

# Responding to N.T. Wright's Rejection of the Soul

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Forthcoming, *Heythrop Journal*, 2016

Penultimate draft available at  
[http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.baylor.edu/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1468-2265](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.baylor.edu/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1468-2265)  
DOI: 10.1111/heyj.12341

## Abstract

At a 2011 meeting of the Society of Christian Philosophers, N. T. Wright offered four reasons for rejecting the existence of soul. This was surprising, as many Christian philosophers had previously taken Wright's defense of a disembodied intermediate state as a defense of a substance dualist view of the soul. In this paper, I offer responses to each of Wright's objections, demonstrating that Wright's arguments fail to undermine substance dualism. In so doing, I expose how popular arguments against dualism fail, such as (1) dualism is merely an unwarranted influence of Greek culture on Christianity, and (2) substance dualism is merely a soul-of-the-gaps hypothesis. Moreover, I demonstrate that Wright himself has offered a powerful reason for adopting substance dualism in his previous works. In conclusion I offer a view that explains why the human soul needs a resurrected body.

**Key Words:** Ontology of Human Persons, Theological Anthropology, Substance Dualism, Hylomorphic Dualism, Soul, Intermediate State, Christian Materialism.

## Introduction

At a 2011 meeting of the Society of Christian Philosophers, N. T. Wright tendered four reasons for rejecting the existence of soul.<sup>1</sup> This was surprising, as some Christian philosophers had previously taken Wright's defense of a disembodied intermediate state as a defense of a substance dualist view of the soul.<sup>2</sup> I argue that Wright's treatment of the soul in both historical and contemporary philosophy of mind is wanting. I examine each of Wright's reasons for rejecting the soul and explaining how each fails in several ways. In so doing, I carefully explain the fundamental thesis of substance dualism clearly distinguishing it from common misconceptions.

Many of the objections Wright raises against the soul are reiterations largely influenced by the Biblical Theology Movement of the early to mid 1900's. These thinkers contrasted Hebrew and Greek thought as if they were polar opposites. While they rightly removed uniquely Platonic thought from biblical anthropology, they mistakenly took any view that used the term dualism as endorsing Platonism.<sup>3</sup> Although, I focus on Wright's

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<sup>1</sup> 'Mind, Spirit, Soul and Body: All for One and One for All Reflections on Paul's Anthropology in his Complex Contexts', presented at the *Society of Christian Philosophers Regional Meeting*, Fordham University (March 18, 2011). Available online at ([www.ntwrightpage.com/Wright\\_SCP\\_MindSpiritSoulBody.htm](http://www.ntwrightpage.com/Wright_SCP_MindSpiritSoulBody.htm)).

<sup>2</sup> For example, John W. Cooper, 'The Bible and Dualism Once Again: A Reply to Joel B. Green and Nancy Murphy,' *Philosophia Christi* 9 (2007), p. 461.

<sup>3</sup> For an excellent treatment of this historical situation, see, Jeffrey H. Boyd, 'A History of the Concept of the Soul During the 20th Century', *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 26 (1) (1998), pp. 66-82; and,

rejection of the soul, my replies extend to the wider community of scholarship that makes use of these objections to the substantive soul. I have in mind scholars such as, Joel Green, Warren Brown, and Nancy Murphy.

## 1. Wright's Rejection of the Soul

Christian scholars are divided over the ontology of human persons, a debate many of the Church Fathers would likely not have expected.<sup>4</sup> On one side stand those of the historical Christian view, a type of dualism according to which human persons are not identical to a physical body, but consist of a body and a soul. In opposition stand a more recent cohort of Christian materialists who maintain that human persons are in some way fundamentally material.<sup>5</sup> While Wright clearly rejects the soul, it is unclear how he avoids materialism. There are various views of the substantial soul. The fundamental thesis is as follows:

SUBSTANCE DUALISM (SD): Human persons are not identical to their bodies, but consist of a physical body and a non-physical substantial soul, provided that having a physical body is not necessary for being a human person.

This is the basic notion of SD.<sup>6</sup> Notice that this minimal thesis only requires that the soul is a substance, while the body need not be a substance. This leaves room for Cartesian SD and Neo-Thomistic or Hylomorphic SD. Specific details of the ontology of the soul and the soul-body relation vary among Cartesian, Neo-Thomistic, and Emergent forms of SD. Wright's paper does not take these subtleties into account. Hence, when I refer to dualism or Wright's rejection of the soul, I have in mind SUBSTANCE DUALISM.

