"THE BODY OF CHRIST AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE"

A THEOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF THE CHURCH'S CAPABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO RESPOND WELL TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis shows that the church has both the responsibility and capability to meet the challenges of Alzheimer's disease. Although Alzheimer's disease appears to destroy memory, a communal understanding of memory points to the need for those with Alzheimer's disease to have a community to help them remember. Herbert McCabe's account of human existence shows that such a community exists because of the person of Jesus and his resurrection, cleverly avoiding the confusion involved with discussion about the nature of the human soul. With the institution of the church as the Body of Christ, hierarches are radically reversed as the weak and forgotten become vital members joined in a new way of living. The story of Basil of Caesarea provides an example of how the Body of Christ can function in this manner. However, liberalism, with its emphasis on the rational, autonomous chooser, is shown to be incommensurable with the Body of Christ. As Christ's body, the church possesses practices of presence that can support

those who are overlooked in liberal society, including those with AD. These practices include prayer, the Eucharist, and funeral rites. Furthermore, a renewed emphasis on the virtues of Christian love, patience, and memory can inspire and support the church as it aims its practices towards those with AD.

Dedicated to Ann and Charles Mayrand

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INTRODUCTION

On September 13, 2011, the well-known televangelist Pat Robertson made a series of shocking statements about Alzheimer's disease, citing it as a justification for a spouse to seek a divorce.[1] In response to a viewer's question about what advice to give a friend who had started dating another woman following his wife's diagnosis with the disease, Robinson said: "I know it sounds cruel, but if he's going to do something, he should divorce her and start all over again, but make sure she has custodial care and somebody looking after her." He warranted this claim by identifying Alzheimer's disease as a "kind of death." Having seen two grandparents diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in the last decade, I found Robertson's argument abhorrent. The heated debates following Robertson's claims indicated that while I was not alone in my response, a significant number of people did share Robertson's perspective.

I have since come to realize that the controversy that Robertson's statements fueled is not surprising given the current confusion and ignorance about Alzheimer's disease in the U.S. Many people simply do not seem to know how to deal with what is generally referred to as a terrifying, incurable disease. A general reluctance to face the painful realities of Alzheimer's disease pervades not only secular culture, but also the Christian church. For example, the Vatican document released in October of 1998 detailing at

[1] Katie Moisse and Jessica Hopper, "Pat Robertson Says Alzheimer's Makes Divorce OK," *ABCNews.com*, September 15, 2011, http://abcnews.go.com/Health/AlzheimersCommunity /pat-robertson-alzheimers-makes-divorce/story?id=14526660

length the mission and dignity of the elderly fails to mention Alzheimer's disease.[2] As an aspiring theologian, this lack of conviction strikes me as a serious problem that cannot be ignored. I hope to show through this project that Alzheimer's disease need not be avoided due to fear or feelings of ineptitude. I will explain how the Christian church, through its well-established habits and practices, is more than capable of responding well to Alzheimer's disease. In doing so, the Christian church can better fulfill its mission as the Body of Christ.

Before I move into the specifics of my argument, I will provide a brief overview of the disease itself. In 1906, Alois Alzheimer presented a case study of a patient with what he termed a "peculiar disease of the cerebral cortex."[3] This disease was then officially referred to as Alzheimer's disease in Emil Kraepelin's famous book, *Psychiatrie*, in 1910.[4] For a number of reasons, the disease was understood to be a relatively rare form of "presenile" dementia until the 1960s.[5]

Modern medical advances now allow for a much more specific definition of the disease, although its causes are still unknown. Alzheimer's disease is:

> a degenerative brain disease that is the most common form of dementia, that usually starts in late middle age or in old age, that results in progressive memory loss, impaired thinking, disorientation, and changes in personality and mood, that leads in advanced cases to a profound decline in cognitive and physical functioning, and that is marked histologically by the degeneration of brain neurons especially in the cerebral cortex and by the presence of neurofibrillary tangles and plaques containing beta-amyloid.[6]

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[2] See *The Dignity of Older People and their Mission in the Church and in the World*.

[3] See Mathias Jucker et al., eds., *Alzheimer: 100 Years and Beyond* (Heidelberg, New York: Springer, 2006), 51.

[4] *Ibid*., 52.

[5] *Ibid*., 53. Jucker et al. provide a much more detailed account of the scientific bases for Alzheimer's disease for those interested.

[6] *Merriam-Webster: Medline Plus*, s.v. "Alzheimer's disease."

According to the *2012 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report, 5.4 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's disease.[7] One in eight Americans above the age of 65 have the disease, while 45% of those above the age of 85 have it. Alzheimer's is currently the sixth-leading cause of death in the U.S. and the overall costs of care in 2012 are estimated to be around 200 billion dollars. Currently, over 15 million people in the U.S. provide unpaid care for those with Alzheimer's disease. Although much could be made of these facts and figures, at the very least they reveal the prevalence of this disease. As the baby boomer generation moves into these age ranges, the numbers will become even more alarming.

I also need to say a few words about my perspective and methodology. I must acknowledge that I was only able to approach this study because I benefit from just about every form of privilege available. I am a white, able-bodied, middle-class male to name but a few. Although I try to keep these privileges in mind as I think and write, it is inevitable that they do play some role in shaping my theology. I also find it important to note my identity as a Roman Catholic. Although I hope my argument is not so narrow that non-Catholics cannot follow it, I know that my Catholic lens has had a significant impact on my work.

This also seems an appropriate place to address what I mean when I refer to the Christian church. As the argument develops, the Christian church will be identified as the Body of Christ and these terms will be used interchangeably. By grounding my understanding of the church in Christ's body, I hope to bracket the troublesome

[7] One can access this report at www.alz.org for more details.

denominational issues that can hinder theological discussions.[8] This is not to say that any group claiming the title of Christianity is necessarily part of the church. Certain recognizable virtues and practices must be present and specific doctrines upheld in order for the church to fulfill its mission, especially with regards to Alzheimer's disease.

Finally, I will offer a brief summary of my approach. This project is divided into two major chapters. The principle goal of the first chapter is to show that the church as the Body of Christ values those with Alzheimer's disease as integral members. In this first chapter, I locate my argument within the ongoing theological discussion surrounding Alzheimer's disease. The main voice that I will engage is that of David Keck, whose book *Forgetting Whose We Are* remains the only comprehensive theological engagement with Alzheimer's disease that I know of. Keck's work helps me to explain how Alzheimer's disease fails to destroy memory when memory is understood as primarily communal within the Christian narrative. I then move to a critique of Keck's reliance on dualism, which enables me to identify resurrection as a critical concept/doctrine. Belief in the resurrection results in a new way of life as the Body of Christ that necessarily includes those with Alzheimer's disease. I conclude this chapter with an example from Christian history that reflects the transformative power of the church when it acts out its mission as the Body of Christ.

[8] My claim that the church is the Body of Christ is not novel. Paul speaks of the church as Christ's body in Ephesians (see especially 1:22-23, 5:23) and 1 Corinthians (see 12:12-31). *Lumen Gentium* also repeatedly describes the church in this way (see paragraphs 7, 8, 48). The church's identity as the Body of Christ necessarily invokes a certain discomfort with the present divisions within Christianity. However, the complexities of the discussions surrounding these divisions far exceed the constraints of this paper. Nevertheless, it is important to note that it is not my intention to inadvertently advocate a broad, transdenominational ecclesiology (see Roger Haight, *Christian Community in History*, (New York: Continuum, 2008), vol. 3, 3-27). As a Roman Catholic, I certainly do not disagree with the Catholic Church's stance that the church as the Body of Christ *subsists in* the Catholic Church (*Lumen Gentium*, 8).

The second major chapter endeavors to show that despite the current challenges of liberal society, the Body of Christ is capable of responding well to the challenges posed by Alzheimer's disease. In a Hauerwasian fashion, I argue that this response depends on the character, virtue, and practices of the Christian community. I begin with a discussion of liberalism and its emphasis on the independent monadic chooser, explaining how it is incommensurate with the Body of Christ. I then argue that the church is the true first family that can rely on its powerful practices of presence to deal with Alzheimer's disease. These practices include prayer, the Eucharist, and funeral rites. Finally, I discuss two virtues that are crucial to sustaining the Body of Christ as it learns to handle the challenges of Alzheimer's disease.

CHAPTER 1

THOSE WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE ARE INTEGRAL MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

I. Developments in the 20th century concerning old age and senility describe how David Keck was the first theologian to try to systematically address AD in 1996.

Although the statistics about the prevalence of Alzheimer's disease (AD) are staggering, the implications of the disease received precious little attention in theological circles during the 20th century. I will now identify several factors in an effort to explain this lack of attention.

We begin with a look at census data from this time period. At the start of the 20th century, roughly 4 percent of the population was above the age of 65. This percentage steadily increased to almost 15 percent in 1940 and remained at similar levels throughout the rest of the century. The 2000 census revealed that this age group made up 12 percent of the U.S. population.[9] These figures suggest that at least in the early portion of the century, the population potentially affected by dementia was a negligible minority. Thus, it seems plausible that sheer numbers could have been responsible for the lack of theological attention to dementia in the early part of the century. However, this seems

[9] Data collected from U.S. Census Bureau's website , especially http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-12.pdf and http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1900.html

much less tenable in the middle and later years as the percentages moved into the teens. Thus, we must dig a bit further.

Along with these numbers, the 20th century featured dramatic shifts in attitudes about aging and senility. Historian Jesse Ballenger explains that the prevailing understanding of old age in America as the 20th century began as a "metaphoric concept" that saw aging as an inevitable depletion of a limited life force. In essence, each person was seen as receiving a certain amount of energy at birth to put towards growth and movement. As this energy bank began to run low, the effects of old age would begin to show. Medical textbooks explained that dementia was simply a natural part of this process as the energy needed to sustain one's mental faculties ebbed away. Variances in the onset of dementia were attributed mainly to personal or social factors. While it was believed that there was no way to supplement additional energy to what one had initially received, certain habits such as heavy drinking or excessive physical exertion were understood to quicken the depletion of one's vital energy. Thus, once the effects of old age began to surface, physicians saw little use in pursuing new forms of treatment. In fact, the term "senility" was increasingly used to distinguish the incurable ailments of the elderly from the treatable diseases of youths.[10]

Although the vitality metaphor persisted during the first few decades of the 20th century, advances in a number of fields slowly changed the American perception of aging. Postmortem examinations of tissue provided new insight into the causes of various aging issues and dominated the medical literature by the 1920s. In addition, the emergence of the fields of gerontology and geriatrics signified a new interest in the

[10] Jesse F. Ballenger, *Self, Senility, and Alzheimer's Disease in Modern America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006) 14-19.

elderly. By the 1940s, a recognizable community of scholars and researchers devoted to the issues of aging could be identified. Tellingly, the amount of scholarship on aging published in the 1950s and 60s equaled the total from the previous 115 years.[11] It seems no small coincidence that this boon in research and scholarly attention coincides with the aforementioned shift in population demographics.

A key shift that this new attention to old age helped bring about was the inversion of the symptoms and causes of senility. Ballenger explains that when senility was understood to be a natural part of aging, problems such as "the dullness found in the senile, their isolation and withdrawal, their clinging to the past and lack of interest in worldly affairs"[12] were understood to simply be the symptoms of senility. Gerontologists turned this model on its head, citing these issues as the very causes of senility. Society was blamed for removing meaningful roles from the lives of the elderly, causing them to become lost in a modern world that was becoming increasingly consumer-oriented. The agenda of gerontology became a sustained effort to:

> improve the material circumstances of old age through increasing public and private pensions, abolishing mandatory retirement, establishing a network of social and recreational services, and, perhaps most important, replacing the negative image of senility, which generated fear of and hostility toward the elderly, with positive images of successful aging, which generated the optimistic attitude necessary for the individual and society to meet the challenges of aging.[13]

While this program did indeed lead to marked improvements in the material circumstances of the elderly by the end of the 1970s, it also served to push the troubling problems of dementia to the forefront. An agenda that relied on the image of the

[11] *Ibid*., 56-7.
[12] *Ibid*., 58.
[13] *Ibid*., 59.

"successful elder" did not have a way to account for those with AD whose problems could not be resolved by re-integrating them into the consumer-oriented culture.

This historical background helps explain why the specific diagnosis of AD did not emerge until the 1970s, despite first appearing in a German medical textbook in 1910.[14] As a response to the gerontological agenda, researchers sought to show that AD was not simply part of aging, but a distinct and menacing disease. Whereas studies in the first half of the century had failed to find significant linkages between disease and dementia, the advent of electron microscopy and biochemistry in the 1970s and '80s revealed conclusively that dementia indeed had organic causes.[15]Although the organic nature of dementia is commonly accepted today, some scholars now argue that social factors are still crucial. For example, English psychologist Tom Kitwood, who has written extensively on the mentality surrounding dementia patients, argues that neurological decay is not as determinative as is commonly assumed. He believes that discussions of dementia have become so imbued with medical terminology that the persons afflicted with the disease become identified as little more than the disease itself.[16] Such a shift in identity perhaps compounds the harmful effects of dementia that are commonly blamed on organic causes (e.g. plaque buildup).

This account of the historical emergence of AD in America explains how it was possible that serious theological reflection did not occur until the end of the 20th century. Published in 1996, David Keck's *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the*

[14] Konrad Maurer and Ulrike Maurer, *Alzheimer: the Life of a Physisician and the Career of a Disease* (New York: Columbia UP, 2003), 217. The well-respected German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin briefly referred to Alzheimer's disease in his textbook, stating that "the clinical interpretation of Alzheimer's disease is still unclear at the moment."

[15] Jesse F. Ballenger, *Self, Senility, and Alzheimer's Disease in Modern America,* 90-2.

[16] See John Swinton, "Forgetting Whose We Are: Theological Reflections On Personhood, Faith and Dementia," *Journal of Religion, Disability and Health* 11, no. 1 (2007): 45-6.

Love of God is widely recognized as the first major effort to take into account the challenges of Alzheimer's disease for theology. The book was inspired by Keck's own experience of caring for his mother who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 1990. It has received positive reviews from notable scholars such as Yale's Brevard Childs and Duke's Stanley Hauerwas and has been cited in a host of later essays and books. Thus, it seems only logical to begin this project with a discussion of Keck's work. I will analyze the main strengths of the book while also highlighting some significant gaps that I will attempt to fill in with the remainder of this project.

II. Memory, as more than simply a storehouse of thoughts about past events, plays a crucial role in constituting both who and whose we are, a claim that AD challenges but does not overturn.

Since AD boldly attacks human memory, we might expect a theological response that shifts the emphasis from or even devalues memory. It initially strikes one as illogical or perhaps even insulting to base a theological argument on the very thing that victims of AD seem to be losing. However, Keck chooses to place memory very much at the center of his project, readily admitting that memory is crucial to a cohesive understanding of who we are as humans. Robert Knight explains that Keck's extensive engagement with memory is insightfully "juxtaposed against the apparent loss of memory function in this awful disease (Alzheimer's)."[17] This juxtaposition is appropriate only because memory is not simply one's internal storehouse of personal recollections. One of Keck's main theses is that memory is an incredibly deep term that has a canonical function. It not only forms

[17] Robert M. Knight, Review of *Forgetting Whose We Are:Theological Reflections on Pershonhood, Faith and Dementia*, by David Keck, *Journal of Pastoral Care* 52, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 204.

who Christians are as God's people but also provides the resources that can direct who God's people become in the future.[18] Viewing memory in this manner necessarily begins with scripture and its reassurance of "whose we are."

i. God's memory is perfect, serves as an anchor for humans in their forgetfulness, and is evidenced most by the Incarnation.

Both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament speak of God's unfailing memory contrasted with what seems like countless instances of forgetfulness when it comes to the memory of God's people. Keck writes that we ultimately depend on God's memory for our hope, a mindset that the crucified thief in Luke 23:42 reflected when he begged Jesus to remember him.[19] Whereas even the healthiest of humans constantly forgets things, God's memory is perfect. Alice Camille, in her article about memory and this Lukan thief, writes that unlike God, humans are constantly in need of what she calls "celestial Post-its," by which she simply means sacramental moments in which humans encounter God each day. These Post-its remind humans of their fundamental relationship with God. On the other hand, God's perfect memory means that "God doesn't forget who we are, so God needs no vehicle for remembering us as the whole/holy people we are intended to become."[20] This comforting notion of the power of God's memory is one that permeates much of scripture.

God's memory as an anchor for humans and their flawed memory is a theme that is so prevalent in the opening chapters of Deuteronomy that commentators often refer to the

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[18] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 43.

[19] *Ibid.*, 45.

