ecclesiology of the New Testament, the somatic ecclesiology of I Corinthians, the somatic ecclesiology of Romans, the somatic ecclesiology of Colossians, the somatic ecclesiology of Ephesians, and the summary and conclusion.

Each one of the four central chapters has an introduction, in which the author relates his thesis with the references of *sōma* in that particular epistle, along with considerations on its integrity chronology, authorship, and authenticity. Then, as a second section, there is a description of the church to which the epistle is addressed. The third section is an exegetical study of the references to *sōma* in the letter. Finally, there is a summary statement. In a clear, straightforward style one argument flows from the

other, taken from 1 Corinthians, Romans, Colossians and Ephesians to convincingly reach a final conclusion: the referent of the church as *sōma* is the human body, not Christ's body.

Although G. Yorke does not develop an ecclesiology, the consequences of this study for ecclesiology are very important. The work destroys all possibility of defining the church as "the mystic body of Christ," with emphasis on the church's divine aspect rather than human reality. There is no mystical unity of Christ and his church, no mysterious metaphorical identity, no dogmatic manipulation. The church is not "the corporate Christ," always perfect, never sinful, never in need of reform and renewal.

On the contrary the church as *sōma* of Christ must be understood in spiritual terms in which relationships between Christians and between them and Christ are vital. This spiritual unity with Christ, not corporate unity, endows the church with spiritual gifts, making it the property of Christ and operated by him through the Spirit, the place where "love, unity, equality, purity, peace and truth are ever to abound" (121). Christ as *kephalē* stands as one to whom supreme headship and lordship have been accorded over the church and the cosmos in general. The growth of the church is made possible when all limbs, ligaments, and linkages of the body function properly and Christ is the direction of growth and the bestower of charisma and the Spirit.

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