Wright's basic rejection of the soul is as follows:

- P1: Any view of human persons that is either inconsistent with biblical eschatology or not supported by scripture should be rejected.
- P2: Mind-body dualism is both inconsistent with biblical eschatology and not supported by scripture.
- C: Therefore, dualism should be rejected.

I will assume that P1 is true. Hence, the contentious premise is P2. Wright offers four objections to SD that support P2.

## 2. Answering Wright's Objections to the Soul

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Anthony Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> Christian Materialist, Kevin Corcoran, admits, 'Most, if not all, orthodox Christian theologians of the early church were anthropological dualists.' See Corcoran, 'Dualism, Materialism and the Problem of Post Mortem Survival', *Philosophia Christi* 4, (2) (2002), p. 414. More recently, during a panel discussion with J. P. Moreland and Angus Manuge, Corcoran stated that he thought Jesus and Paul were both mind-body dualists (Annual Meeting of the AAR/SBL, San Francisco, CA, November 19, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Lynne Rudder Baker, 'Need a Christian Be a Mind/Body Dualist?' *Faith and Philosophy* 12, no. 4 (1995), pp. 498-504; 'Christian Materialism in a Scientific Age', *International Journal of Philosophy of Religion* (January), pp. 1-13; Trenton Merricks, *Objects and Persons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Peter van Inwagen, *Material Beings* (Cornell University Press, 1990); and Kevin Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed analysis of the nature of structure of the soul, see: S. L. Frank, *Man's Soul: An Introductory Essay in Philosophical Psychology* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1993); and *The Evolution of the Soul*, Revised Edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1997), especially chapter 14.

## 2.1 Soul of the Gaps & the Natural/Supernatural Distinction

According to Wright, SUBSTANCE DUALISM adopts a false framework: a natural/supernatural distinction with God in the distant heavens, and the world functioning on its own. However, Wright fails to cite examples and offers no argument to support this objection. It is not clear how this logically follows from dualism. Of course, God is non-physical and is ontologically distinct from creation. From this, a natural/supernatural distinction does not follow. Likewise, it does not logically follow from the thesis that human persons consist of a physical body and a non-physical soul. In fact, you might think that the soul is exactly what makes the body naturally supernatural in the same way that God's interaction with creation disallows a natural/supernatural divide.

Wright further argues that this natural/supernatural framework leads to methodological problems. He states,

I believe that we are wrong to look for a god-of-the-gaps, hiding somewhere in the unexplored reaches of quantum physics like a rare mammal lurking deep in the unexplored Amazon jungle, so I believe we are wrong to look for a soul-of-the-gaps, hiding in the bits that neuroscience hasn't yet managed to explain.<sup>7</sup>

Accordingly, dualists posit the soul to explain mental events and experiences that could in principle be explained neurologically, but have not been as of yet. Again, Wright does not reveal which dualists he has in mind here. Looking to historical and contemporary defenses of SUBSTANCE DUALISM undermine Wright's thesis.

Most substance dualists argue that consciousness cannot in principle be given an exhaustive scientific explanation.<sup>8</sup> These arguments, for example some versions of the knowledge argument, do not conclude that science has yet to explain consciousness, but that science in principle cannot explain consciousness. This is not a thesis unique to SD. Nonreductive physicalism maintains a real distinction non-physical mental properties and physical properties and substances. Likewise, in virtue of continued debates among materialists, a group of philosophers Owen Flanagan labeled the 'new mysterians', claim that although materialism must be true we will never understand how it could be true.<sup>9</sup> The substance dualist makes an alternative inference that although consciousness cannot be fully explained with the resources of materialism, it can be explained by a non-physical, unified, substantial soul.