[20] Alice L. Camille, "Jesus, remember me," *U.S. Catholic* 60, no. 11 (Nov 2001): 47. She proceeds to connect the story of the thief to the central act of the Eucharist, a topic which I will return to later in this paper.

existence of a "theology of remembering."[21] This unique theology is inextricably tied to the covenant between God and Israel, which continually highlights God's mercy and fidelity in remembering God's promise in light of Israel's repeated forgetfulness. God's memory is always linked with God's action and intervention in history. Swinton echoes this view when he remarks that God's remembering is "not an act of sentimental retrospective reflection, but rather a powerful act of affirmation and commitment to his continuing involvement with human beings in history."[22] Deuteronomy is also important for a theological consideration of Alzheimer's because it reflects the clear precedence of community, worship, and God's memory over individual suffering.[23] Other portions of the Hebrew Bible refer to God's memory as well, often in the proclamations of those in distress.[24]

For Keck, the New Testament grabs hold of the witness of God's memory from the Hebrew Bible and extends its influence. The Incarnation is a radical act of God's remembering rooted in the covenant and in God's mercy. The forgiveness of our sins also emerges as an aspect of God's memory. Keck notes that Jeremiah 31:34, in which God speaks of remembering sins no more, takes on an entirely new meaning when viewed in light of Christ's death and resurrection. Whereas human forgetfulness points to weakness, the divine act of forgetting our sins reflects God's great love.[25]

The final element of God's memory that Keck considers is the impact of the union of the divine and human memory in the person of Jesus. This mysterious joining of the

[21] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God,* 45.
[22] John Swinton, *Resurrecting the Person: Friendship and the Care of People with Mental Health Problems*, 124.
[23] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God,* 46.
[24] *Ibid.*, 47. He highlights Genesis 30:22, Judges 16:28, and Jeremiah 15:15 as pertinent examples.
[25] *Ibid.*, 47-8.

divine omniscience with human weakness means that in some way God's memory will always include the suffering that Jesus endured on the cross. God's memory of being forgotten and abandoned by all as he died on the cross ties God all the more to those suffering, especially in isolation, from AD throughout the world.[26] Just before breathing his last, alone on the cross, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mat. 27:46). The experience of being forgotten is one with which those with AD are quite familiar. However, evidence of God's memory again appears in the form of the resurrection. Jesus' experience on the cross may have been his last prior to his death, but death did not have the last word. Christian beliefs about the general resurrection affirm that those with AD can also draw hope from this example of God's loving memory.[27]

ii. Human memory is primarily communal and is best understood using the terms *zkr* and *duree.*

Robert Imbelli writes that "We remember because God has first remembered us."[28] Only with an appreciation of God's memory ready at hand can a discussion of human memory proceed. In order to build a robust account of human memory that meets the challenges of AD, some current misconceptions about memory must be identified and countered.

The fundamental misconception is the tendency to view human memory as primarily belonging to the individual rather than to the community. The distrust of received authority and emphasis on personal rational thought that began to take hold during the Enlightenment have persisted and severely diminished the general role of communal

[26] *Ibid.*, 48.
[27] The specific details of the importance of the resurrection are discussed later in this paper.
[28] Robert P. Imbelli, review of *Forgetting Whose We Are: Theological Reflections on Personhood, Faith and Dementia*, by David Keck, *Commonweal* 124, no. 5 (Mr 14 1997): 26.

memory. Individuals that are capable of reason are not seen as in need of any formative collective memories; in fact, such memories are often construed to be oppressive if they do not support various modern ideals. Add to this the increasing privatization of religion, especially in the U.S., and it is no surprise that many Christians today see little use for communal memories of the story of Israel or even of Christians throughout history. Emphases on feelings and personal experiences, both characteristic of Romanticism, have separated people even further from the stories of their ancestors. This modern glorification of the individual has thus made it increasingly difficult for people to appreciate the communal nature of memory.[29]

Such a dismissal of the communal nature of memory does not fit with general human experience. Humans love to recall past events in social situations, often with those who shared those same experiences. The meanings of these recollections change based on the communities with which they are shared. For example, my impassioned recap of a recent trip to Wembley Stadium for a cup final match does very little when delivered to my desk chair. On the other hand, the same recap may inspire a flurry of questions, emotions, and perhaps future actions (e.g. new plans for trips to the next cup final) when offered to a group of avid soccer fans. One can imagine an almost infinite range of effects that such a recap can have depending on the communities involved. Furthermore, my personal recap of such an event does not tell the whole story. I may have missed a critical moment in the match because the tall man seated in front of me decided to stand up to stretch. It makes perfect sense then that people often seek out additional accounts of events to try to piece together the broader picture, because individual recollections are inherently limited and sometimes flawed. The memory of an event like a cup final is something that transcends

[29] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God,* 61-3.

the individual. Memory is not simply the sum total of all the individual recollections about an event. There is something objective to such memory, as people can usually sense when an individual's account is flawed, even if those people were not originally at the event. It is evident then that memory cannot be classified as simply an individual phenomenon, but that the communal aspect of memory is actually fundamental.

The assertion that memory is fundamentally communal is critical for this discussion of AD. Keck discusses two terms that help provide an account of memory that recognizes its communal nature. First, he discusses the Hebrew root word for memory, *zkr*. Throughout Israel's history, *zkr* referred to more than just individual cognitive processes. *Zkr* referred primarily to an efficacious communal memory that linked the Israelites to their ancestors. For example, the Israelites would eat certain bitter herbs at Passover to allow them to bring the Passover experiences of the past to the present. Brevard Childs refers to this as "actualizing" historical events, linking the Israelites to the God of history. Through *zkr*, the Israelites were able to identify themselves directly with the covenant and relive the formative events of their ancestors.[30]

Keck sees the notion of *zkr* persisting during the early years of Christianity, albeit within a complicated context.[31] One key role of memory once again was to enable people to actualize historical events that they were not able to personally witness, a process of faith that became increasingly important as the days of Christ's corporal life grew more and more distant. Sharing in the Eucharistic meal is a prime example of this sort of communal memory. As the early Christians wrestled with the challenge of figuring out how to faithfully remember Jesus, communal memory began to serve a canonical

[30] *Ibid.*, 48-9.

[31] *Ibid.*, 50. Here he provides three ways that memory differed from the Hebrew understanding of it during the early years of Christianity.

function. Central memories that establish the dominant context for reinterpreting past memories can be considered canonical as they "give the primary energy to our identities."[32] As individuals willfully assume the memories of the church community into their own lives, transformation takes place. Keck points to the example of Augustine, who explains in his *Confessions* that he began to see his past life in a completely new way as a result of his conversion and participation in the church community.[33]

Finally, Keck brings in the modern Bergsonian concept of *duree*, which is loosely translated as duration. When something in the past has *duree*, it "gnaws and impinges on the present, often without our being aware of it."[34] This gives a more active role to memories, seeing them as exerting influence on people. For Bergson, the free person then is one who is able to act in continuity with the vast sum of memories that make up her story. Applying this to the Christian context, Keck sees the free Christian as one "able to live within the total memory of God's work in Israel and the church."[35] When one is free in this manner, memories of Jesus flow into the present and influence one's life, as do memories of sin, pleasure, etc.[36] Thus, the need for central canonical memories becomes even clearer. Memory as *zkr* offers a basis to understand and interpret the various memories that constantly impinge on us during the course of our lives.

[32] *Ibid.*, 70.
[33] *Ibid.*, 52.
[34] *Ibid.*, 68.
[35] *Ibid.*, 69.
[36] *Ibid.*, 69.

III. Central Christian beliefs about resurrection show the way forward in responding to AD.

i. Appeals to the substantial soul need not dominate a theological response to AD.

A. Keck's decision to place the substantial soul at the center of his argument is problematic because of significant confusion surrounding the term 'soul'.

Keck finds it necessary to place the soul near the center of his argument because he believes that the destructive nature of AD necessitates a serious discussion of the "basic stuff of human beings."[37] He insists that the affirmation of an immortal, substantial soul provides a necessary foothold for those struggling to make sense of the rapid dissolution of the body that occurs during late-stage AD. Keck argues that it is the soul's substantial existence that somehow unifies the human person and prevents the complete disintegration of the human person into its parts (molecules, atoms, etc.). Furthermore, it is the soul that somehow allows the self to continue to exist after death, preserving its memories.[38] Keck's language is reminiscent of that of Augustine, who talks about the soul in a similar manner with a pejorative attitude towards the body. Augustine once referred to death as "the sheer flight and escape from this body [that] is now yearned for as the greatest boon."[39]

As Keck lays out his understanding of the soul, he aligns himself with scholars such as Charles Taliaferro and Stewart Goetz, proponents of "integrative dualism." Taliaferro and Goetz explain that this form of dualism holds that human beings are made up of both

[37] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God,* 97.
[38] *Ibid*., 125-6.
[39] Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 33.76, in *The Fathers of the Church. A New Translation*, trans. Ludwig Schopp (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1947), 144.

a soul and a body. The qualifier, "integrative," expresses the claim that for "healthy, fully-functioning human beings, the person is a unified subject, but at times such as physical death, dualists hold that persons (souls or minds) can survive the destruction of their bodies."[40] These integrative dualists argue that their form of dualism is not only consistent with Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, but that it is actually central to Catholic faith and practice. They appeal to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) as evidence of this dualism, pointing to the teaching that "every spiritual soul is created immediately by God – it is not "produced" by the parents – and also that it is immortal: it does not perish when it separates from the body at death, and it will be reunited with the body at the final Resurrection" (366). They also cite major Christian figures like Thomas Aquinas, and offer doctrinal analyses to bolster these claims.[41]

Integrative dualism is not without its critics, which is not surprising given the constant controversies surrounding the mind-body debate. What is surprising is that many of its opponents are operating from within the same traditions and appealing to the very same sources. For example, Patrick Lee and Robert P. George offer a critique of integrative dualism that begins with the CCC's teaching that "spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature" (365). They see this as an unambiguous affirmation that "the body is an essential part of the person, not a distinct being with which the person or the self interacts."[42] They also argue that integrative dualism is dangerous because it can lead to the denigration of the body. When the body appears more like a prison for the soul, arguments for practices such as

[40] Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro, "Duel over Dualism," *First Things* (May 2005) http://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/01/duel-over-dualism-41.

[41] *Ibid*.

[42] Patrick Lee and Robert P. George, "Duel over Dualism," *First Things* (May 2005) http://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/01/duel-over-dualism-41.

euthanasia and abortion start to gain momentum. Lee and George's critique also features Thomas Aquinas and addresses the very same doctrinal issues that Goetz and Taliaferro bring up, namely the incarnation, prayer to saints, and birth.

Keck's endorsement of integrative dualism is not surprising given the current attitudes about the soul in modern American society, coupled with Keck's concern with appealing to a wide audience. Although some do scoff at the idea of an immaterial soul, it seems that the majority do agree that human life cannot be fully explained by atoms and molecules, or even organs and internal systems. Popular culture often references the soul in one way or another. A quick glance at a list of recent Hollywood films makes it clear that general audiences identify with the term 'soul'. Movies with titles such as "Soul Surfer," "My Soul to Take," "Cold Souls," and "Cost of a Soul" are just a few of those that have come out in the last three years, ranging from comedies to thrillers to inspirational documentaries. Countless popular books refer to the soul or market themselves as "good for the soul" (e.g. *Chicken Soup for the Soul*; *Eat, Pray, Love*; *Great Soul*). Although it may seem at first that these popular references to the soul could lend support to Keck's decision to keep the soul at the center of his project, I will argue that the plenitude of such references actually highlights a problem with Keck's approach.

Just as in popular culture, the term 'soul' also surfaces often in specifically Christian circles. The soul is often referenced as an entity that is distinct from the body. It is sometimes employed to talk about what happens when humans die or used to fill the gaps in current scientific knowledge. The soul is also often referred to as private and personal, perhaps as representative of one's consciousness or mind. The evangelical impulse to "save souls" often reflects this individualized conception of the term, placing the

emphasis on the private, internal self rather than the public, corporeal being. Herbert McCabe refers to all of this as the "jumble of ideas [that] people commonly associate with the word 'soul'."[43] He sees the plethora of modern conceptions of the soul, especially those influenced by Cartesian dualism, as misleading and even dangerous. The confusion that he consistently observed about the soul actually provoked him to write an entire catechism that purposefully avoided the term 'soul'. McCabe argues that this state of confusion is serious enough that "it is quite probable that we ought to abandon the word 'soul' altogether when we are doing theology or philosophy."[44] This "jumble of ideas" about what the soul means is precisely why Keck's decision to place his integrative dualism at the center of his argument is problematic. His discussion of the soul and integrative dualism throws his readers straight into this "jumble of ideas" as he makes claims about the soul being the locus of God's work in humans and the locus of continuity after death.

B. McCabe's explanation of the unique mode of human existence grounds the human in linguistic communities, providing a strong alternative to Keck's dualism that lends itself to a discussion of the church as Christ's body.

In order to properly challenge Keck's reliance on dualism, an alternative understanding of human existence must be provided that still keeps the realities of AD in mind. McCabe's approach provides a useful starting point. For McCabe, as for Aristotle, questions about the soul are simply questions about what it means to be alive: "When they [traditional Christian thinkers] considered God and the soul they did not think first of God and human minds, or of God and private experiences, religious or otherwise, or of

[43] Herbert McCabe, "Soul, Life, Machines and Language," in *Faith Within Reason* (New York: Continuum, 2007), 124.
[44] *Ibid*.

'God and the conscious self'; they thought of God and being alive."[45] McCabe refers to Aquinas for his basic definition of life, identifying as alive anything that has the ability to move itself. Both animals and humans are understood to be alive, objects such as cell phones are not. This is true because living things are more than simply a collection of individual parts. Whereas one can explain a cell phone's being by talking about the various parts that someone else assembled at some point, one cannot describe a dog's or human's existence in such a manner. While the number 7 key of a cell phone is still a number 7 key if removed from the phone, the eye of a dog is no longer fully the eye when it has been removed from the dog because one level of its meaning comes from being part of the whole dog. One could still talk about the eye in terms of pupils and lenses, but one could no longer talk about the eye as the organ that enables the dog as a whole to "see." In this latter manner, the eye can provide meaning for the life of the dog, as is the case when the dog runs for a ball after "seeing" it. The organs of a living being thus function to allow the living being to experience meaningful events in its world.[46]

Having outlined the distinction between things that are and are not living, I now turn to what sets aside humans from other animals. An animal finds significance in its world through the various sensations that it receives, whether by sight, smell, hearing, etc. These sensations trigger responses due to that animal's genetics and conditioning, meaning that the animal has a strictly "sense-shaped world."[47] Thus, the animal does not form meaning in its world, it merely receives it. Animals can be said to communicate

[45] *Ibid*., 125.

[46] *Ibid.*, 126-134. When McCabe talks about a "world" he is referring to "an environment organized in terms of significance" (see Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love, Language* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 71).

[47] Brad Kallenberg, "Practices" in *Living by Design* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, *forthcoming*).

(defined by McCabe as "actively sharing a common life"), but only as beings that react to the same stimuli in the same manner due to shared sensory capacities.[48]

Humans find meaning through the senses too. But the main difference between humans and animals is that humans have language, which is an additional way of interacting with their world. As the linguistic animal, humans can create their responses to their environment are solely not dependent on their sensory responses.[49] Humans are thus capable of communicating (sharing life) in an additional way that animals are not. This communication is language, which is primarily a sharing of life rather than simply the transfer of messages.[50] This sharing of life now includes anything that people can talk about in addition to shared sensations.[51] As linguistic beings, humans operate in terms of structures that are their own creations.[52] For example, food is much more complex for humans than other animals because humans are able to assign new meanings to food. A dog is more than capable of eating cake, while humans have cakes with additional meanings for special occasions (e.g. birthday cakes). The way a vegetarian responds to the offer of a free filet mignon is quite different from the way a steak connoisseur treats it because each assigns meaning to the filet that is more than simply sensual response.

It is important to point out that human communication cannot be merely an individual act. A man can politely refuse a free filet mignon by calling himself a vegetarian, but not by stating that he is a mailman. The word vegetarian has a historical background that links it to the abstention from meat, while the term mailman generally has nothing to do with food. This scenario points to the undeniable fact that human communication is tied

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[48] *Ibid.*
[49] Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love, Language* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 72.
[50] *Ibid.,* 74.
[51] Brad Kallenberg, "Practices."
[52] Herbert McCabe, "Soul, Life, Machines and Language," 141.

to *history*. For McCabe, *history* means that language is not a product of the individual but of the community.[53] Intra-communal use of language creates meaning in worlds, a process that extends throughout time. Individuals can pick up this language and the meanings that are associated with it, but cannot simply invent words and expect others to instantly grasp their significance. Words only have meaning in light of the purpose they serve between people in a particular community.[54]

This communal understanding of meaning leads to McCabe's rejection of dualism. Humans are not unique because they somehow inhabit "two spheres [that] are variously called 'soul and body' or 'mind and matter' or 'thinking substance and extended substance'."[55] Concepts are not the private experience of something non-corporeal inside one's body that is then conveyed imperfectly through words. Rather, concepts are "skills in the use of words" that come about because humans share worlds full of meaning together. McCabe sums up his alternative to dualism:

> Instead of saying that I have a private mind and a public body, a mind for having concepts in and a body for saying and hearing words, I say that I have a body that is able to be with other bodies not merely by physical contact but by linguistic communication. Having a soul is just being able to communicate; having a mind is being able to communicate linguistically.[56]

In its rejection of dualism, McCabe's account of the human mode of existence preserves the value of the human body as non-instrumental but intrinsically communicative.[57] If the body was simply an instrument used to communicate, there would have to be something like the dualistic understanding of soul using the body. When bodies are understood to be merely instruments, they are much more vulnerable to

[53] Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love, Language*, 83.
[54] Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love, Language*, 86-7.
[55] *Ibid.*, 84.
[56] *Ibid.*, 86.
[57] *Ibid.*, 90-1.

abuse in liberal society. As mentioned before, arguments against euthanasia lose their power when bodies are understood as mere casings for souls. McCabe combats this view by arguing that the human body is "intrinsically communicative."[58] Critical for patients with advanced AD (as well as for other persons with mental disabilities), it is not just in its ability to write or speak that the body is communicative. McCabe argues that all of the body's behavior is linguistic to a certain extent, as is the body's failure to act (a person who fails to respond when asked a question is conveying something in that failure to act). Human bodies communicate in various manners in varying numbers of overlapping communities, the history of which is referred to by McCabe as *biography*. *Biography* is crucial because it sees the individual life as part of a story at the intersection of these communities. Because individuals share their worlds with others, they cannot be seen as the sole authors of their life stories, but as co-authors necessarily indebted and connected to the others that share in their meaningful worlds.[59] No life story is private because humans are connected in a linguistic way that allows them to share the human way of living.[60]

Thus, the person with AD remains a human not because of an invisible soul but because, through *history* and *biography*, that person remains embroiled in linguistic communities that are markers of the human mode of existence. In a brief article about late-stage AD, Stephen Sapp discusses the critical importance of these linguistic communities. He shows that even when people reach this horrifying stage of AD and can no longer remember their life stories, those stories continue in a variety of ways as they

[58] *Ibid.*, 91.
[59] Brad Kallenberg, "Practices"
[60] See Herbert McCabe, "Organism, Language and Grace," in *The Good Life* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 72 and Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 2007), 213.

continue to live and their co-authors continue to write, meaning these people are certainly worthy of respect and dignity. Their bodies still struggle for nourishment and against disease, a story in which every embodied being takes part. Socially, they still retain a role in the community as the embodiment of that community's history. Interpersonally, they still have relationships with family and caregivers. In some cases, more trivial family disputes may be overcome as members rally around their loved ones in their final days on earth. Alternatively, the stresses of late-stage AD can sometimes create rifts among loved ones and caregivers. Either way, these relationships are part of the ongoing stories that feature those afflicted with AD.[61]

Keck's use of integrative dualism is characteristic of the individualistic milieu in which much of his audience operates. As Sapp points out, the American mentality understands each person to be "a discrete, self-sufficient monad whose greatest achievement is to 'do one's own thing' according to the light of one's own reason."[62] Thus, the case of a person with AD seems especially tragic because that person clearly cannot stand up to this mentality. Keck decides to advocate for those with AD by defending their individuality using the dualistic soul. McCabe's conception of human existence has provided an alternative that does not rely on individualistic appeals to the soul. When humans are understood to be unique as linguistic animals who share both *history* and *biography* with one another, the person with AD remains rooted in community as an embodied living being. McCabe's linguistic account of human existence thus removes the burden from those with AD to prove that they are still human

[61] Stephen Sapp, "Living with Alzheimer's: Body, soul and the remembering community," *The Christian Century* (January 21, 1998), 58.
[62] *Ibid.*, 60.

beings by grounding their identity in Christ. In order to substantiate this claim, I will now discuss resurrection and its connection to the Body of Christ.

ii. The resurrection of the body is the critical doctrine for formulating a meaningful response to AD.