Characterizing SD as a 'soul-of-the-gaps' thesis reveals a fundamental misunderstanding on Wright's part. Surveying philosophers of the past reveals quite the opposite. For example, Plato, Augustine, Descartes, Butler, and Reid held to SD in virtue of being aware of themselves from the first-person perspective as not reducible or identical to their body.<sup>10</sup> Aristotle and Aquinas arrived at SD after analyzing positive arguments for the soul. After a detailed look at these philosophers, Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro

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<sup>7</sup> Wright, 'Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body', section 1.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, J. P. Moreland, *Consciousness and the Existence of God: A Theistic Argument* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> Owen Flanagan, *The Science of the Mind*, Second Edition (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), p. 313. The New Mysterians include Colin McGinn, *The Mysterious Flame: Conscious Minds in a Material World* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1999), and Thomas Nagel, *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> For contemporary work on SD and self-awareness, J. P. Moreland, "Substance Dualism and the Argument from Self-Awareness" *Philosophia Christi*, Vol. 13, no. 1 (2011), pp. 21-34. I also consider the work of David Barnett as relevant here. See, David Barnett, 'The Simplicity Intuition and Its Hidden Influence on the Philosophy of Mind', *Noûs* 42 (2008), pp. 308-355; and 'You are Simple' in Robert Koons and George Bealer (eds.), *The Waning of Materialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 161-174.

conclude, ‘There is not the least bit of evidence for the idea that they arrived at their belief in the soul’s existence after failing to explain various experiences in terms of what goes on in the physical world.’<sup>11</sup> Materialist, William Lycan, agrees,

I know of no dualist who grants the “‘theory’ theory”, that the main (much less the only) purpose of mental ascriptions is third-person explanatory and that we know our own minds only by way of the general “mind” theory. Nor do I know of any who holds either SD [substance dualism] or PD [property dualism] on explanatory grounds; dualist arguments are generally deductive.<sup>12</sup>

It seems Wright’s objection is a mere caricature of SD.

Lastly, Wright fails to explain dualism’s supposed commitment to this natural/supernatural distinction. There is no explicit use of this distinction in the statement of SD. There is a dualism of entities, but not of God’s involvement with them. Moreover, all Christians must accept the distinction between the physical and non-physical, at least with respect to angels, demons, and God, which are described as non-physical throughout scripture.<sup>13</sup> Wright affirms this distinction between the physical and the non-physical.<sup>14</sup> How does he escape his own objection?

## 2.2 Is Substance Dualism a Greek Idea?

Wright’s second objection is grounded in the thesis that dualism is a not a biblical idea, but a Greek idea in which Westerners have been indoctrinated.<sup>15</sup> This thesis faces at least three difficulties. First, this objection is historically false. SUBSTANCE DUALISM is not the exclusive product of Greek or Western thinking. Greek historian, Herodotus, (ca. 484 BC–ca. 425 BCE) understood that SD predated the Greeks. He writes,

Moreover, the Egyptians also are the first who said this account [substance dualism]...there are those of the Greeks who made use, some earlier and some latter, as if it were their own private, whose name I know and refuse to write.<sup>16</sup>

Likewise, Eastern thought in India–Hinduism and some forms of Buddhism–hold to SD.<sup>17</sup> A recent large-scale, quantitative examination of mind and body concepts in pre-Qin (pre-221 BCE) Chinese literature revealed both the universality of pre-theoretical belief in SD as well as an intellectual development of SD in early China.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro, *A Brief History of the Soul* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), p. 155.

<sup>12</sup> William G. Lycan, ‘Is Property Dualism Better Off Than Substance Dualism?’ *Philosophical Studies* 164 (2) (2013), pp. 534-35.

<sup>13</sup> Moreland and Rae argue that God and angels are the clearest examples of persons, and that this must impact our ontology of human persons. See, J. P. Moreland and Scott B. Rae, *Body & Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), pp. 24-26.

<sup>14</sup> Wright, ‘Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body’, section 3.

<sup>15</sup> This objection is popular among theologians. See for example, Doug Pagitt, *A Christianity Worth Believing* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2008), Ch. 8; Brian McLaren, *The Story We Find Ourselves In* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003) 51-53; *A Generous Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), pp. 280-81; and Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 1994), pp. 761-2.

<sup>16</sup> Herodotus, *Historiae* 2, 123, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Stuart Goetz, ‘Substance Dualism’, in Joel B. Green and Stuart L. Palmer (eds.), *In Search of the Soul: Four Views of the Mind-Body Problem* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), p. 35, footnote 6.

<sup>18</sup> Edward Slingerland and Maciej Chudek, ‘The Prevalence of Mind-Body Dualism in Early China’, *Cognitive Science* 35 (5) (2011), pp. 997-1007.

Moreover, several extrabiblical texts reveal a Jewish adherence to SD. New Testament scholar, Robert Gundry, offers the following passages in support of this claim:

(1) the dead are those “in hades whose spirit has been taken from their bodies”(Bar. 2:7). (2) Tobit prays for the release of his “spirit” in death for the enjoyment of “the everlasting place” (Tobit 3:6). (3) The souls and bodies of the righteous will be united at the resurrection but the souls of the wicked will continue in a grief-laden disembodied existence (2 Bar. 30:25). (4) At death “the death the mortals “who were made of earth” return “to the earth” while their souls return to God who lent them (Wis 15:18).<sup>19</sup>

Wright recognizes the SD teaching in *Wisdom of Solomon* (Wis). He admits, ‘Here – and perhaps in chapter 3 as well – we have taken a small but significant step towards a genuine anthropological body-soul dualism, even though still held within a Jewish framework.’<sup>20</sup> This admission undermines his argument that SD is merely a Greek idea.

Secondly, Wright’s thesis that SD is merely a Greek idea is empirically weak. Current research in cognitive science shows that very young children, yet to be indoctrinated by culture, naturally form a belief in SD.<sup>21</sup> This should not be the case if SD is the product of Greek influence. The prevailing view among cognitive scientists is that SD is a universal pre-theoretical belief shared across cultures. Rather than a culturally imposed belief, it is naturally developed in infancy. We simply are, as Paul Bloom says, ‘natural Cartesians.’<sup>22</sup> This view best explains the universal pre-theoretical belief in SD. Wright’s thesis is undermined by this data.

Third, Wright’s thesis is philosophically problematic. Stewart Goetz has argued that belief in SD is properly basic.<sup>23</sup> J. P. Moreland has argued that individuals do not infer SD but come to hold SD in virtue of a direct awareness of the self as mereologically simple and distinct from the body.<sup>24</sup> If Goetz and Moreland are correct, then belief in SD is not merely the influence of Greek culture. Philosophers, both dualists<sup>25</sup> and physicalists alike, recognize that SD is the common sense view. Frank Jackson, no friend of SD, admits,

We commonly think that we, as persons, have a mental and bodily dimension...Something like this dualism of personhood, I believe, is common lore shared across most cultures and religious traditions.<sup>26</sup>

One could argue that most cultures hold to SD (Greek, Jewish, Hindu, and Buddhist) because SD is the pre-theoretical common sense view. It is not a mere product of culture, but a core understanding gained by self-awareness that informs nearly every culture.

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<sup>19</sup> Robert H. Gundry, ‘Addendum: A Biblical and Philosophical-Scientific Conversation with Christian Nonreductive Physicalists’, in *The Old is Better: New Testament Essays in Support of Traditional Interpretations* (Tuebingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), p. 191.

<sup>20</sup> Wright, “Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body,” section 1.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Paul Bloom, *Descartes’ Baby: How the Science of Child Development Explains What Makes Us Human* (Cambridge, MA: Basic Books, 2004).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, xii.

<sup>23</sup> Stuart Goetz, ‘Modal Dualism: A Critique’, in Kevin Corcoran (ed.), *Soul, Body and Survival* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 89–104.

<sup>24</sup> J. P. Moreland, ‘Substance Dualism and the Argument from Self-Awareness’, *Philosophia Christi* 13 (1) (2011), pp. 21-34.

<sup>25</sup> Uwe Meixner, ‘The Naturalness of Dualism’, in Benedickt Paul Göcke (ed.), *After Physicalism* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012): 38-40.

<sup>26</sup> Frank Jackson, *From Metaphysics to Ethics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 30.

Consequently, Wright's objection that SD is simply a Greek idea is false. More to the point, even if Wright is correct, the rejection of SD does not logically follow. That a thesis is the product of a culture is to say nothing of the truth or falsity of that thesis. The Greeks of course were right about a great many things!