Although Augustine's early writings reflect the influences of dualism, his later writings reveal an emphasis on resurrection. According to the later writing of Augustine, "No doctrine of the Christian Faith is so vehemently and so obstinately opposed as the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh" (Ps. lxxxviii, sermo ii, n. 5). As a writer in the 4th century, he had already encountered countless objections to the bodily resurrection from groups of Gnostics, Manicheans, Neo-Platonists, and other schools such as the Epicureans and Stoics (these latter groups are even mentioned by the writer of Acts as mockers of the resurrection). Augustine's words continue to ring true throughout the rest of history, as evidenced by the claims of significant groups such as: "the Priscillianists, the Cathari, and the Albigenses… the Rationalists, Materialists, and Pantheists."[63] In more recent years, groups such as the Jesus Seminar attest to the timeless nature of the kind of opponents that Augustine describes. A general modern religious culture of "underbelief" about the resurrection allows such groups to make these attacks on the resurrection. Keck argues that recent theological projects concerned with being widely palatable have only perpetuated this avoidance of the resurrection, a move that merely serves to undermine their usefulness.[64] Despite such opposition, "the creeds and professions of faith and conciliar definitions do not leave it doubtful that the resurrection

[63] A. J. Maas, "Resurrection of Jesus Christ," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911) http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12789a.htm.

[64] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God,* 133-4.

of the body is a dogma or an article of faith."[65] Thus, the goal of this section will be threefold. First, I will trace the development of the concept of bodily resurrection. Second, I will explain its necessary centrality to the Christian narrative. Finally, I will convey why the doctrine of the bodily resurrection is so crucial for this response to AD.

A. The concept of resurrection developed slowly throughout the history of Israel leading up to Jesus' time.[66]

a. Initial beliefs about life and death

An account of the emergence of the doctrine of bodily resurrection necessarily begins with Israel. Throughout much of Israel's history, the concept of bodily resurrection was essentially non-existent. The Israelites understood man to be *nephesh*, an indissoluble unity in which life itself cannot be separated from the body. Death was understood to be a separation of the dead from those living and from YHWH as "the divine breath returned to God, who had loaned it."[67] However, death was not necessarily complete dissolution:

> When he dies a man is not purely and simply annihilated. He goes down to Sheol, the subterranean place of silence and gloom, in the dust and there he retains a remnant of existence which is not worth calling life: it is sleep or rest, a torpor occasionally penetrated by a few flashes of consciousness, inactivity, leveling out all inequalities between individuals.[68]

Thus, early Israel did believe in man's continued existence after death in a certain sense, but without any conception of a potential resolution to this rather bleak state that was certainly seen as a lower level of existence than life.

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[65] A. J. Maas, "Resurrection of Jesus Christ."

[66] This section depends primarily on Robert Martin-Achard's article in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* and on S.B. Marrow's article in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Brad Kallenberg's lecture notes on Martin-Achard's article helped sort out the various steps.

[67] Robert Martin-Achard, "Resurrection," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 5* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Anchor Bible, 1992), 680.

[68] Andre-Marie Dubarle, "Belief in Immortality in Old Testament and Judaism," in *Immortality and Resurrection*, ed. Pierre Benoit and Roland Murphy (United States: Herder and Herder, 1970), 37-8.

b. Notable exceptions to death

A firm belief in God's dominion over all things, including death, allowed for some exceptions to the basic understanding of death. Various Psalms speak of God's power that "brings up from the netherworld and preserves from going down into the pit, rescues from the depths of Sheol and redeems life from destruction (Ps. 30:3; 86:13; 103:3-4)," although such cases were seen as only temporary reprieves from death's reign.[69] More notable are the cases of both Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kgs. 2:1-15), who avoided death through a process called "translation". This term describes the ascension of man into heaven to be with God without suffering a natural death. In addition to Enoch and Elijah, translation also may be applicable to Isa. 53:8, Ps. 49:16, Ps. 73:24, several instances in the book of Wisdom, and in Hellenic Judaism.[70]

c. Examples of God's power over death through resurrection-healings

The books of Kings contain three mentions of 'salvific interventions' by Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs. 17:17-24; 2 Kgs. 4:31-37; 2 Kgs. 13:20-21). These accounts feature miraculous healings, including the "reintegration of the breath of life into a child's body," that demonstrate the superiority of God's power to that of Baal and serve to authenticate the prophetic ministry. These are not seen as permanent victories over death, since those who received the interventions are still understood to have died again eventually.[71]

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[69] S.B. Marrow, "Resurrection of the Dead," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, *Volume 12* (Gale, 2002), 168.

[70] Robert Martin-Achard, "Resurrection," 681.

[71] *Ibid*.

d. Resurrection as the restoration of a nation

Later passages in the Hebrew Bible feature the notion of resurrection as the "reestablishment of an unending reign and a definitive prosperity of the Chosen People."[72] Passages such as Ez. 37:1-14 refer to the reconstitution of nations, in this case the house of Judah, as God fulfills his promise to deliver Israel from extinction. Thus, these passages (see also Isa. 1:9, 26:19) are not speaking of individual resurrection but of the restoration of the nation of Israel as a whole.[73] The expectation is that Israel will be raised to prominence and all opposing nations destroyed.

e. Shift from national resurrection to eventual resurrection of the individual as a form of theodicy

It was not until Israel began to experience significant persecution and separation from YHWH's holy land that the concept of individual resurrection that emphasized the retention of an individual's post-mortem identity started to take shape. For example, the persecutions of the Seleucid king, Antiochus Epiphanes (2nd century B.C.E.), often resulted in the martyrdom of the most pious Israelites, a situation that Israelite proverbs about happiness in the wake of trials generally failed to explain.[74] Rather than losing faith, the Israelites continued to fight against their persecutors and new conceptions of life beyond death began to emerge from within their tradition. The basis for early formulations about individual resurrection was God's divine justice and power, balanced with God's *hesed*, which loosely translates to loyalty or love.[75] Dubarle identifies Daniel 12:1-3, which was written during the Maccabean uprising, as the first indisputable

[72] S. B. Marrow, "Resurrection of the Dead," 169.
[73] *Ibid*.
[74] Andre-Marie Dubarle, "Belief in Immortality in Old Testament and Judaism," 35.
[75] George Nickelsburg, "Resurrection," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 5* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Anchor Bible, 1992), 684.

evidence of Israelite belief in bodily resurrection.[76] The prophet speaks of the awakening of "those who sleep in the dust of the earth" to either "everlasting life" or "everlasting contempt" (Dan 12:2). The prevailing Israelite anthropology indicates that this resurrection must be bodily in some fashion, a conclusion that Dubarle argues is so obvious to the prophet that it merits no explicit mention.[77] The scope of this resurrection is apparently limited to the Jewish community, with those supporting Antiochus facing "everlasting contempt." This conception of resurrection thus provided the Israelites with a way to understand God's justice in light of the severe persecution. Resurrection as a form of theodicy is also evident in the book of Enoch, written in the 2nd century B.C.E., and 2 Maccabees 7, dated at 110 B.C.E.

f. The emergence of the concept of a universal resurrection

It was not until the first century C.E. that resurrection assumed a universal tone. Prior to Jesus' own resurrection, those who heard statements of Christ such as "repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (Lk 14:14) most likely still conceived of resurrection as limited to the people of God. However, 2 Esdras 7, written sometime after the fall of the Temple in 70 C.E., reveals a clear understanding of resurrection as a universal event in which all of humankind are raised. So too does 2 Baruch, a pseudepigraphical text dated somewhere between 70 and 90 C.E. These texts reflect the widespread belief in a universal resurrection at the end times that is also central to the New Testament.

[76] Others point to Isaiah 24-27 as the earliest text portraying resurrection, but Dubarle sees this as problematic for a variety of reasons (see Dubarle, 39-40).

[77] Andre-Marie Dubarle, "Belief in Immortality in Old Testament and Judaism," 41.

B. The Christian understanding of the resurrection of the body builds on these Israelite roots and is central to the Christian narrative.

Andre-Marie Dubarle writes that without its Israelite heritage, the very core of the Christian message, Jesus' resurrection, would have seemed "an almost incomprehensible aberration."[78] The slow development of the concept of resurrection throughout history gave those at Jesus' time a framework that made it possible to talk about what happened to Jesus. However, the understanding of resurrection in the New Testament features several additional developments or mutations from the existing conceptions.[79]

a. Diversity of beliefs about the resurrection to a more unified theology

Various groups within Judaism maintained differing stances on resurrection during the first century. The Sadducees did not believe in any sort of resurrection, while the Pharisees recognized some sort of universal resurrection. The early followers of Jesus came from several strands of Judaism as well as varying pagan religions. Despite the wide spectrum of beliefs on the resurrection in the backgrounds of these early Christians, Christianity seems to have quickly honed its belief about resurrection into a unified perspective.

[78] Andre-Marie Dubarle, "Belief in Immortality in Old Testament and Judaism," 34.

[79] The following seven subsections detailing these developments were identified by N.T. Wright in a lecture called, "Can a Scientist Believe the Resurrection?" My account follows his outline fairly closely.

b. Lesser importance of resurrection in Second Temple Judaism to vastly increased importance of resurrection

Prior to the fall of the Second Temple, resurrection was important but definitely far from central to Jewish belief. Many lengthy texts from this period never mention resurrection and those that do are often difficult to interpret. However, resurrection is at the center of Christianity, especially throughout the first two centuries. Wright points out that both the New Testament and writings of most of the early church fathers are essentially nothing without the mature concept of resurrection.[80] For example, Paul sets the resurrection as the very foundation of both his teaching and the Christian faith (1 Cor 15; 1 Thes 4:14; 2 Cor 13:4).

c. Vague view of the resurrection body to specific view

Jewish beliefs are rather vague about the specifics of the resurrection body, with explanations ranging from the resuscitation of one's very same body to the resurrection body as a shining star. On the other hand, Christianity is confident from its beginnings that the resurrected body would be physical yet transformed. Jesus was raised bodily in such a way that he could still eat but also pass through locked walls, not susceptible to death because dying was no longer possible. Christians believe that Jesus' resurrection body prefigures their own. The resurrection body is 'imperishable' and 'immortal' because the Spirit animates it (1 Cor 15:53-55). Through the resurrection, God does not abandon creation but remakes it. Paul writes that the Lord will 'transform' the physical body to 'conform' it to the body of his glory (Phi 3:21).

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[80] N.T. Wright, "Can a Scientist Believe the Resurrection?" (lecture, Babbage Lecture Theatre, Cambridge, May 15, 2007) http://www.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/faraday/CIS/Wright/pdf/Wright_lecture.pdf.

d. One-stage resurrection to two-stage resurrection

As noted above, most post-Exilic Jews expected the resurrection to be a one-time event that happened to at least all of God's people, if not the human race as a whole. Other variations existed within Judaism, but nothing resembling the Christian understanding of resurrection because of Jesus. Central to Christianity is the claim that the prototypic resurrection, a "resurrection" in the fullest, most developed conception, has already occurred for one person, Jesus, serving to anticipate and guarantee the final universal resurrection in the end times.

e. "Not-yet" resurrection to "now-and-not-yet" resurrection

Whereas the Jews generally saw the resurrection as a future event, the resurrection of Christ means that 'resurrection' has in some ways already begun. Prior to its completion, Christians believe they are called to work with God in the present world through the guidance of the Spirit. Because the eschatological age was inaugurated through the person of Jesus, his followers are tasked with anticipating their final resurrection through their present lives. The end time has already come because Christ is present through the Holy Spirit in the church.[81]

f. Resurrection as a reference to Israel's rebirth to a reference to a radical new life in Christ

In Ezekial 37, the prophet relays a vision of resurrection, in which 'bones come together' and the breath of God vivifies them (37:7-10). The prophet goes on to explain that the bones signify the 'whole house of Israel' which will return to the 'land of Israel'

[81] H.M. McElwain, "Theology of Resurrection," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, *Volume 12* (Gale, 2002) 172.

(37:11-13). In the New Testament, this reference disappears as resurrection becomes linked with a new kind of living. Paul speaks of this new life, stating that "Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:5) before detailing what that new life involves. This call to new life fits with the promise of the future resurrection of the body as the core of the Christian faith concerning resurrection.

g. Absence of need for Resurrection for the Messiah to resurrection as central to Messiahship

Finally, because Israel did not expect its eventual Messiah to die, it had no reason to associate resurrection with the Messiah. Texts that had speculated about the Messiah saw the Messiah as leading a sweeping victory in battle against the enemies of Israel or rebuilding the Temple. Thus, Jesus' death on the cross would have rendered useless any claims about him being the Messiah. Nevertheless, followers of Jesus almost immediately referred to him as the Messiah due to his resurrection, forcing a shift in belief about Messiahship.

C. This Christian belief in resurrection dramatically shapes the life of believers, calling them into a new way of living in a new 'world-of-meaning' as Christ's body.

The importance of Christian faith in the bodily resurrection of both Jesus and humanity cannot be understated. Without it, "there would have been no Christian community, no New Testament, and scarcely any historical memory of Jesus of

Nazareth."[82] Resurrection is important due to both its guarantees about the future and its import for the present. As McCabe points out, humans are different from other animals because humans share in a higher, or second order, world of meaning as linguistic beings. With the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, McCabe explains that an even higher world, or third order, of meaning has been instituted. Jesus brings a new form of human communication to the human world-of-meaning that can only be recognized by participation in that new mode.[83] Through Christ's resurrection, the meaning of the end of life changes because death becomes a "revolution" as the beginning of a new and unpredictable life. As a revolution, resurrection is a "radical change of those structures within which we exist at all."[84] Humans can now suffer death as it is understood in the second-order world-of-meaning, and yet be alive in a third-order world-of-meaning, because their identity exists with the Father in Christ, who has conquered death.[85] Jesus "offers a new way in which men can be together, a new way in which they can be free to be themselves, the way of total self-giving."[86] McCabe explains that this is not an offer of a blueprint for an ideal society, but an offer of Jesus himself as the source of a new kind of personal relationship for humans.[87]

Jesus' resurrection thus brings about a new kind of life in a new world of meaning for human beings in Christ. McCabe alludes to how this new life is in the church as the Body of Christ:

> In the risen Christ, however, the future exists and influences the present in a way comparable to the way the past does. Jesus Christ is himself the medium in which

[82] C.P. Ceroke, "Resurrection of Jesus," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, *Volume12* (Gale, 2002), 148.
[83] Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love, Language*, 130.
[84] *Ibid*., 133.
[85] *Ibid*., 134.
[86] *Ibid.*, 129.
[87] *Ibid.,* 130.

> men will in the future communicate, he is the body in which we shall all be interrelated members, "*la cellule premiere du cosmos nouveau*," he is the language in which we shall express ourselves to each other in accordance with the promise and summons of the Father. Now this language, this medium of expression, this body which belongs to the future is made really present for us in the church.[88]

McCabe is saying that in a way that is somehow similar to the future uniting of human beings with Christ (the *telos* of humanity for McCabe), humans are now also communicating as part of Christ's body in the church. *Lumen Gentium* makes this claim as well when it says that

> the Son of God, by overcoming death through His own death and resurrection, redeemed man and re-molded him into a new creation. By communicating His Spirit, Christ made His brothers, called together from all nations, mystically the components of His own Body.[89]

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus thus institutes a new way of sharing in a new kind of community, which is in the church as Christ's body.