### 2.3 Does Substance Dualism Lack Biblical Support?

Wright's third objection argues that appeals to the New Testament in support of dualism are problematic. Much of Wright's objections have to do with showing that the words *nous*, *psyche* and *pneuma*, as used in the New Testament, do not refer to an immaterial soul. These objections are not original to Wright, but frequently recycled in the literature. However, not all biblical scholars are convinced. Some SD advocates clearly reject arguments for SD from these words.<sup>27</sup> I consider the work of John Cooper<sup>28</sup>, Robert Gundry<sup>29</sup>, and Philip Esler<sup>30</sup> as effective responses to these arguments.<sup>31</sup> My interest here is in analyzing the logic of Wright's arguments.

Wright's objections are often of the following form: SD arguments from biblical texts should be rejected because the New Testament authors do not argue for SD when they could have. Yet, support for a thesis may come in a variety of forms. To assume that a biblical or theological argument can only be made from explicit teaching from scripture is mistaken. The doctrine of the Trinity is an obvious example. Moreover, Wright is mistaken about the form of most biblical argument for SD. Arguments for SD from the biblical teaching of the intermediate state or the nature of God do not state that the New Testament argues for SD. Rather, the argument is that a variety of biblical teaching as expressions of or assume SD.

Wright argues that the New Testament refers to human persons not souls, which undermines biblical argument for SUBSTANCE DUALISM. It isn't clear how Wright makes this inference. It certainly is not clear that because one talks of human persons rather than bodies that one does not think that persons are bodies or even embodied souls. If one were arguing for some type of Platonic dualism, this objection might make sense. Yet, I know of no Christian philosopher currently arguing for Platonic dualism.

Perhaps Wright is arguing that the New Testament does not support dualism, but a version of physicalism. This is contradicted by remarks Wright makes against reductive physicalism:

Faced with a strident, sometimes even bullying, modernism in which humans are just naked apes or even just random bundles of atoms and molecules, it is important to protest. Many wise atheists would agree. There is much about

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<sup>27</sup> For example, Cooper, 'The Bible and Dualism Once Again: A Reply to Joel B. Green and Nancy Murphy', 36-37.

<sup>28</sup> John W. Cooper, *Body, Soul & Life Everlasting: Biblical Anthropology and the Monism-Dualism Debate* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989); 'The Bible and Dualism Once Again: A Reply to Joel B. Green and Nancy Murphy', *Philosophia Christi* 9 (2007), pp. 459-69; 'The Current Body-Soul Debate: A Case for Holistic Dualism', *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 13 (2009), pp. 32-50; 'Exaggerated Rumors of Dualism's Demise: A Review Essay on Body, Soul and Human Life', *Philosophia Christi* 11 (2009), pp. 453-64.

<sup>29</sup> Gundry, pp. 187-194.

<sup>30</sup> Philip F. Esler, *New Testament Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), pp. 239-251.

<sup>31</sup> See also, C. Stephen Evans and Brandon L. Rickabaugh, 'What "What Does it Mean to Be a Bodily Soul?', *Philosophia Christi* 17 (2) (2005), pp. 315-330. Philosopher Paul Moser also has some interesting arguments from the New Testament. See Paul Moser, 'Human Persons: Their Nature, Faith, and Functions', *Ex Audity* 13 (1995), pp. 17-36.

human life, even without God in the picture, which rebels against that radical reductionism.<sup>32</sup>

Wright makes no suggestion that he is supporting non-reductive physicalism either. His rejection of reductionism means we must take his argument to mean something other than support for physicalism.

Lastly, notice that if we grant that the New Testament does not support dualism (although I will show later that it does), it does not follow that SD is false or even unwarranted. A foreseeable reply from Wright is likely from a point he makes in the introduction:

I believe therefore that a Christian anthropology must necessarily ask, not, what are human beings in themselves, but, what are human beings called to do and be as part of the creator's design? Not to ask the question that way round, and to think simply about ourselves and what we are, risks embodying, at a methodological level, Luther's definition of sin: *homo incurvatus in se*.<sup>33</sup>

First, who exactly is it that adopts this thesis? Wright fails to identify anyone with this view. I cannot think of any SD advocate that leaves behind the important issue of what human persons are called to do and be a part of according to God's design. It would have been helpful had Wright cited whom he has in mind. Again, we are left wondering if anyone actually defends the view Wright criticizes.