The church thus exists not because people throughout history have decided to join it, but directly because Jesus launched a new world-of-meaning in which the church cannot die. F. X. Durrwell explains that "the resuscitating action of God that makes Christ communicable is thus creative of the Church. The latter is like the space in which Christ exists and lives; it is filled with Him, so much that it is identified with His risen humanity and is called the 'Body of Christ'."[90] Those baptized into this church are intimately connected to each other as Christ's body as they live together in this sacred space, supported by the Holy Spirit, sharing in a new world-of-meaning. The church as the Body

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[88] *Ibid.,* 141.

[89] See *Lumen Gentium*, 7, 8. These paragraphs further clarify how Jesus' death and resurrection mystically made humans Christ's body and how that body is none other than the church with Jesus as its head.

[90] F. X. Durrwell, "Resurrection of the Dead," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, *Volume 12* (Gale, 2002), 162.

of Christ is then the fundamental unit within which Christians come to live in a radically different way, "walking in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). As members of this body, enemies are reconciled and boundaries fade away (Ephesians 2:11-16). Furthermore, as the Body of Christ the Christian community has been and continues to be Christ's hands and feet on this earth. Teresa of Avila recognizes the significance of this existence in her well-known prayer:

> Christ has no body but yours,
> No hand, no feet on earth but yours,
> Yours are the eyes with which he looks
> Compassion on this world,
> Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
> Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
> Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
> Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
> Christ has no body now but yours,
> No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
> Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world.
> Christ has no body now on earth but yours.[91]

The Christian community extends Christ in this world as his body, helping Christ to do good and bless the world. This enables Christians to continue Christ's mission of renewing the world.

As a people seeking to be Christ's hands and feet, Christians are able to be, as Paul would say, "in Christ." Thus, the resurrection of Christ and the promise of the eventual bodily resurrection are not just about the future. This new life is already a present endeavor that enables the church to be as God envisions it. By living this new life, Christians are certain to encounter some difficulties because those operating in the second-order world-of-meaning cannot understand the revolution. However, it is only by "reaching beyond the values of the world" that Christians can live in the new mode of

[91] United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Issues and Action: Get Involved," http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/get-involved/

communication that Christ has provided through his resurrection.[92] When it comes to AD, the church certainly needs to reach beyond the values of the world, by which I mean the second-order world-of-meaning. The second chapter of this project looks extensively at what these values are and how the church can respond to them.

The world currently has a variety of ways it "deals" with AD. Some see AD as a kind of death and act accordingly. Others view AD as an inconvenience that threatens to cut into their personal time. Still others see AD as a personal problem and ignore it if they are not the ones afflicted. The resurrection of Christ and the promise of bodily resurrection call these responses into question. This Body of Christ includes many who have AD and will be made up of many more in the near future. This means that AD directly impacts Christ's body, which is a significant claim: "The unity of the Mystical Body produces and stimulates charity among the faithful: 'From this it follows that if one member suffers anything, all the members suffer with him, and if one member is honored, all the members together rejoice.'"[93] When the church as Christ's body fails to remember those with AD, the body suffers. As he lays out a "resurrection theology," Glenn Weaver argues that as the Body of Christ, the church's mission must include "doing all that it can to uphold the identities, the 'nephesh', of persons experiencing the ravages of Alzheimer's dementia."[94] The Holy Spirit already mysteriously does this in a sense by "keeping them in the life of Christ even when their experience seems very distant from God."[95] The church must also include those with AD in Christ's life as it both suffers and rejoices with them. Many perceive AD to be a direct attack on personal identity, as

[92] Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love,Language,* 153.
[93] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 791. See also 1 Cor. 12:26.
[94] Glenn D. Weaver, "Senile Dementia and a Resurrection Theology," *Theology Today* 42 (1986), 454.
[95] *Ibid.*, 453.

evidenced by statements about those with AD such as: "This isn't really Mom anymore" or "My father actually died years ago when this disease robbed him of his identity." These statements only make sense when identity is mistakenly thought to come from something other than the Body of Christ. As long as one remains a member of Christ's body, a disease like AD cannot destroy one's identity. Thus, it is a pressing duty of the church to be sure it attends to every member of its body. As the church does this, it fulfills the vision that "one's identity is established, redeemed, and maintained in the collective experience of a people living in covenant with their God."[96]

IV. As Christ's body, the church community reflects Christ's concern for those on the margins through its distinctive social ethic.

The claim that the church is the Body of Christ is both an ontological and political statement that affects the way Christians live. Christ's very being is relational with both the other members of the Trinity and the church. Jesus' existence as the church is not merely a metaphor, but a concrete reality stemming from the historical person of Jesus Christ (referred to by Paul as the head of the body) and the community that he called together, made possible through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the common life of the Christian community directly draws from the life of God in the person of Jesus, through the Holy Spirit. The body's ontology is "constituted by God's presence," which affects the politics of the body, meaning the ways in which the members live. In an effort to explore these politics, Joel Shuman identifies three "material attributes" of the common life of the

[96] *Ibid.*, 454.

church as the Body of Christ: "christoformity", unity and difference, and weakness as authority.[97]

"Christoformity" refers to the church's efforts to imitate and be shaped by Jesus' own ministry, a ministry that is "inescapably social and political."[98] Significant for this discussion of AD is the fact that this ministry is especially concerned with service amidst suffering and towards others experiencing suffering, even others who are not part of the Body of Christ. The basis for this ministry is Jesus' life and especially his suffering on the cross, which Shuman claims are morally normative for Christians. Jesus consistently attended to those who were suffering throughout his time on earth, especially those whom society had forgotten. For example, Jesus healed a woman who suffered from perpetual bleeding,[99] a condition that made her an outcast due to purity laws and social structures that privileged women who could provide children (Mt. 9:20-22). It is important to note that Jesus does not try to explain the existence of suffering, but also does not shy away from it. His own suffering on the cross as a "crucified slave" is a prime example of what Shuman calls suffering service:

> Just as Jesus' suffering was ultimately not to his benefit, but rather to the benefit of those to whom he was sent, so can our suffering and our sharing in the sufferings of others in the body be seen as to the benefit of those with whom we share our lives.

Because Christians are bound to each other in the Body of Christ, they recognize that like Jesus himself, the Body of Christ is not immune to suffering. However, as a

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[97] Joel Shuman, *The Body of Compassion* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), 97.
[98] *Ibid.*, 97.
[99] One theory posits that this perpetual bleeding was a menstrual bleeding disorder. See Brad Kallenberg, "Jesus and Cross Domain Transfer," in *Living by Design* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Press, forthcoming).

"Christoform" community, the church can function with a willingness to be present in the face of suffering, such as the suffering that AD brings to both patient and family.

The second attribute of the church's life as Christ's body is "unity and difference." This is a way of looking at the interdependence of those in the church that recognizes both the ontological unity of the Body of Christ and the ontological difference of the bodies within it.[100] The ontological unity means that division is damaging to the Body of Christ. The writings of Paul reveal a concentrated effort to combat divisions among the community, including those brought about by social structures. Paul asked those in the upper classes to surrender their privileges in order to preserve the unity of the body, a request that was quite radical in Paul's context and is still challenging today.[101] The privileges enjoyed by the able-bodied or mentally healthy certainly warrant attention due to the divisions they currently create. This concern about division is necessary for attending to the unity of Christ's body, but it does not overwhelm human individuality. Just as there is a fundamental diversity in the three persons of the Trinity, so too is there diversity within Christ's body. Paul directly addresses the existence of such diversity: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone." (1 Cor. 12:4-6). The Body of Christ is able to function through the diversity of its members, with some serving as the eyes, others as the feet, etc. (1 Cor. 12:20-21). John Zizioulas affirms that this diversity is an ontological claim, meaning that the differences between the various members are not optional roles but are

[100] *Ibid.*, 97.
[101] *Ibid.*, 106-7.

fundamentally constitutive of those members, oriented towards the overall good of the body.[102]

Significantly for those with AD, Paul indicates that the weaker members of the body are indispensable, that those accustomed to receiving little honor are "clothed with greater honor" (1 Cor. 12:22-23). This claim leads to Shuman's third material attribute of the Body of Christ, weakness as authority. Shuman explains that Paul is contrasting the Body of Christ with the prevailing worldview and its "conservative logic of concord" that was often used to try to hold together societies. Whereas the logic of concord sought to justify the existing hierarchies, Paul's account subverts those hierarchies for the common good of the body. Those accustomed to the bottom rungs of society have authority in the Body of Christ "in the way they teach—and in the ways they allow—the rest of the body to care for them and meet their particular needs. In that caring the true nature of the body is displayed."[103]

These three attributes provide the Body of Christ with a distinctive social ethic. Members of this body are responsible for each other and even for those outside the body. This requires significant use of practical moral reasoning as a community concerned with sticking to its mission as Christ's body. Yoder defines this practical moral reasoning as a process "by which people make particular choices which are illuminated by their general faith commitments, but which need to be worked out through detailed here-and-now thought processes."[104] Practical moral reasoning as a community thus allows the body to discern how to image Christ in response to changing times and social structures. A useful example of this can be seen in Basil's famine relief centers.

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[102] Cited in Joel Shuman, *The Body of Compassion,* 109.
[103] *Ibid*., 110.
[104] Cited in Joel Shuman, *The Body of Compassion*, 111.

i. Basil insisted that imitating Christ meant going outside of the comforts of the city to the poor and the lepers, whose place in society parallels that of those with AD.

Basil, one of the three 4th century "Cappadocian Fathers," served as the local priest in the town of Caesarea during a prolonged famine in the 370s. A small number of wealthy landowners had stockpiled grains while the poor faced starvation. Basil observed the dire situation of the poor and sympathized with those who were "circumstantially inverting the gospel passage, saying, 'the laborers are many and there is little harvest'."[105] He saw the farmers in his town as they:

> kneeling heavily in the fields and gripping their knees with their hands (this indeed is the outward appearance of those who lament), weep over their vain toil, looking toward their young children and crying, gazing at their lamenting wives and waling, stroking and, like a blind man, groping for their parched produce, wailing greatly like fathers losing their sons in the flower of manhood.[106]

Rather than succumbing to the overwhelming despair that had overtaken Caesarea, Basil chose to respond practically to the challenges of the famine. Using his substantial inheritance, Basil turned his family's country estate into an extensive hospice for the poor, which he called a *ptochotropheion*. This hospice provided a place where the poor could not only be fed and nurtured, but also offered them the chance to work the land or learn various trades. The hospice also offered the sick a place to receive medical treatment from legitimate doctors and nurses.[107]

Such was the positive impact of this hospice that Basil used it as the model for subsequent monasteries:

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[105] Basil, "In Time of Famine and Drought," in *The Hungry are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia*, by Susan R. Holman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 184.

[106] *Ibid*.

[107] Susan R. Holman, *The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 74.

> A group of monks would locate outside the walls of a large city and provide food, shelter, and medical treatment for the urban poor. Not only did Basil oversee the logistics of food acquisition and distribution, he himself could often be found ministering directly to those in need… Basil's *ptochotropheion* was large enough to create a mid-sized economy of its own, enabling the poor to first be trained and then actually to serve in various trades. The sheer scale of these complexes earned them the nickname 'Basil's Cities'.[108]

These 'cities' exemplify on an impressive scale what Shuman means when he speaks of "christoformity." Basil's cities were constructed outside of the major cities directly for those who are suffering. Recognizing that Christ's body includes those among the least of society, Basil designed his 'cities' to "welcome the lowest castes of the poor, destitute, crippled, sick and starving."[109] These 'cities' were so successful that those inside the city began to take note and government officials started to feel uncomfortable. In a letter addressed to Elias, a provincial governor, Basil defends his cities:

> But to whom do we do any harm by building a place of entertainment for strangers, both for those who are on a journey and for those who require medical treatment on account of sickness, and so establishing a means of giving these men the comfort they want, physicians, doctors, means of conveyance, and escort?[110]

Basil's tone betrays his dismay that the government and members of the large city are not more supportive of his cities. He proceeds to question the governor's unwillingness to address the problems of poverty and illness. Basil reminds the governor that as the ruler, the governor has the duty as well as the capability to "restore our ruins… turn wilderness into towns." Basil explains that he is thus serving as an associate of the governor and that he ought to be thanked rather than harassed![111]

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[108] Kallenberg, "Engineering as Vocation," in *Living by Design* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Press, forthcoming).
[109] *Ibid.*
[110] Basil, *Letter XCIV*, 180.
[111] Basil, *Letter XCIV*, 180.

The example of Basil's innovative cities shows concretely how a community living as the Body of Christ can live out its social mission. These cities required a diversity of members to allow them to function smoothly, ranging from cooks to nurses to trade specialists. These members not only served the poor and sick in their suffering, but also worked to reverse the existing hierarchies by training those people to be nurses, cooks, and skilled specialists as well. Despite their diversity, the members of these cities were also united in a common life. No one gained riches or power by living in Basil's cities; rather, many gave up the comforts of the large cities to be part of Basil's cities. Basil's relationship with Governor Elias also reveals something important about the social mission of the Body of Christ. Often, this mission is not well-received by the existing powers-that-be because it challenges the very presuppositions and structures that hold up those powers.

ii. Modern presuppositions and conditions have not been conducive to the social ethic of the Body of Christ.

I have endeavored to show throughout this chapter that the church needs to care about those with AD. Unfortunately, the very fact that I felt the need to make this claim indicates that things are not functioning quite as they should in society and especially in the Body of Christ. Thus, the next chapter will seek to expose the various presuppositions and social conditions that have made it necessary to make this argument in the first place. Some of these, such as excessive individualism, have already been introduced and discussed in part. Others, such as confusion about family or lack of virtue, will be new additions to the conversation. The exposure of these issues will allow for a constructive

account that details how the church is capable of responding to AD as a virtuous, remembering community.

CHAPTER 2

DUE TO THE UNIQUE PROMISE OF THE RESURRECTION AND THE CHURCH'S IDENTITY AS A SOCIAL ENTITY, THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY HAS EVERYTHING THAT IT NEEDS TO DEAL WITH AD AS A VIRTUOUS, REMEMBERING COMMUNITY

I. Hauerwas shifts the focus of ethics from analyses of individual decisions to discussions of character and community.

Stanley Hauerwas' approach to theological ethics is unique. His scholarship does not normally provide a clear stance on controversial ethical quandaries. This is largely a result of his conviction that the Christian moral life is "not solely the life of decision."[112] Rather, the moral life is predominantly about the challenges of everyday living as Christians and the formation of virtuous character within the believing community. The ways in which people live the moral life in these more mundane circumstances provide a firm basis for dealing with the more "sexy" moral dilemmas that might occasionally arise. Responses to these isolated quandaries are then more likely to be consistent with

[112] Stanley Hauerwas, "Situation Ethics, Moral Notions, and Moral Theology," in *Vision and Virtue* (Notre Dame, IN: Fides Publishers, 1974), 29.

the Christian life as Christians try to figure out "what sort of people ought we to be?"[113] The work that Christians do in advance of the eventual moral crisis is thus vitally important, for as a student of Hauerwas once explained to me, "If there's a robber in the house, it's a little too late to start lifting weights!"

Hauerwas' conception of the moral life is crucial to understanding his linguistic approach to ethics. Whereas authors like Keck often deliberately turn to secular language to appeal to a wider audience, Hauerwas uses unabashedly Christian terminology in his writings. He credits Wittgenstein for forcing him to realize that he could not ground his theology "in some general account of 'human experience,' for [Wittgenstein's] writings taught me that the object of the theologian's work was best located in terms of the grammar of the language used by believers."[114] Thus, Hauerwas uses explicitly Christian language to navigate ethical issues as he tries to shed light on what it means to be part of the believing community, the Body of Christ. In an analysis of Wittgenstein and Hauerwas, Kallenberg explains that Hauerwas' "appropriation of Wittgenstein" and "rich Christian convictions" are what enables Hauerwas to do ethics as he negotiates the former by means of the latter.[115]

Although it is difficult[116] to pin down Hauerwas' overall "position," narrative certainly emerges as a critical skill for connecting the various themes that arise from these "rich Christian convictions." However, Hauerwas cautions that he should not be

[113] This question appears in some fashion in numerous Hauerwas publications. For example, see Stanley Hauerwas, "Sex in Public: How Adventurous Christians Are Doing It," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 487 or Stanley Hauerwas, *Suffering Presence*, (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 185.

[114] Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom* (Notre Dame, IN: Univ of Notre Dame Pr, 1983), xxi.

[115] Brad J. Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar: Changing the Postmodern Subject* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Univ of Notre Dame Pr, 2001), 8.

[116] Perhaps 'futile' might better describe this task. Hauerwas himself does not want to claim any overall "position."

considered a narrative theologian. He argues that theology does not tell stories, but critically reflects on the particular, ongoing story of the church: "(theology) is a tradition embodied by a living community that reaches back into the past, is present, and looks to the future."[117] Thus, Hauerwas' theological ethics must constantly be understood in terms of the church and its witness to Jesus Christ.

II. A Hauerwasian approach to the role of the Body of Christ today has potential for thinking about AD because it is neither based on the distorting presuppositions about personhood within liberal society nor on dualism.

As Hauerwas discusses the church and its identity as a servant community, he challenges Christians to consider a simple question, "What is going on?" prior to asking "What should we do?"[118] Before we can think about solutions, it is important to establish not only the core issues, but also the broader context from which those issues are emerging. Thus, an ethical response to AD must begin with a look at the society that is struggling to handle AD.

i. In order to discuss the church's response to AD in modern society, the values and presuppositions of liberalism must be exposed.