Secondly, I wonder if Wright would say the same thing to medical doctors or psychologists? Pay no attention to what a person is, just pay attention to what people are called to do. But, how does that help the heart surgeon, the family therapist or the philosopher?<sup>34</sup> From this passage, it is plausible that Wright might respond that his real point is to show that scripture doesn't talk about the ontology of human persons and neither should we. Notice, however, that this reply does not itself appeal to scripture, but to the following philosophical principle: where biblical texts are silent so should we be. I offer two reasons to reject this possible response.

First, this avoids altogether the current debate and cultural posture that favors the reductionism Wright himself is against.<sup>35</sup> Secondly, Wright's use of Luther's *homo incurvatus in se* is questionable. The central point to Luther's thesis is that Christian anthropology must be relational insofar as understanding human persons as bound up in relation to God and not to us only.<sup>36</sup> Where exactly is there a contradiction between SUBSTANCE DUALISM and the thesis that persons are who they are in relation to God?

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<sup>32</sup> Wright, 'Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body', section 1.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., introduction.

<sup>34</sup> For work on the significance of substance dualism for psychology see, J. P. Moreland, 'Restoring the Substance of the Soul to Psychology', *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 26 (1998), pp. 29-43; Dallas Willard, 'Spiritual Disciples, Spiritual Formation, and the Restoration of the Soul', *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 26 (1998), pp. 101-109; Jeffrey H. Boyd, *Soul Psychology: How to Understand Your Soul in Light of the Mental Health Movement* (Cheshire: CT, Soul Research Institute, 1994); Jeffrey H. Boyd, 'Two Orientations of the Self', *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 26 (1) (1998), pp. 110-122; Todd W. Hall, 'The Soul or Substantive Self as Experiencer, Actualizer, and Representative in Psychoanalytic Theory', *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 26 (1) (1998), pp. 55-65.

<sup>35</sup> One might ask, why is Wright against an ontological view if he thinks issue should be avoided? Why not simply hold that reductionism is fine, provided it yields to his favored eschatology?

<sup>36</sup> Matt Jensen, *The Gravity of Sin: Augustine, Luther, and Barth on Homo Incurvatus In Se* (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2007), p. 73.

Some SD advocates argue that we first look to God to understand what a person is. Alvin Plantinga advised Christian philosophers several years ago,

How should we think of human persons? What sort of things, fundamentally, are they?...The first point to note is that on the Christian scheme of things, *God* is the supreme person, the first and chief exemplar of personhood...and the properties most important for an understanding of our personhood are properties we share with him.<sup>37</sup>

Once again, Wright's portrait of SD is wanting.

Perhaps Wright thinks there is a logical entailment between SD and the view that individuals exist without relation to God. Again Wright leaves us without an argument. What exactly about SD forbids an understanding of the existential identity of persons in relation to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? It is not as if SD is committed to the thesis that a soul sustains its own existence apart from God, as Wright suggests.<sup>38</sup> Stuart Goetz writes, '...dualism does not entail that the soul is an immortal entity that exists independently of God's creative activity. It is important to remember this point, given all of the abuses of dualism by biblical scholars in recent decades.'<sup>39</sup> SD advocate Richard Swinburne argues that a low view of the body is, 'out of line with Christian emphasis on the embodiedness of men as their normal and divinely intended state...If souls exist...without their bodies, they do so by special divine act, not under their own natural powers.'<sup>40</sup> Wright's argument is simply based on a distortion of SD.

Lastly, Wright argues that SD is in tension with the New Testament teaching of the resurrection of the dead. Wright states,

To speak, as many Christians have done, of the body dying, and the soul going marching on, is not only a travesty of what Paul says. It has encouraged many to suppose that the victory over death is the escape of the soul from the dead body. That is a dangerous lie. It is resurrection that is the defeat of death. To think of the body dying and of something, the soul or whatever, continuing onwards isn't a victory over death. It is simply a description, however inadequate, of death itself. Let us not collude with the enemy.<sup>41</sup>

Notice that Wright has not given an argument that SUBSTANCE DUALISM logically entails a rejection of the reality or importance of the resurrection. Moreover, it cannot be argued that holding to SD leads people to reject or belittle the eschatological hope of resurrection. Surveying the SD literature of the medieval philosophers belies Wright's objection. Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Scotus offer arguments for the necessity of resurrection embodiment from proper function, metaphysical completeness, perfect

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<sup>37</sup> Alvin Plantinga, 'Advice to Christian Philosophers', *Faith and Philosophy* 1 (3) (1984), pp. 264-65.

<sup>38</sup> 'To insist that we "possess" an "immortal part" (call it "soul" or whatever) which cannot be touched by death might look suspiciously like the ontological equivalent of works-righteousness in its old-fashioned sense: something we possess which enables us to establish a claim on God, in this case a claim to "survive".' Wright, "Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body," section 3.

<sup>39</sup> Goetz, 'Substance Dualism', 35, footnote 6.

<sup>40</sup> Richard Swinburne, *The Evolution of the Soul*, Revised Edition (London: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 311-12.

<sup>41</sup> Wright, 'Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body', section 1.

happiness, appetite satisfaction, soteriology, divine purpose, and divine justice.<sup>42</sup> For example, Bonaventure argued that the soul must be united to the body for the final judgment because they were pre-mortem partners and should be post-mortem partners in rewards or punishments.<sup>43</sup> Aquinas argued that the human soul must be embodied in order for it to clearly think.<sup>44</sup> Scotus argued that redemption requires embodiment because embodiment perfects the soul-body composite whole.<sup>45</sup> After arguing for the necessity of the physical resurrection of Jesus, Gundry states, “Traditionally the physicality of resurrection in the NT has gone along with anthropological dualism...”<sup>46</sup> Again, Wright’s representation of SD is uninformed.

## 2.4 Does Substance Dualism Devalue the Body?

Wright’s final objection to the soul is that “anthropological dualism tends to devalue or downgrade the body.”<sup>47</sup> This, of course, is in conflict with the high view of the body present in biblical teaching. Wright gives us no argument for this thesis that SD tends to devalue the body. Notice SD makes no statement regarding the value of the body. It simply maintains that the human person partly consists of a body.

Perhaps Wright means that holding SD causes a tendency devalue the body. Yet, surveying the SD literature I mentioned regarding the resurrection belies this popular claim. Again it is not at all clear to whom Wright is referring. Perhaps, like many other theologians, Wright is thinking of Descartes. This is a mistake. Descartes adamantly rejects the dualism of Plato. The soul, says Descartes, does not simply reside in the body “as a pilot resides in a ship,” but rather forms a kind of natural unity “most closely joined” and “as if intermixed” with it.<sup>48</sup> Arguably, Descartes’ view has more in common with scholastic-Aristotelian theories of soul-body union than is popularly portrayed.<sup>49</sup> For Descartes there is no ‘ghost in the machine.’<sup>50</sup> He refers to the soul as a ‘substantial form’,<sup>51</sup> and as ‘substantially united’<sup>52</sup> with the body.

Likewise, contemporary SD advocates hold a high view of embodiment as well. Plantinga, a strong defender of SD writes,

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<sup>42</sup> For an excellent introduction to these arguments see, Marilyn McCord Adams, ‘Why Bodies as Well as Souls in the Life to Come’ in Gregory T. Doolan (ed.), *The Science of Being as Being: Metaphysical Investigations* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), pp. 264-297.

<sup>43</sup> Bonaventure, *Commentarius in librum Sententiarum*. IV, d. 43, a. 1, q. 1, 4.883-84.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologia* I, q. 89, a. 1 co. & ad 3; ST I, a. 2 co. & ad 2; ST I, q. 89, a. 3 co.

<sup>45</sup> Scotus, *Opus Oxoniense*. IV, d. 45, q. 2, n. 14, 10.182.

<sup>46</sup> Gundry, ‘Addendum: A Biblical and Philosophical-Scientific Conversation with Christian Nonreductive Physicalists’, 187.

<sup>47</sup> Wright, ‘Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body’, section 1.

<sup>48</sup> René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Sixth Meditation, 81; (1641), in *Descartes: Selected Philosophical Writings*. Vol. 2. Trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 56. Hereafter CSM refers to this edition of Descartes’ Work. See also *Discourse on Method* 1637, part 5: 59 (CSM I 141), and *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Objections and Replies 228 (CSM II 160).