This chapter will build on the basic claim that the church as the Body of Christ is not altogether compatible with liberalism. In order to make such an argument, I must first explain what I mean by the term "liberalism." Unfortunately, this is not a term that can be succinctly defined in a single sentence. Robert Song, in his book entitled *Christianity and Liberal Society*, argues convincingly that "liberalism" is best understood in terms of

[117] Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, xxv.
[118] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Servant Community: Christian Social Ethics," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 377.

family resemblances among its major proponents. Song provides five such family resemblences of liberal thought that can be traced to prominent liberal thinkers such as John Locke, Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill, L. T. Hobhouse, and F. A. Hayek. I will now briefly outline these five features in order to establish grounds for contrasting the church as the Body of Christ to modern liberal society.

A. The human agent's relationship to its ends and obligations as a distinguishable individual is self-determined.

Human agency is central to liberalism. The self is understood as a detached entity that only has relations due to personal choice or consent. The self can select its own ends and determine how it wants to live as a "sovereign chooser." Some see as binding only those obligations that arise between the self and his or her God. Since one's god is chosen, this view of ethics supports a pluralistic understanding of religion. Others understand obligations to be only those that are self-imposed, due to a belief that finding meaning in life is an individual task that requires no external support. Individual human agents can be distinguished from each other and from the whole through various criteria.[119] The upshot of this is an understanding of all social obligation as voluntary.

B. The moral autonomy of the individual is privileged.

Individual moral autonomy trumps any attempts to appeal to objective facts. Collective efforts to moderate human decision-making are seen as coercive and groundless. To be an "individual" is to be capable of choosing one's own way whether or not one is following rules imposed by others.

[119] Robert Song, *Christianity and Liberal Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, USA, 1997), 40-1.

C. The typical mode of thought is individualist, universalist, and abstracted from particulars.

The individualist strand within liberalism is seen in its support of religious choice and individual consent to political representation. It is also evident in efforts to explain the world by reducing wholes into parts. Universalism refers to the "broadening scope of the features of persons that it counts as morally irrelevant."[120] So long as one can be a sovereign chooser, such features do not matter. This means that many particularities such as race or class should not affect the rightness of moral decisions, only that such decisions made are freely chosen. Universalism also eliminates particularities of history and culture because it operates with an assumption that generalizations can be made for all times. Finally, the abstract way of thinking refers to the tendency to make universal claims based on temporary or limited conditions. Song's example is "attending only to the political rights of male heads of households."[121] Such an abstraction often results in skewed social structures or legal precedents.

D. Truth is discovered through reason and reason aids the individual in gaining advantages.

One way that liberalism views reason is as the "appropriate instrument for the discovery of truth and for the settlement of disputes."[122] As a result, tradition and revelation are generally opposed. Revelation is the language of conformity. Reason is understood as the way individuals figure out how to satisfy their passions or make free choices.

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[120] *Ibid*., 42.
[121] *Ibid*.
[122] *Ibid.*

E. Some conception of progress is essential to the philosophy of liberalism

All the major liberal thinkers have some understanding of progressive improvement because they want to believe all rational, sovereign choosers will choose the same things, allowing for a system of morality. A few, such as Nicolas de Condorcet, see progress as a gradual movement towards complete human perfection. The majority view progress as tending towards a more pluralistic utopia. This aligns with the emphases on individuals, since liberalism does not necessarily recognize a commonly held conception of human perfection.[123]

ii. The values of liberalism are not synonymous with the values of the Body of Christ.

The claim that liberalism and Christianity are at odds is one that is not self-evident in modern America. Song notes that "historically, liberalism has been significantly indebted to Christianity, and some version of the former is frequently thought to be automatically entailed by any reasonable version of the latter."[124] The fact that liberalism and Christianity have been intertwined throughout history in different capacities makes it sometimes difficult to draw clear distinctions between the two. The current pluralistic scene in America certainly contributes to this complicated relationship. However, I will argue that a strong critique of liberalism is crucial to allowing the church to be the Body of Christ. With the help of scholars such as Hauerwas and William Cavanaugh, I will

[123] *Ibid.*, 43.
[124] *Ibid.*, 2.

expose the incommensurability of liberalism as it pertains to the church's ability to be Christ's body.

A. Liberalism's privileging of the free, autonomous individual is incommensurable with the Christian belief that identity is primarily relational as a member of the Body of Christ.

The previous chapter tried to show the significance of the emergence of a new kind of life brought about by Jesus' resurrection and establishment of the church as his body. Although this new life does not eradicate individuality, it does locate it within the primary unity of the Body of Christ. The liberal focus on the individual as a sovereign chooser capable of forming its own unique identity is incommensurable with the relational way of life characteristic of Christ's body.

Hauerwas discusses the liberal conception of the individual in his book, *Resident Aliens*. Hauerwas reiterates what we have seen above, namely, that central to liberalism is the notion of autonomous persons who ought to be free to express their individuality. Thus, society exists as a "vast supermarket of desire" to meet the perceived needs of these individuals as they seek fulfillment. When clashes arise between these individuals, the appeal to rights and laws provides a putative method to resolve such disputes. Under this method, it is then possible for people to remain *strangers* to one another while they avoid making any sort of value judgment on their various "needs."[125] On the other hand, one of the main concerns of Jesus and consequently of the body of Christ is to turn strangers into friends.[126] Liberalism provides no incentive for people to engage in this process unless the individuals involved see the possibility of personal advantages.

[125] Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 32.
[126] See the example of St. Benezet the Bridge Maker in Kallenberg, "Jesus and Cross Domain Transfer"; see also Eph. 2:19, Heb. 13:2, Mat. 25:43.

John Coleman explains that the liberal society is necessarily "notoriously agnostic" as it avoids making judgments on the perceived needs of individuals, turning instead to "fair procedure, equal access, societal peace and consensus…"[127] This procedural approach arises from the assumption that a democratic system of government can compensate for a lack of common social origin and *telos*, or narrative. The key to sustaining the "melting pot" that is American society is a reliance not on a shared history, but on a political system whose very *process* is rooted in self-interest and consent. However, the problem with the system is that this form of government requires a *certain kind* of people to function. Hauerwas notes that John Adams once admitted that without virtuous, moral citizens the government would be woefully inadequate.[128] Unfortunately, it is evident that the U.S. is not full of citizens whose private morality and resulting public behavior live up to the standards expected by the founding fathers. Liberalism encourages people to seek their own interests, so long as they do not unfairly impinge on others in the process. Religion and morality were supposed to provide an additional constraint to the system, but have instead been relegated to a separate sphere altogether, subordinated to ideologies of tolerance and universality. The particularities of a religion like Christianity must then be de-emphasized to avoid conflict, reducing it to a barely recognizable shell that can be manipulated to support democracy or "reinforce the 'American way of life'."[129]

[127] John Coleman, "The Two Pedagogies: Discipleship and Citizenship," in *Education for Discipleship and Citizenship*, ed. Mary Boys (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1989) 41.

[128] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Church and Liberal Democracy: The Moral Limits of a Secular Polity," in *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame, IN: Univ of Notre Dame Pr, 1981), 78-9.

[129] Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 12-13.

Furthermore, the liberal understanding of individual freedom removes any sense of a common *telos*, or "common end to which desire is directed."[130] One of Hauerwas' former students, William Cavanaugh, argues that freedom has simply become the option for individuals to pursue whatever they want without interference or external coercion. Individuals thus choose their own ends, meaning that "social ends" simply refer to the times when individual ends happen to match, or the "coincidence of individual ends."[131] Without common ends to desires, individual freedom leads to power struggles between wills competing to satisfy their desires.[132] Those wills that are able to be more assertive, through individual endeavor or existing social structures, generally succeed at achieving their own ends, contributing to the vast disparity that exists in the free market today. This liberal conception of individual freedom can be referred to as "freedom from," which simply refers to the freedom from interference.

The idea of freedom as "freedom from" directly opposes the Christian notion of freedom, which can be called "freedom for." Freedom as "freedom for" can be traced back to Augustine, who defined freedom as a capacity to achieve certain worthwhile goals.[133] These goals only make sense with a common *telos*:

> All of these goals are taken up into the one overriding *telos* of human life, the return to God. Freedom is thus fully a function of God's grace working within us. Freedom is being wrapped up in the will of God, who is the condition of human freedom. Being is not autonomous; all being participates in God, the source of being.[134]

[130] William Cavanaugh, *Being Consumed* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 5.
[131] *Ibid*., 5.
[132] *Ibid*., 2.
[133] *Ibid*., *Being Consumed*, 8.
[134] *Ibid*.

This Christian understanding of freedom and being renders the liberal focus on individual autonomy unintelligible:

> Autonomy in the strict sense is simply impossible, for to be independent of others and independent of God is to be cut off from being, and thus to be nothing at all. To be left to our own devices, cut off from God, is to be lost in sin, which is the negation of being.[135]

For Christians, being is thus inherently relational. Because of Christ's resurrection, Christians have access to a new world of meaning and embark on a new way of life that subordinates individual desires and wills to the common good of the Body of Christ. When Christians function within Christ's body, they are able to recognize that not all desires are in fact worth satisfying. The overriding desire for Christians is simply the desire for God, for desire apart from God is nothing.[136]

B. Liberalism's focus on reason alienates those individuals whose cognitive capabilities are limited through disease or disability.

Liberal society is not hospitable to those with AD or disabilities that affect cognitive function. As Stephen Post points out, "clarity of mind and economic productivity determine the value of a human life" in what he deems our "hypercognitive society."[137] The firm preference for independent, rational, productive members of society leaves those who do not fit these categories on the fringes and elicits serious questions about the meaning and purpose of their lives. Liberalism is able to welcome differences such as race or gender because such differences do not limit the ability to be an individual, sovereign chooser. However, those with cognitive limitations do not fit into this class of

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[135] *Ibid*.
[136] *Ibid*., 13-14.
[137] Stephen Post, *The Moral Challenge of Alzheimer's Disease* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1995), 2-3.

independent monadic choosers and are thus considered defective. Liberalism holds paramount its ability to be a universal, welcoming system, but it clearly falls short of its own standards of inclusiveness when it comes to those with cognitive limitations. Recent formulations about personhood grounded in these liberal presuppositions have inevitably often been dismissive of these "outsiders."[138]

One response has been to try to defend the personhood of those suffering from cognitive disabilities using liberal terminology. A second response has been to re-emphasize Cartesian dualism in its various modern forms (e.g. Keck). However, Hauerwas chooses a radically different methodology that manages to avoid ceding both to the preconceived terms (e.g. personhood) of liberal society and to dualism. Hauerwas' approach is grounded in the conviction that the church is a particular community that cannot be subsumed under liberal categories. Such a claim needs some explaining since community can take vastly different forms. Hauerwas is talking specifically about community that is firmly rooted in the claims of the gospel and "not determined by the epistemology of liberal society."[139] Swinton explains that Hauerwas calls for a return to a "community of virtue and character that reveals in its life and actions a radically new vision of humanness and human living in community based on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ."[140] This virtue- and character-filled community is precisely the Body of Christ, engaged in the mission of imaging its head, Jesus Christ. As established in the previous chapter, those who are suffering from illness or disability are as vital to the Body of Christ as those in good health. The members of this Body are not

[138] See John Swinton, ed., "Introduction: Hauerwas on Disability," in *Critical Reflections On Stanley Hauerwas' Theology of Disability: Disabling Society, Enabling Theology*(Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Pastoral Press, 2004), 6.
[139] *Ibid*., 6.
[140] *Ibid*., 7.

constituted by their ability to function as independent monadic choosers, but simply by virtue of their participation in the new way of life in Christ.

Thus, Hauerwas often argues that Christians simply cannot passively accept the status quo when it comes to the liberal society in modern America. This is not to say that Christians ought to flee the country, but it does entail maintaining the ability to "be contentious within the democratic social order."[141] The modern presumption of the necessity of autonomy, especially with regards to moral issues, is incommensurable with the Christian vision. This vision clearly puts forth a way of life that stresses the importance of faithful and at times intrusive community rather than the modern conception of random collections of people seeking personal fulfillment while trying to stay out of each other's ways. While liberal society defines freedom in terms of rights and lack of interference, Christianity conversely views freedom in terms of the ability to fit into an ongoing narrative that features a distinctive morality.[142] Thus, the primary focus in this vision rests not on individual choice, fulfillment, or even salvation, but on the entire people of God as the church.[143]

[141] Stanley Hauerwas, "Christianity: It's an Adventure," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 525.
[142] *Ibid.,* 524-5.
[143] Stanley Hauerwas, "On Keeping Theological Ethics Theological," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 72-3.

C. A lack of clarity about the family in liberal society and in Christian circles currently limits the church's ability to respond to AD.

a. Both the excessive emphasis on and devaluation of the family are harmful for responding to AD

The modern family in the U.S. is a difficult entity to define. Many believe that the family is a critical unit that must be protected at almost any cost. Proponents of this include Christian groups like "Focus on the Family" and political organizations like the "Family Research Council." From this perspective, the family is an anchor that is necessary for a just and moral society. Some view the family as part of the social support system in this country. The role of the family is to somehow enable one to successfully make it to the point at which the individual can make autonomous decisions. Still others see the family as a convention of the past or even as an oppressive social construct.

The lack of a consensus concerning the role of the family in modern society is problematic for responding to AD. In some cases, family members bear the full weight of providing care for loved ones suffering from AD. This often involves physically moving in with the person with AD, especially as AD progresses to its later stages. Rarely can one maintain a full-time job and be the primary caregiver. The effects of the pressure of this responsibility appear in a variety of ways. Families often speak of the difficulty of maintaining friendships due to the time commitments and other realities of caregiving. A recent court case featured a battle between a son and his mother over custody of a family member because of intense disagreements about caregiving and potentially resorting to

euthanasia. Perhaps the most disturbing response is "granny dumping,"[144] a term describing people's desperate decisions to drop family members suffering from AD in public places with no form of identification, hoping that someone will care for the people with AD because they no longer feel capable.

Some exhibit little to no familial responsibility for those with AD. At best, they may help foot the bill for nursing homes or live-in caregivers while continuing to live in a rather uninterrupted fashion. In such cases, the family member with AD is seen as little more than a financial burden, certainly not worthy of any extended time commitment. This mentality is evident in common statements such as: "My mom really died years ago, this isn't her. Why should I spend my time with her when she will almost immediately forget I was there?"

I recognize that I have by no means exhausted the ways that families deal with AD. However, the range of responses presented above is certainly enough to support the claim that a serious problem exists. The various conceptions in the U.S. of the family and its resulting responsibilities make it extremely difficult to identify the "correct" familial response to AD. Rather than attempting to pick one of these responses, I now turn to Hauerwas' challenging analysis of the family and its place in the Christian story to explain why AD is so difficult for families and discuss why the church community is critical for finding some answers.

One would not hear Stanley Hauerwason a "Focus on the Family" program. He writes of his discomfort with modern attempts to romantically idealize the family. Family relationships are not magically able to deal with the "intense psychological and moral expectations" that many people hold. In fact, Hauerwas identifies these unreasonable

[144] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God,* 19.

expectations as perhaps the main impetus behind the proliferation of social industries devoted to both preserving the family and, in some cases, saving people from their families.[145] On the other hand, Hauerwas also dismisses the idea that family is something that people eventually leave behind in favor of personal autonomy. The fact that one is born into a particular family means that person is part of a unique story that includes that family, whether one likes it or not. Hauerwas thinks that very few, if any, have figured out the family in modern liberal society, leading him to suggest that the family is currently in a crisis. Family is certainly not an institution that is going to disappear entirely, so Hauerwas argues that the issue must be "what kind of family should exist and what moral presuppositions are necessary to form and sustain it."[146] He indicates that true family must be located within the Christian narrative and thus within the community.

b. The understanding that the church family precedes the nuclear family is critical for allowing the church to deal with AD.

Key to locating the family is the difficult realization that Christianity is not always in perfect harmony with perceived familial loyalties.[147] Jesus' teaching on discipleship points to this reality: "If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). Although the intricacies of this passage have been endlessly debated, I want to

[145] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Radical Hope in the Annunciation: Why Both Single and Married Christians Welcome Children," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 510.

[146] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Moral Value of the Family," in *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*, 156.

[147] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Radical Hope in the Annunciation: Why Both Single and Married Christians Welcome Children," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 511.

suggest that this passage contains a simple lesson that is critical for thinking about AD: our commitment to Christ, lived out as part of the Christian narrative in the church community, ought to be the firm basis for our lives. The Christian narrative is fairly clear that the church community as the Body of Christ is "more determinative than the biological family."[148] The bonds of friendship and community in Christ have the potential to be much more effective than the biological family's "interpersonal and psychological" bonds.[149] However, this is only possible when Christians embrace the gospel message that "allegiance to the kingdom of God precedes allegiance to the family."[150] The kingdom of God involves the creation of a new family of brothers and sisters that must be prior to the biological family. Of course, the primacy of this new family does not mean that Christians ought to abandon their biological families at random. Jesus' teachings often speak to the importance of honoring one's family, which leads Rodney Clapp to conclude that "Jesus did not expect biological family to be denied or eliminated. He did, however, decenter and relativize it."[151] Contrary to the various modern viewpoints discussed above, it is only possible to make sense of the nuclear family as secondary to the commitments of discipleship. This prioritization allows the church community to be the Body of Christ, which inherently seeks to care for all of its members, especially those at the perceived societal margins. This helps alleviate the pressures due to society's muddled understanding of family responsibility that biological families often face, especially in caring for those with severe or chronic illness.

[148] *Ibid*., 512.
[149] *Ibid.*, 510.
[150] Rodney Clapp, *Families at the Crossroads* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 77.
[151] *Ibid.,* 78.

The understanding that the church community precedes the nuclear family is critical for allowing the church to fully respond to AD. When Christians take seriously their membership in what Clapp refers to as the "first family," the challenges of AD affect everyone, regardless of blood relations. Those suffering from AD who have no blood relatives willing to care for them have a community of brothers and sisters on which to depend by virtue of their status as a member of the church. The strength of this community can also can offer individual families that have felt pressure to face AD on their own a respite from what can often seem an impossible task. In fact, as long as nuclear families feel the need to face AD alone, whether it is out of individualistic confidence, fear of intruding on others, unwillingness to give up full control, or other reasons, the church community will be limited in its role.

III. The Body of Christ is truly the first family that responds to the gospel call when it functions as a community of presence.

The church is a community that has the resources to be present to those faced with the challenges of AD. The very habits and tradition of the church exhibit the centrality of presence in the Christian narrative. The example of God's unfailing faithfulness throughout salvation history teaches Christians the importance of being present to one another despite weaknesses and failings. This not only involves the willingness to be with those in pain, but also the courage to expose one's own suffering to others. Hauerwas explains that this ability to offer presence is "no special or extraordinary activity, but a form of the Christian obligation to be present to one another in and out of pain."[152] The Christian community must not fall prey to the "religion of healthy-mindedness" that Keck

[152] Stanley Hauerwas, *Suffering Presence*, 80.

fears because presence amidst suffering is so crucial to the Christian narrative. Jesus continually made himself available to the afflicted, whether that suffering was of a physical or spiritual form. Jesus' persistent request during his final days on earth was simply that his disciples be present to him. For example, Jesus praised the woman in Bethany who anointed him with expensive oils for being present to him while he was still there (Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9). Similarly, rather than asking the disciples to help him escape his impending suffering, he merely asked them to stay with him while he prayed in the garden. Following Jesus' example, Christians throughout history have made a habit of being present to each other. Mother Theresa's ministry to those dying in the streets of Calcutta is a prime example of the power of this practice of presence. So, what does this centrality of presence mean for responding to AD as a church?

i. The practice of prayer provides the church with a powerful way to be present.

A. MacIntyre's definition of practice makes this claim intelligible.

Prayer is one of the oldest and most basic practices in the Christian tradition. What exactly does it mean to say that prayer is a practice? Alasdair MacIntyre defines practice as

> any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.[153]

[153] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 187.

In his article about MacIntrye, Craig Dykstra briefly refers to prayer as an example of how a practice is cooperative. He explains that as a practice of the church, prayer is cooperative even when people pray alone because people are doing so "as participants in the prayer of the church."[154] As in MacIntyre's own example of portrait painting, prayer is socially established because its full meaning can only be found in the "form that emerges through a complex tradition of interaction among many people sustained over a long period of time."[155] Without this form, it would be extremely difficult to identify prayer. This form connects the wide range of actions that people identify as prayer in an intelligible fashion. Although Dykstra's discussion of prayer ends here, prayer certainly satisfies the remaining components of this definition of practice. The Christian tradition attests to the fact that prayer includes internal goods that provide a certain standard of excellence. This means that in addition to the external benefits that many attribute to prayer such as miraculous healings or changes of heart (e.g. St. Monica's unceasing prayer for her son, Augustine), those who pray also become better simply through participation in the practice. These internal goods are not immediately evident to those unfamiliar with prayer, but become clear as people actually participate in prayer. Through prayer, Christians acknowledge their lack of complete control, allowing them to develop virtues such as patience, humility, et al. In an interview about the role of prayer, Hauerwas refers to its internal good: "If prayer has taught me anything, it has taught me how to wait… it has also taught me a sense of humor, that it all does not depend on

[154] Craig Dykstra, "Reconceiving Practice in Theological Inquiry and Education," in *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition*, ed. Nancy Murphy, Brad Kallenberg, and Mark Thiessen Nation (Notre Dame, IN: Univ. of Notre Dame Pr, 2003), 170.
[155] *Ibid*.

me."[156] Through the cultivation of virtues, the human power to achieve excellence is indeed systematically extended, solidifying the identification of prayer as practice.

B. Hauerwas' and Shuman's discussions of the relationship between prayer and medicine speak of the necessity of seeking God's presence through prayer.

When prayer is understood as practice in this manner, prayer can be a valuable resource for the church in its response to AD. The default response of modern society to illness is to turn to the doctors and medications in hopes of a cure. The obvious problem is that AD does not yet have a medical cure. Fortunately, Christians have the power of prayer. According to Hauerwas, prayer is not a blind appeal to an "unmovable or unsympathetic but all-powerful God," but is "the way we let God loose in the world."[157] Through prayer, God becomes present as God's people make themselves available to that powerful presence. God's presence is powerful because it challenges people to a new way of living while also providing hope. In the context of illness, prayer has played a central role in the Christian tradition. In Scripture, James 5:14-16 speaks of the power of prayer: "Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up…" The Christian tradition includes numerous liturgical rituals of healing based upon this text and others. Joel Shuman explains that these healing rituals are part of the family of "corporal works of mercy" that feature Christians providing care to those in need. He argues that these practices "suggest that there should exist no sharp discontinuity between divine healing

[156] "Stanley Hauerwas on Prayer," http://new-wineskins.org/blog/2010/04/hauerwas-on-prayer/
[157] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Servant Community: Christian Social Ethics," 384.

and medical healing."[158] Hauerwas offers further insight into this relationship when he argues that no matter how successful medical healing becomes, it will never be able to dismiss the necessity of prayer. Thus, even in the event that a widespread cure for AD becomes available, prayer will still have a powerful role to fill. Hauerwas aptly describes the reason for this:

> For prayer is not a supplement to the insufficiency of our medical knowledge and practice; nor is it some divine insurance policy that our medical skill will work; rather, our prayer is the means that we have to make God present whether our medical skill is successful or not. So understood, the issue is not whether medical care and prayer are antithetical, but how medical care can ever be sustained without the necessity of continued prayer.[159]

Hauerwas' view of this complex relationship privileges prayer as central to being present to the ill. Thus, the lack of a medical cure for AD does not mean the church community should give up hope. Through the time-honored practice of prayer, the church can open space for God's powerful presence amidst those struggling with AD.

C. Prayer as a practice connects Christians to each other and to the saints (saints as a more general term including those still among us).

The formation and strengthening of meaningful relationships is another way that prayer as practice impacts the church community as it seeks God's presence. MacIntyre writes that one's entrance into any practice necessarily involves relationships with others currently involved in that practice. As the church community learns to remember those with AD in its prayers, relationships between its members inevitably change and grow. In order to effectively pray for a man with AD, people have to actually take the time to learn something about that man and his specific circumstances. They also have to figure out a

[158] Joel Shuman, *The Body of Compassion*, 152-3.
[159] Stanley Hauerwas, *Salvation and Health*, 81.

way to cogently talk to God about the realities of the disease and the life of the one suffering from it. As Christians learn how to pray, which for Hauerwas involves discovering how to speak in a Christian manner, they build the skills and relationships necessary to sustain Christ's Body.[160]

Intriguingly, MacIntyre not only refers to these current relationships, but also to the formation of relationships with "those who have preceded us in the practice, particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point."[161] In the Christian context of prayer, this points to those who have been enabling God's presence to break into the world throughout history, the saints. Although the term "saints" is one that has numerous meanings amongst Christians, I will now consider two such understandings of saints that have relevance for AD.

First, saints are often identified simply as exemplary Christians, both deceased and still living. Hauerwas argues that the only way the church can learn to be faithful is through "apprenticeship to a master." As Christians familiarize themselves with the stories of various saints through reading and prayerful reflection, they gain valuable access to countless "masters" capable of providing direction. These saints provide concrete examples of what openness to God's presence means for the moral life.[162] In some cases, the lives of these saints directly speak to the struggles many encounter at the end of life. For example, the story of Eleazar, an Israelite in his ninetieth year of life, provides an inspiring account of facing suffering and death with dignity. During the harsh persecutions of Antiochus, Eleazar was offered the option to eat pork in front of a crowd

[160] See Brad Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar*, 220.
[161] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 194.
[162] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Gesture of a Truthful Story," in *Critical Reflections On Stanley Hauerwas' Theology of Disability: Disabling Society, Enabling Theology*, 74.

(forbidden by Lev. 11:7-8) or face torture and death. The men in charge offered Eleazar a loophole, telling him he could bring a different type of meat and fake that he was eating pork. However, Eleazar refused:

> "'Such pretense is not worthy of our time of life,' he said, 'for many of the young might suppose that Eleazar in his ninetieth year had gone over to an alien religion, and through my pretense, for the sake of living a brief moment longer, they would be led astray because of me, while I defile and disgrace my old age. Even if for the present I would avoid the punishment of mortals, yet whether I live or die I will not escape the hands of the Almighty. Therefore, by bravely giving up my life now, I will show myself worthy of my old age and leave to the young a noble example of how to die a good death willingly and nobly for the revered and holy laws" (2 Mac. 6:24-28).

Eleazar's suffering and death then served as a great example to the rest of the Israelites, young and old, as they faced suffering and death in their own ways.

Prayer's ability to connect Christians to saints is also important because sometimes those currently living with AD are themselves quite saintly. These saints have much to teach the rest of the Christian community when given the chance. Often, long-term memories are the last to fade for those with AD. Thus, important stories of facing the Great Depression, various wars, or just daily joys and trials are often waiting to be told.[163] Even in cases where recollections of the past are essentially non-existent, Christians can learn invaluable faith lessons from being present as a person struggles to face their AD virtuously.

Therese Lysaught provides a useful account of a second understanding of saints. She explains that the "communion of saints" is an ecclesiological concept that refers to the

[163] Patricia Long's program "Discover the Person Within" is a fitting example. As the Director of Nurses at Elant at Fishkill Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center in NY, Long has created a program designed to research the stories of the various residents. These stories are then relayed to the community and family members. The program has received several awards and has been adopted by numerous other facilities. For more details, see http://lb2.ec2.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/maturehealth/director_spring2011/index.php?startid=20

Christian community as a whole. Since God is graciously present in the church, God makes his people holy from the moment of their baptism through the gift of the Spirit. As part of the community, all involved participate in God's holy presence, making them worthy of being called *hagioi* (the Greek word Paul uses in the New Testament to describe the saintly community).[164] Drawing upon the work of Elizabeth Johnson, Lysaught argues that this communion of saints binds Christians together across all sorts of boundaries. She specifically mentions geographical boundaries and the division between the living and the dead as incapable of breaking this bond. It logically follows that the barrier between those with AD and the rest of the community that so often exists today is one that can be overcome by the communion of saints. Such a task points to the Eucharist as crucial to achieving this unity:

> In partaking in the Body of Christ, all are given a foretaste of eternal life in Christ and are united with Christ, with each other, and with all the faithful, living and dead: "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17).[165]

Thus, the Eucharist unifies the church as the Body of Christ across all sorts of boundaries. Lysaught also relates the communion of saints and the Eucharist to prayer, stating that "through prayer we come into each other's presence in an active, embodied way, speaking concretely, going out of ourselves toward the other in a way that is creative, healing, life-giving, and salvific."[166] Not only is this a practice that is critical for those in the communion of saints that are still living, but it is also a practice that may

[164] Therese Lysaught, "Memory, Funerals, and the Communion of Saints: Growing Old and Practices of Remembering," in *Growing Old in Christ*, ed. Stanley Hauerwas et al. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 287.
[165] *Ibid.*, 288, referring to section 143 of the *Order of Christian Funerals*.
[166] *Ibid*.

very well continue after death.[167] "Immersed in the joyous presence of God," the deceased are able to act as caregivers as they remember the living in prayer.[168] This is possible because, as Scott Hahn aptly states, "the members of the Church are siblings in a close-knit family" which is "extended through time and space."[169] Prayer is the primary way that members of this family can care for each other across the countless boundaries that might arise.

Keck offers one final way that the practice of prayer can help the church respond to AD. He explains that one of the basic aspects of prayer is the assumption of a position of one in need of God's presence. Thus, the Christian in prayer is not unlike a patient dependent on her caregivers. Referring to his own experience of prayer, Keck highlights how his "words and actions often make little sense to God… the inadequacy of our words becomes plain, and we see our stammering—and perhaps even our suffering—in a new light."[170] In this fashion, prayer reminds Christians of their dependency on others and on God, closing the gap between themselves and those with AD. As prayer allows people to begin to understand themselves as patients, it also encourages them to see God in others, including those with AD. Keck ties this to Jesus' solidarity with the sick in Matthew 25:36: "[I was] ill and you cared for me."[171]

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[167] For those Christians who believe in the intercession of saints, this is not a radical claim. As a Catholic, this is my personal stance as well so I am including it here. However, I do not envision it as critical to my argument, so I hope it will not be a major stumbling block to those who do not recognize the intercession of saints.

[168] Therese Lysaught, "Memory, Funerals, and the Communion of Saints: Growing Old and Practices of Remembering," 288-90.

[169] Scott Hahn, *First Comes Love* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 118.

[170] David Keck, *Forgetting Whose We Are: Alzheimer's Disease and the Love of God*, 33.

[171] *Ibid*.

ii. It serves the Body of Christ well to include those with AD in the Eucharist, the Christian community's central act of presence, whenever possible.

Hopefully it is clear now that AD is not merely a biological issue that can be left to the nurses and doctors. It is a disease that is begging the church community to respond first and foremost with its deeply ingrained habits of presence. Along with prayer, another of these habits is participation in the Eucharist, which is the central act of the Christian community. As Therese Lysaught explains, through the Eucharist we remember "God's great act of remembering which confers our identity… [the Eucharist] is not simply recall of a past event but is instead *anamnetic*."[172] *Anamnesis* refers to a special way of remembering that brings the events of the past to the present and gives them an active role.[173] As an anamnetic practice, the Eucharist boldly points to Jesus' continued presence among his people. This presence is not a passive presence, but a presence that spurs Christians to further conversion and action. This rich understanding of remembrance lines up well with Keck's emphasis on memory as *zkr* having *duree*. Through the Eucharist, the salvific events of the past are allowed to impinge on the present, transforming the lives of those involved. Thus, the Eucharist is capable of morally forming Christians. It provides Christians with a definitive practice that when performed "informs and educates Christians in their performance of all other actions."[174] The Eucharist persistently calls Christians to worship and imitate Jesus as a visible community, as the Body of Christ.

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[172] Therese Lysaught, "Memory, Funerals, and the Communion of Saints," 281.

[173] *Ibid*., 281. She forms her understanding of anamnesis from Elizabeth Johnson's *Friends of God and Prophets: A Feminist Theological Reading of the Communion of Saints*.

[174] Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, "The Gift of the church and the Gifts God Gives It," in *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 20.

An understanding of the Eucharist as an anamnetic and morally formative practice has several implications for responding to AD as a church. First, it calls the church to do everything possible to include its members in the practice of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is a gift that is clearly not restricted to those capable of coming to it on their own with full comprehension of the intricacies of the sacrament. For example, second graders receiving their first communion rarely, if ever, show up to the service alone; they are supported and encouraged by various family members, teachers, classmates, etc. Although they possess some basic understanding of the purpose of the Eucharist, it would be difficult to argue that the depth of their appreciation compares to that of older Christians well-versed in the practice. This is not an attempt to judge their faith commitment, but simply an observation that faith looks different at the various stages of life. In a similar manner, those suffering from AD may find it increasingly difficult to make their way to the celebration of the Eucharist on their own. As the Body of Christ, the church simply cannot allow these people to slip through the cracks. Just as the community rallies around its youth as they come to their first Eucharist, so too must the church support those at the other end of life.

One solution is to physically take the Eucharist to the people with AD, which may prove to be the only recourse in extreme cases. However, I want to argue that whenever possible, it is good for the church community to help bring those with AD to the same Eucharistic celebration that the rest of the community attends. In doing so, both those with AD and the rest of the community can grow in their Christian faith. The church community receives the benefit of increased interaction with those who have long embodied the Christian tradition, allowing opportunity for the sharing of stories and

acquired wisdom. Those with AD can continue to experience the transformative presence of Jesus, even though the perceived effects may be significantly different because of the disease. It seems incredibly dangerous to assume that AD, even in its latest stages, can prevent one from experiencing Jesus in the Eucharist. As noted above, the Christian narrative attests to God's continued remembering of his people, even when those people turned their backs on God.

Of course, the process of including those suffering with AD in the Eucharistic celebration is not always a glamorous one. Whereas a second-grader's mid-service antics are normally greeted by a smile or light reprimand, such responses to the uncontrollable bowel movement of a person suffering from late-stage AD hardly seem appropriate. The inclusion of people with AD, especially late-stage, certainly challenges comfort levels and disrupts what Christians have come to expect from their church services. However, the call to be a unified, visible church does not come with qualifiers about who should be seen. The common expectation that a church service should be free of discomfort or distraction is nothing but an offshoot of liberal society's obsession with protecting the individual. The prevalence of cry rooms is a glaring example of this mentality. Jesus' admonishment of his disciples for their attempts to prevent the children from coming to him offers a clear challenge to the current status quo (Matthew 19:14). The simple truth is that Christianity is intrusive and often uncomfortable for those who take it seriously. Jesus may have been talking about young children when he said, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these," (Matthew 19:14) but is it really that much of a stretch to substitute those with AD into this passage? Enabling those with AD to continue to come to Jesus at the Eucharist ought

to be a pressing goal for the church, especially as the incidence of AD continues to rise with the movement of the baby boomers into their seventies.

Although I am arguing that inclusion of those with AD in the Eucharistic celebration ought to be a priority, I do recognize that certain circumstances present further challenges. For example, a woman in the latter stages of AD who consistently made the Eucharist a priority throughout her life may no longer have the capacity to indicate whether she wants to continue to do so. In an even more extreme case, she may even protest participating in the Eucharist. Such cases clearly require careful prayer and deliberation by the church community, especially those responsible for distributing the Eucharist. Recent controversies in both Catholic and Lutheran contexts surrounding ministers' refusal to administer the Eucharist to those suffering from AD highlight the importance of taking this matter seriously. According to the Code of Canon Law for the Catholic Church, "The Christian faithful have the right to receive assistance from the sacred pastors out of the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the word of God and the sacraments" (Can. 214). Such a statement supports an inclusive understanding of the Eucharist, especially in light of further canons that express a reluctance to refuse the Eucharist to members of the church.[175] In his response to a minister's refusal to serve the Eucharist to a woman with AD, canon lawyer Edward Peters explains that it is not the individual's personal understanding of the Eucharist that makes it the central gift, but "the fact that it is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ. That reality is not in the slightest dependent on anyone's 'understanding' of so great a mystery."[176] Although it is possible to refuse the Eucharist to someone if there is sufficient canonical cause, Peters

[175] See canons 843, 912.

[176] Edward Peters, "Alzheimer's, the Eucharist, and The God Squad," http://www.canonlaw.info/2007/03/alzheimers-eucharist-and-god-squad.html

sees such cause as difficult to prove and thus advocates that the benefit of the doubt be given to those with AD.

From the Catholic perspective, there may be a certain point at which a person with AD can no longer receive the Eucharist. The official requirements state that the person must be able to "distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food, even if this recognition is evidenced through manner, gesture, or reverential silence rather than verbally."[177] The process for determining the fulfillment of these requirements is not to be taken lightly, but should include consultation with "parents, those who take the place of parents, diocesan personnel involved with disability issues, psychologists, religious educators, and other experts" due to the gravity of the matter.[178] As Hauerwas points out, ethical decisions are complicated because just as one can never experience another's suffering in the same way that the other does, one also cannot know the way another experiences a disability.[179] By reasonable extension, one cannot fully fathom another's experience of AD, especially with regards to the Eucharist. Thus, the Catholic stance that "cases of doubt should be resolved in favor of the right of the baptized person to receive the sacrament" certainly pertains to cases involving AD.[180]

[177] See the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*, ¶20. http://www.ncpd.org/views-news-policy/policy/church/bishops/sacraments

[178] *Ibid*.

[179] See Stanley Hauerwas, "Timeful Friends: Living with the Handicapped" and "Salvation and Health: Why Medicine Needs the Church."

[180] See the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*, ¶20.

iii. As a remembering community, memory as presence is a vital task for the church community

Hauerwas argues that the first social task of Christians is to be a community and a people capable of remembering.[181] As a remembering community, the church is capable of "nourishing its life by the memory of God's presence in Jesus Christ."[182] Having argued in the previous chapter that memory is primarily communal, I now return to memory and how it can function today in a church community that values presence. Remembering is inherently a practice of presence, as it brings an awareness of past and future to the present. The Body of Christ remembers not only by recalling God's faithfulness to God's people in the past through the Incarnation, Resurrection, Pentecost, etc., but also by witnessing to God's future promises to bring his Kingdom fully to fruition. Memory serves to make people aware not just of such events but of the character that produces or characterizes those events, challenging people to either renounce or accept that character in the present moment.[183] In doing so, memory concretely impacts the way of life characteristic of the Body of Christ.

Chris Huebner suggests that the Body of Christ is thus capable not only of being materially present but also *memorially* present. His term "embodied memory" offers a way of talking about memory as inherently linked to the concrete habits and practices of the church. Embodied memory is thus a communal skill rather than an individual mental process. The "memorial agency" rests not with the individual but with the whole

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[181] Stanley Hauerwas, "Remembering as a Moral Task: The Challenge of the Holocaust," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 341.

[182] *Ibid*.

[183] Stanley Hauerwas, "Memory, Community, and the Reasons for Living: Reflections on Suicide and Euthenasia," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 584.

church.[184] Thus, in cases like AD in which individual memory falters, the church community is able to do the remembering for those who can no longer do so themselves. Those with advanced AD may not always be able to recall that they are part of Christ's body, but the church as a whole can remember this vital fact for them. When memory is understood in this way, it is not an individual quality that one must exhibit in order to be fully human. Instead, memory is a skill of the entire community as it carries on that community's traditions and practices. Certain practices of the church are especially important for communal memory, such as the Eucharist and funeral rites.

The Eucharist has already been identified as an anamnetic practice, making it a prime example of the church's embodied memory. The Eucharist enables the church to remember truthfully the passion and resurrection of Jesus as Jesus shows up in a unique way. The memory that occurs through the Eucharist is "not the ability to answer questions but *the openness to having our lives (trans)formed by what we attend to*."[185] Through these resulting transformations in the lives of the members of Christ's body, the church becomes "eucharistically disciplined." The shared embodied memory of the church thus constitutes its identity and provides it with a distinctive character.[186] In addition to the Eucharist, another way that the church is formed as a remembering community is through its funeral rites.

Almost every culture throughout history has featured some sort of funerary custom, so it is no surprise that Christians participate in funeral rites. However, Christian funeral rites are special in the ways that they train the memory of the Body of Christ. Therese

[184] Chris Huebner, "Embodied Memory: Memory, Alzheimer's, and Theological Ethics by Way of Two Mennonite Grandmothers" (lecture, Duke University Divinity School, November 21, 1996), 7-8.
[185] Merold Westphal, "Lest We Forget," *Perspectives* (February 1996): 11.
[186] Chris Huebner, "Embodied Memory: Memory, Alzheimer's, and Theological Ethics by Way of Two Mennonite Grandmothers," 9.

Lysaught argues that funerals teach Christians to remember those whose lives have "changed but not ended."[187] Although this is primarily a reference to those who have suffered physical death, it also points to those who are suffering from diseases like AD that bring about significant changes to their lives. Funeral rites not only rejoice in the fact that the dead are still alive, but "remind us that what is determinative for our identity is not that we are selves but that we are saints."[188] When Lysaught refers to saints here, she is not speaking narrowly about paragons of moral perfection. She is talking about the fact that the "Spirit of Life who raised Jesus from the dead has been poured out on them and has transformed them into the very image of Christ. It means that God remains present and active with them, among us, in a vital and vigorous way."[189] This simple claim leads to a specific way of viewing those who have AD. Part of this is the recognition that those with AD are still disciples in their own right. The form of their discipleship will certainly change and develop with the shifting effects of AD, but this is no excuse to dismiss these people as passive recipients of ministry. One way that the church can encourage those with AD to persist as disciples is through the forging of relationships between generations. Lysaught points out that the elderly are often able to minister to others because they have already experienced the paths that younger members of the community are starting to travel.[190]

However, this view of those with AD as saints also accounts for the fact that the realities of the disease mean that those with AD are in need of ministry. Funeral rites encourage Christians to remember in an active, concrete manner those who are

[187] Therese Lysaught, "Memory, Funerals, and the Communion of Saints," 283.
[188] *Ibid*.
[189] *Ibid*.
[190] *Ibid*.

marginalized. Remembering those with AD can simply involve visitation, or it can take the form of more intense practices. Just as the *Order of Christian Funerals* prescribes concrete practices of care from the church for those mourning the deaths of loved ones, so too can it be thought of as supporting the remembrance of the elderly.[191] As a remembering community, the whole church is tasked with attending concretely to its weakest members. Lysaught concludes that the church needs to concretely address the fear and grief that often accompanies old age and AD in a similar way to the Christian funeral's attention to the grief that accompanies death.[192] One example of a way this could occur is through renewed efforts to include those with AD in the life-giving sacraments of the church.

IV. The development of virtue among the Christian community is critical for creating a community that takes the challenges of AD seriously.

Virtue has surfaced in a number of ways throughout this argument (e.g. presence is itself considered a virtue) and it is now time to address it explicitly. MacIntyre's rich definition of virtue provides the basis for this section:

> The virtues find their point and purpose not only in sustaining those relationships necessary if the variety of goods internal to practices are to be achieved and not only in sustaining the form of an individual life in which that individual may seek out his or her good as the good of his or her whole life, but also in sustaining those traditions which provide the practices and individual lives with their necessary historical context.[193]

I have argued above that the church has the capability to respond to AD as the Body of Christ with its unique practices. The goal of this section then is to enumerate the specific

[191] *Ibid,* 295.
[192] *Ibid*, 298.
[193] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 223.

virtues necessary to continually form the church into a community capable of sustaining these practices. These virtues enable members of the church to better live out their new lives in Christ. The church as a whole gains a better understanding of the good life in terms of its *telos*, which is essentially to show people how to live in a way that fits with God's will for humanity.[194]

A discussion of virtue is made difficult by the diverse accounts of the virtues both throughout history and within various cultures today. Although the names of certain virtues such as justice or courage may be rather widespread, the actual meanings intended by these terms often vary significantly. This points to a significant claim about virtue; namely, virtue is not a purely objective category but is historically and communally dependent. This ambiguity can be problematic because people often live at the intersections of several influential communities, each with their own history and understanding of virtue.[195] However, Christians have a standard with which to view these competing meanings of virtue. The fundamentally new way of living and seeing the world that Jesus' resurrection instituted and the Holy Spirit sustains carries with it specific virtues. These virtues are critical to supporting the Body of Christ as it learns how to deal with AD. The three virtues that I will now discuss in light of AD are charity, patience, and memory.

[194] See Nancy Murphy, "Using MacIntyre's Method in Christian Ethics," in *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition*, 32.

[195] See Stanley Hauerwas, "The Virtues and Our Communities: Human Nature as History," in *A Community of Character*, 125-7.

i. Charity, as the form of the virtues, is the most important virtue for the church in its response to AD.

The virtue of charity is crucial to forming the church into a community that can respond well to AD. As one of the three traditional theological virtues (along with faith and hope), charity maintains a special place in the Christianity. Aquinas identifies charity as "the friendship of man for God."[196] When he uses the term friendship, Aquinas is speaking of a specific type of friendship described by Aristotle as "friendship based on goodness."[197] Friendship based on goodness is the highest type of friendship (lower forms include friendship based on common causes and friendship based on pleasure) as each friend desires the true happiness of the other. This means not only seeing the good in the other, but actually seeking the good for the other. Charity can thus be understood as friendship because it involves "resting in, enjoying, God as supremely good, much as we would appreciate and enjoy a true friend."[198] God has made this possible by extending the invitation of friendship to humanity, especially through the person of Jesus.[199] Charity is thus the most excellent of the virtues because it enables people to attain God in order to rest in God, which can be considered the *telos* of human existence.[200]

Friendship with God necessitates friendship with others. Aquinas explains that friendship does not stay between the two friends:

> For his sake he loves all belonging to him, be they children, servants, or connected with him in any way. Indeed so much do we love our friends, that for their sake we love all who belong to them, even if they hurt or hate us; so that, in this way, the friendship of charity extends even to our enemies, whom we love out

[196] Aquinas, *Summa*, II, 23, i.
[197] William Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 293.
[198] *Ibid*.
[199] See especially John 15:14-15.
[200] Aquinas, *Summa*, II, 23, vi.

> of charity in relation to God, to Whom the friendship of charity is chiefly directed.[201]

As a result of friendship with God, Christians are tasked with loving anyone who belongs to God. Incidentally, those who are easy to love are not the only people who belong to God. The outspoken members of one's local parish belong to God in the same way that the homeless beggars outside one's downtown office building belong to God. The relatively healthy older woman who babysits one's kids belongs to God in the same way that the man stricken with AD who lives on one's block belongs to God. In fact, the conclusion of Aquinas' statement makes it clear that it is those whom it is difficult to love that charity is "chiefly directed."

A church that values charity takes seriously the implications of friendship with God. So what does it mean for the Body of Christ to be charitable in light of AD? First, charity enables members of Christ's body to discover a proper conception of selfhood. Paul Wadell writes that charity is "the love that demands ourself, but it is also the love which promises a self. In friendship with God we give ourself away, we surrender to the Spirit, and in that surrender our most exquisite individuality is secured, for we become what God in perfect love has always wanted us to be."[202] Selfish ambitions have no place in the Body of Christ, as friendship with God requires Christians to set such ambitions aside to allow room for loving God and others. This certainly speaks to the challenge of providing care for those with AD. Although caregiving is certainly not always a one-way street, it almost always requires some personal sacrifice. Although overcoming

[201] Aquinas, *Summa*, II, 23, i, ad. 2.

[202] Paul Wadell, *Friendship and the Moral Life* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 121.

selfishness is often a difficult process, Wadell's words point to the transformative nature of charity as it provides this "most exquisite individuality."

A renewed emphasis on charity also inevitably points the church to liturgy. When understood narrowly as what occurs when Christians gather to worship, the liturgy clearly strives to overcome self-absorption. Shuman points out that the liturgy is "replete with words and gestures that move us beyond ourselves toward God and one another: the greeting… the peace… and especially the Eucharist, with all its rich language about the oneness of the body."[203] All of these liturgical acts clearly seek to foster the bonds of Aristotle's highest level of friendship within the Body of Christ, as they all "involve our being together not simply with but also for one another."[204] This inevitably leads to the more broad understanding of liturgy as both worship and the resulting life of the Christian community. The bonds liturgical acts create are bonds that support the friendships of Christians with God, each other, and even their enemies. The importance of liturgy once again calls the church to evaluate the ways it can include those with AD in its liturgy (both narrowly and broadly conceived).

The discussion to this point has explored the importance of charity as a specific virtue. Aquinas makes a further claim about the virtue of charity: "No true virtue is possible without charity."[205] As the "form of the virtues," charity directs all virtuous acts to the *telos* of human existence, which is union with God.[206] Charity makes it possible for all the other virtues to bring people closer to God, giving those virtues their full meaning. Aquinas explains that charity provides the other virtues "sustenance and nourishment" as

[203] Joel Shuman, *The Body of Compassion*, 125.
[204] *Ibid*., 125-6.
[205] Aquinas, *Summa*, II, 23, vii.
[206] William Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues,* 302.

it directs them to their true end, union with God.[207] With this in mind, I now turn to another virtue that is crucial for the church's response to AD, patience.

ii. As the church develops the virtue of patience, it learns how to wait attentively, purposefully, and without complaint in response to AD.

Modern society, especially in the U.S., simply does not value the virtue of patience. In a society fixated on instant gratification and unbounded progress, patience is viewed as a hindrance or a weakness. Those who take time to make decisions and those who are not quite as concerned with purchasing the newest products are characterized as abnormal and out-of-touch.[208] Modern society caters to those who cannot stand to wait, from instant coffee to fast food to one-click online shopping with priority shipping. Businesses have created ways to eliminate the dreaded waiting lists and waiting rooms. For example, a cell phone application now allows Great Clips customers to check-in remotely prior to a haircut, ensuring that a stylist will be waiting for them within moments of walking in the doors. Restaurants often provide electronic buzzers that allow patrons to use their waiting period to shop at nearby stores instead of simply talking to each other while waiting for a table. Modern society essentially does whatever it can to remove the need for people to patiently wait for things.

This aversion to patience is especially striking when it comes to the human body. The moment the body begins to falter in some fashion, frustration and anger arise. The expectation is that a quick fix must exist, especially if one's finances are of little issue.

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[207] Aquinas, *Summa*, II, 23, viii, ad. 2.

[208] The cell phone industry offers a clear example. Recent AT&T advertisements focus on the respective download speeds of the newest phones and networks. These advertisements often feature a group of people in a certain social situation who have each received a pertinent downloadable message. Those who have the latest model or network download the message in time to save them from some form of social embarrassment, while those with the outdated models suffer in some fashion. These download speeds realistically differ by just a few seconds at most.

Hauerwas compares the modern attitude about the body to how people think about their automobiles: "they [bodies] are to serve as we direct without calling attention to themselves (although we may use them to call attention to us). If they do call for our attention, we are quick to anger, with both our bodies and cars, and with those whose job it is to repair them."[209] The irony of the connection between the terms 'patience' and 'patients' is not lost on Hauerwas, who points out that patients are often some of the most impatient people in modern society. I will show in this section that it is good for the church as Christ's body to cultivate the virtue of patience both for caregivers and those receiving the care.

In order to make such a claim, it is necessary to first explain precisely what it means to say that patience is a virtue. MacIntyre identifies patience as "the virtue of waiting attentively without complaint, but not of waiting thus for anything at all."[210] Although this definition appears at first to be rather cursory, an analysis of its parts will reveal its depth.

First, patience involves "waiting attentively." I have already pointed out that modern society is oriented towards minimizing the need to wait. In the rare times that people are forced to wait, they generally find ways to distract themselves. For example, doctors' waiting rooms inevitably feature a collection of generally outdated magazine issues and children's toys to attempt to amuse parents and kids alike. A glance at those sitting in traffic or standing in lines reveals a majority fidgeting with their phones. These simple examples highlight the opposite of "waiting attentively." As the parent in the waiting room mindlessly thumbs through an issue of Sports Illustrated to pass the time, that

[209] Stanley Hauerwas, "Practicing Patience: How Christians Should Be Sick," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 349.
[210] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 202.

parent's sick child wanders around free to swap germs with other children in the room. While the driver stuck in slow-moving traffic fidgets with his phone, the vehicle in front of him stops suddenly and a collision ensues. Patience thus involves waiting with awareness and perhaps even purpose, a claim that will make more sense when the entire definition has been examined.

MacIntyre's definition of patience also requires one to wait "without complaint." The child who continually whines, "Are we there yet?" is not waiting patiently. The teacher who badgers or belittles her students because they have yet to grasp a difficult concept is not waiting patiently. The employee who moans to his coworkers about his suitability for promotion is not waiting patiently. The list could go on…

The key to this definition actually rests in the latter half, "not of waiting thus for anything at all." This phrase means that patience is only intelligible in light of a *telos* that enables people to evaluate goods and fit them into some sort of hierarchy. Otherwise, patience could potentially involve waiting forever for things that are of little value, which would certainly not be beneficial to a practice. For example, a lawmaker can only wait so long to settle a negotiation. Otherwise, the negotiation will become irrelevant as circumstances inevitably change, which would certainly not fit the *telos* of negotiation.[211] This phrase is especially important when discussing patience as a virtue for the church. As noted above, the church has a distinct *telos* that calls it to witness to God's will for humanity, especially as shown through Jesus. This means that certain things are worth waiting for attentively and without complaint, while others are not. This *telos* also provides the task of waiting patiently with a purpose; namely, to image God's patience.

[211] See Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 202-3 for additional examples.

Due to the perfect nature of God's patience, as evidenced by the life of Christ,[212] the Christian virtue of patience cannot come only from human willpower. Patience comes from the Spirit, a fact that Paul attests to in Gal. 5:22.

How then does the Christian virtue of patience relate to AD? Hauerwas writes that the church is sustained by "a patience that looks to our misfortunes, even the misfortune of our illness and death, as part of our service to one another as God's people."[213] For caregivers facing an incurable disease, AD offers an opportunity to patiently serve members of the Body of Christ without expecting to cure them. "Waiting attentively without complaint" takes many forms when it comes to AD. It may mean repeatedly listening and responding to the same few stories or questions. It also could involve cleaning up unpleasant bodily fluids or feeding by hand. As a virtue that sustains the specific practices of the church, patience is definitely necessary to help members of the church make the effort to pray for those with AD or include them in the Eucharist, especially when doing so requires significant effort with little visible effect. The distinctive *telos* of the church makes these tasks sensible, for just as Jesus made it a priority to serve the weakest members of society, so too does the church.

For those members of Christ's body who themselves have AD, the virtue of patience is also crucial. A church that values and encourages patience among its members can help instill the virtue of patience before the disease strikes. This is vital because it is much easier to form habits of patience before patience is put to the test by illness. As one faces a terminal disease such as AD, one has the opportunity to bear patiently one's bodily

[212] Hauerwas outlines Tertullian's account of God's patience exemplified in the life of Christ, explaining that it was God's patience that allowed God to be conceived in a woman's womb, await birth, grow up slowly while avoiding recognition, etc. in "Practicing Patience," 357.

[213] Stanley Hauerwas, "Practicing Patience," 362.

afflictions just as Jesus did on the cross. To do so is an intelligible course of action because of the Christian conviction that life is not an end in itself.[214] Although I cannot begin to fathom the experience of AD, I have been around numerous people with AD and seen the various ways they respond. One woman stands out because of the way that she patiently handles with a measured humor the daily issues that AD causes. Rather than complaining or becoming dejected, she often chooses to humbly admit that she simply has no idea what people are talking about before asking that someone fill her in on what she is missing, even though she realizes she will probably not be able to recall the conversation just hours later. This way of patiently dealing with AD fits with the patience she displayed throughout her lifetime as a mother of six.

The Body of Christ as a whole needs the virtue of patience to face challenges such as AD well. There is no quick fix to an illness like AD, and its prevalence is on the rise in the U.S. Patience enables members of the church to continue to participate in its practices and to work to include others in those practices as well. As a community that has a fundamental claim on the lives of its members, the church embodies patience because it knows that the path that it is on will one day find its final end in Christ and its attentive waiting without complaint will be rewarded.

Finally, it is important to note that the virtue of patience cannot be properly formed apart from love. The reality of life is that humans have been given to one another and that they share in each other's stories as both co-authors and characters. This shared presence allows a love for others to arise that helps make practicing patience possible. Hauerwas notes that this love takes place within "the narrative of God's patient care of the world"

[214] *Ibid*., 365.

and that patience, or "our ability to take the time to enjoy God's world, when we are well as when we are sick," requires an admission that the world does in fact belong to God.[215]

iii. Memory is a key virtue for the church, tying the church to the past with an eye to the future.

In his discussion of the virtue of prudence, William Mattison explains that prudence is about seeing things rightly when it comes to practical matters. Although this may seem to be an individual task, he explains that it is inherently communal in two ways. First, people often ask others for advice on practical matters. But perhaps more basic is the fact that communities form the people within them to see things in a certain way.[216] Thus, the way communities come to see the world and sustain that vision is vitally important.

It is thus appropriate to talk about memory as a virtue, for memory plays a key role in shaping the practical vision of a community. Mattison briefly addresses memory as a sub-virtue of prudence, explaining that truthful memory is necessary for practical decision making. Truthful memory is especially important when it comes to communities, since the distortion of memories on the communal level can often have dire consequences.[217]

The church is one such community that relies heavily on the virtue of memory to form its vision of the world. While liberalism tends to relativize the particularities of history, the church is inextricably bound to its rich history and a truthful remembering of the person of Jesus. Hauerwas argues that the church must prize and develop the virtue of memory. When he talks about memory as a virtue, he has this specific definition in mind: "The kind of memory which truly shapes and guides a community is the kind that keeps

[215] Stanley Hauerwas and Charles Pinches, *Christians Among the Virtues* (Notre Dame, IN: Univ of Notre Dame Pr, 1997), 177.

[216] William Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 102.

[217] *Ibid.*, 103. Mattison cites treatment of slavery in American history textbooks prior to 1950 as an example of distorted communal memory.

past events in mind in a way which draws guidance from them for the future."[218] This means overcoming the modern temptation to form vision by creating separation from the past, even when the past is not altogether pleasant. Hauerwas thus highlights the importance of scripture for forming truthful memory in the church. Through scripture, the church remembers its central stories in a way that helps form the church's moral vision as a community of character. Often, this involves remembering the failures and sins of humanity, which leads to the importance of forgiveness.[219]

Thus, while some communities try to remember only the positives from history, the church cannot do so because it is a community brought about, at least in part, through a failure! As McCabe points out, "Jesus failed to affect human history from within, he failed to bring it to a head, he was crucified instead."[220] McCabe goes on to argue that as a result of this failure, the church must also be concerned with remembering the future and making it present. This involves holding on to the hope that despite humanity's rejection of Jesus, human beings will one day be united with Jesus as a result of his resurrection and conquering of death. McCabe's stress on the importance of fostering memory that has an eye to the future is one that Hauerwas echoes: "The Christian should have a particular aversion to the use of memory which shuts out the future."[221]

When the church prizes the virtue of memory as critical for its communal vision, the reality that individuals with AD are struggling to remember things is still sad, but no longer crippling. As a virtue of the community, memory enables the church to include

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[218] Stanley Hauerwas with Richard Bondi, "Memory, Community and the Reasons for Living: Reflections on Suicide and Euthenasia," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 583.

[219] Stanley Hauerwas, "The Moral Authority of Scripture: The Politics and Ethics of Remembering," in *A Community of Character,* 68-9.

[220] Herbert McCabe, *Law, Love, Language*, 139.

[221] Stanley Hauerwas, "Memory, Community, and Reasons for Living " 584.

those with AD in its history as it reminds itself of the hope that comes through Jesus. Through Jesus, human beings can be confident that God's love does not come with qualifiers about rationality, health, or the individual ability to remember. The church's truthful remembering of both past and future thus leads to a way of seeing the world in which AD does not have the final say.

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSION

I chose to tackle this project primarily because AD has played a significant role in my life, especially in the last few years. Having had two grandparents diagnosed with AD, I have seen first-hand the various challenges the disease can bring about. My thesis was composed of two major chapters. The broad goal of the first chapter was to show how the church, if it is to truly be the Body of Christ, has a responsibility to value those with AD as integral members. The second main chapter then endeavored to show that despite the current challenges of liberal society, the church as the Body of Christ today is quite capable of responding well to the challenges posed by AD.

I began the first chapter with an explanation of how no theologians attempted to deal with AD prior to David Keck in 1996. Relying on the work of historian Jesse Ballenger, I highlighted a gradual shift in understanding about old age throughout the 20th century. Having established this historical context, I then turned to Keck's book and outlined what I thought was its main strength. Since AD boldly attacks people's ability to recall past events, I expected a theological response that shifted the emphasis from or even devalued memory. However, Keck placed memory very much at the center of his project. He argued that memory is a deep term that has a canonical function, meaning that it forms

and directs Christians as God's people. This is possible first because of God's own perfect memory. God's memory is evident in the Hebrew Bible as he continues to actively honor his covenant with the Israelites, despite their repeated forgetfulness. The Incarnation is then the most radical act of God's perfect memory as God expresses full commitment to God's people, becoming one of them in the person of Jesus. Keck also discussed human memory in light of God's memory, choosing to stress its primarily communal nature. He introduced two terms that recognize the necessity of viewing memory as communal. The first, zkr, is the Hebrew root word for memory and refers to an effective communal memory that linked the Israelites to their ancestors, and later linked Christians to Jesus. The second, duree, is a modern concept developed by Henri Bergson that refers to the ability of something past to impinge on the present. Communal memories flow into the present, actively forming the actions of Christians as they seek to act in continuity with these memories.

Having established the necessity and value of communal memory, Keck then moved to a prolonged discussion of the existence of the human soul as the necessary foothold for those struggling with the dissolution of the body that occurs during late-stage AD. It is here that I chose to challenge Keck and move in a different direction. I found it odd that he chose to shift from a strong emphasis on communal memory to a more individualized endorsement of body-soul dualism. Relying on the thought of Herbert McCabe, I argued that the jumble of ideas surrounding the word soul makes it almost impossible to rely on the soul as a basis for theological argument. McCabe's approach to questions about what it means to be alive as humans successfully sets human beings apart from other animals and maintains the dignity of those with Alzheimer's. As linguistic beings with *history* and

biography, humans are capable of communicating, or sharing life, in a way that other beings are not. The human body is intrinsically communicative even when one can no longer literally speak or write. The person with AD remains a human worthy of dignity not because of some invisible soul, but because they remain embroiled in linguistic communities that are markers of the human mode of existence.

McCabe built upon this understanding of human existence in his discussion of the resurrection as a revolution that brings about a new way of living in a new world-of-meaning. This discussion of the resurrection enabled me to show how those with AD are not only fully human, but also important members of the Body of Christ. I began by tracing the evolution of the concept of resurrection throughout the history of Israel. I then discussed several developments following Jesus' resurrection that led to the Christian understanding of the resurrection as the foundation of the faith. The Christian belief in resurrection dramatically shapes the life of believers, calling them into a new way of living in a new world-of-meaning as Christ's body. Resurrection, as a revolution, radically changes the structures within which Christians exist. Death is no longer the end because Christians now have a true identity with the Father in Christ, who has conquered death. Resurrection has allowed for a new way in which people can be together in community, as the church or the Body of Christ. Those who are a part of the Body of Christ are intimately connected to each other as Christ's body as they live together in this new world-of-meaning, supported all the way by the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12 clearly states that if one member of the Body suffers anything, all the members suffer with him or her, a claim that is extremely significant for thinking about AD.

The final step in my argument in this first chapter then was that as Christ's body, the church community is committed to a distinctive social ethic that values those with AD. With the help of Joel Shuman, I identified three material attributes of the common life of the church as the Body of Christ: "christoformity," unity and difference, and weakness as authority. Each of these speaks to the important role of those with AD in Christ's body. For example, within the body of Christ, those accustomed to receiving little honor are clothed with greater honor, according to Paul. By subverting traditional hierarchies, the common good of the body is served. In this manner, those with AD actually have authority in the Body of Christ as they both teach and allow the rest of the body to care for them and meet their needs. I concluded the first chapter with the example of the 4th century Cappadocian Father Basil's hospice model. These hospices concretely showed how the Body of Christ can live out its social ethic by caring for those generally cast aside or forgotten.

In my second chapter, I made what I called a "Hauerwasian" argument. This meant letting go of any aspirations of making sweeping, universal moral claims. It meant accepting the particularity of Christianity and formulating a response out of the concrete practices and habits of Christians trying to live as Christ's Body. This first involved looking at what is going on before thinking about what should be done. Thus, I first discussed the complex relationship between liberalism and Christianity here in the U.S., explaining why liberalism is ultimately incommensurable with the Christian belief that identity is primarily relational as a member of the Body of Christ. This mainly results from liberalism's privileging of the free, autonomous, productive consumer. While liberalism claims to be a universal, welcoming system that overcomes gender and racial

differences, it fails its own test of inclusivity when it comes to those with cognitive limitations. Some have tried to defend those with cognitive limitations using the terminology of liberalism, but just as with dualism, these accounts fall short. A Hauerwasian argument avoids the preconceived terms of both of these, grounded instead in the church community firmly rooted in the claims of the gospel, exhibiting a radically new vision of humanness and human living in community. This virtue- and character-filled community is precisely the Body of Christ, engaged in the mission of imaging its head, Jesus Christ. Members of this Body are not constituted by their ability to function as independent monadic choosers, but simply by virtue of their participation in the new way of life in Christ. In addition, members of the Body are part of a family that is actually more primary than the biological family.

I then argued that the church as the Body of Christ features habits and practices that are helpful for responding well to AD. First, the Body of Christ has deeply ingrained practices of presence. Following Jesus' example, Christians throughout history have made a habit of being present to each other, exemplified by the ministry of Mother Theresa. One specific practice that enables Christians to be present is prayer. The default response of modern society to illness is to turn to doctors and medications with the expectation of a cure, a response that is of little value when it comes to AD, an incurable disease. Scripture and the Christian tradition point to the immeasurable value of prayer when it comes to illness. Prayer is critical because it opens people to God's powerful presence. This openness is important even when cures do exist, for prayer is not simply a supplement to the insufficiency of medical knowledge. Theologians like Hauerwas and Joel Shuman have argued that the practice of prayer and the virtues that this practice

inculcates is in fact necessary to sustain medical care. In addition, prayer is a practice of presence that links Christians to each other and to the saints.

The Christian community's central act of presence is the Eucharist, and I argued that the church needs to include those with AD in the Eucharist whenever possible. I commended efforts to take the Eucharist to those with AD when necessary, but also argued for increased efforts to include these people in the Eucharistic celebration as a whole. I also discussed canon law and the requirements for participation in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. I explained how the presumption in favor of the baptized person in cases of doubt should certainly apply to those with AD.

The final way I argued that the church can be present is memorially. In cases where those with AD can no longer remember themselves, the church is able to remember for them. Christian funeral rites are a good example of this memorial presence. Therese Lysaught argues that funerals teach Christians to remember those whose lives have changed but not ended. Those with AD are still disciples, but the form of their discipleship will change and develop with the shifting effects of AD. They can still minister to others in the Body of Christ when given the chance, but the changes that AD brings also make it necessary for the Body of Christ to recognize the need to minister to those with AD in new ways. As a remembering community, the church is tasked with attending concretely to its weakest members.

The final piece of my thesis discussed three key virtues that must be cherished and developed if the church is to truly respond well to AD as a community of presence. The first of these is the infused virtue of charity. God extends the invitation of friendship to humans especially through Jesus, an invitation that enables people to rest in God, which

is the *telos* of human existence. Friendship with God also necessitates friendship with others, even those who are not easy to love. Through charity, a new conception of selfhood emerges after Christians surrender their lives to God in favor of becoming what God always wanted them to be. Friendship with God and others requires the setting aside of selfish ambitions, something that is difficult but sometimes necessary when it comes to dealing with AD. Charity also points Christians to the liturgy and the bonds that the liturgy creates within the body of Christ. Charity, as the form of the virtues, sustains and nourishes other virtues as well, which together aid Christians in their journey to their true end, union with God.

One such virtue that charity sustains is patience. Patience is not a virtue that people value much today, especially when it comes to the human body. However, patience is critical for the Body of Christ if it is to respond well to AD. Patience, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, sustains the Body of Christ by enabling its members to look at the misfortune of illness as part of service to each other as God's people. This means that patience is a virtue that is important not only for caregivers but for patients themselves. It is important for the church to foster patience for all of its members, because once one is already suffering from an illness like AD it's not easy to learn how to be patient. From a broad perspective, the virtue of patience is necessary to help the body of Christ face illnesses like AD, especially when no cure exists and its prevalence is on the rise. The church can patiently deal with AD because of the faith that it is on a journey with its final end in Christ. Patience allows Christians to take the time to enjoy God's world, both in sickness and health, in light of the fact that the world and Christians themselves truly belong to God.

Finally, I discussed memory as a communal virtue of the church. Truthful memory is a virtue that is vitally important for forming the vision of a community. The church's memory includes both the positives and negatives associated with its history, but situates both within its hope about the future in Christ. Memory as a communal virtue enables the church to include those with AD in its history as it forms a way of seeing the world in which AD does not have the final say.

So to briefly summarize my argument: I have attempted to show that the church has both a responsibility and capability to meet the challenges of AD. Although AD appears to destroy memory, a communal understanding of memory points to the need for those with AD to have a community to help them remember. Such a community exists because of the person of Jesus and his resurrection. With the institution of the church as the Body of Christ, hierarches are radically reversed as the weak and forgotten become vital members joined in a new way of living. Liberalism, with its emphasis on the rational, autonomous chooser, is incommensurable with the Body of Christ. As Christ's body, the church possesses practices of presence that can support those who are overlooked in liberal society, including those with AD. Furthermore, a renewed emphasis on the virtues of Christian love, patience, and memory can inspire and support the church as it aims its practices towards those with AD.

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