<sup>49</sup> See for example, Paul Hoffman, ‘The Unity of Descartes’ Man,’ *The Philosophical Review* 95 (1986), pp. 339-369. For a critical treatment of Hoffman, see Marleen Rozemond, *Descartes’s Dualism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). For a response to Rozemond, see Justin Skirry, *Descartes and the Metaphysics of Human Nature* (London and New York: Thoemmes-Continuum Press, 2005).

<sup>50</sup> The ‘ghost in the machine’ is a phrase coined by Gilbert Ryle to describe Descartes’ mind-body dualism (*The Concept of Mind*, 1949). The phrase was intended to portray, in a pejorative way, the mysterious notion of mind/brain interaction, but to this day is often mistaken for an accurate statement of Descartes’ view.

<sup>51</sup> René Descartes, *Letter to Regius*, CSM III, 207-208.

<sup>52</sup> René Descartes, *Letter to Mesland*, CSM III 243.

...on the traditional Christian view, God has designed human being to have bodies; they function properly only if embodied; and of course Christians look forward to the resurrection of the body. My body is crucial to my well-being and I can flourish only if embodied.<sup>53</sup>

Likewise, according to SD advocate Dallas Willard, “...the body lies at the center of the spiritual life...”<sup>54</sup> and is “an essential part of who we are, and no redemption that omits it is full redemption.”<sup>55</sup> Charles Taliaferro has argued that given SD, being an embodied person consists in the exercise of six types of virtue: sensory, agency, constitutional, epistemic, structural, and affective.<sup>56</sup> It is simply false that substance dualists do not embrace the value of embodiment. As I’ve shown, historical and contemporary advocates of SD have all held that the soul and body are profoundly integrated.

Those who oppose SD face the problem of ethical voluntarism regarding the value of persons. SD has a natural account of the special value of human persons as rooted in God’s creative act, rather than his volition. God has created human persons with a unique essence—an embodied soul—reflective of God’s unique intention for humanity. SD understands creation as intimately caught up in the purposes of God, while the alternative voluntarism account has a deep divide between God’s creation and his purposes for it along with its value.<sup>57</sup> Wright is simply mistaken that SD tends to devalue the body.

### 3. An Eschatological Argument for Substance Dualism

Here I argue that Wright’s work is in logical tension with itself. It is obvious that in the paper under consideration Wright rejects the soul. It is not obvious, however, that Wright consistently rejects SUBSTANCE DUALISM throughout his extensive previous works. Regarding the state of Christians between death and resurrection, Wright states, “Rather, *sleep* here means that the *body* is “asleep” in the sense of “dead,” while the real person—however we want to describe him or her—continues.”<sup>58</sup> Wright is as clear as he ever is on this issue. The “*real person*,” is not identical to a body, but is what remains apart from the body until the resurrection. This is a clear commitment to SD, especially in light of the following arguments.

#### 3.1 Jesus and Paul in Defense of Disembodied Existence

According to Wright, the resurrection of the dead is not immediate.<sup>59</sup> After death, yet before the resurrection, human persons exist. Wright asks, “Who or what are they? They are, at present, souls, spirits or angel-like beings, held in that state of being not because they were naturally immortal but by the creative power of YHWH.”<sup>60</sup> But hasn’t

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<sup>53</sup> Alvin Plantinga, ‘Materialism and Christian Belief’ in Peter van Inwagen and Dean Zimmerman (eds.), *Persons: Human and Divine*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 99.

<sup>54</sup> Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2002), p. 159. For an excellent treatment of Willard’s view, see, J. P. Moreland, ‘Tweaking Dallas Willard’s Ontology of the Human Person’, *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 8 (2) (2015), pp. 187-202.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

<sup>56</sup> Charles Taliaferro, ‘The Virtues of Embodiment’, *Philosophy* 76 (2001), pp. 111-125.

<sup>57</sup> For a detailed treatment of substance dualism and the value of human persons, see: Moreland and Rae, *Body & Soul*; and Patrick Lee and Robert P. George, *Body-Self Dualism in Contemporary Ethics and Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>58</sup> N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2008), p. 171.

<sup>59</sup> Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, p. 162.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 203.

Wright rejected this? Wright offers a variety of arguments from the New Testament for the reality of a disembodied intermediary state. I will focus on only a few.

In Acts 23:7-9, Paul, before an audience of Sadducees and Pharisees, sides firmly with the Pharisees. Regarding this, Wright states,

The most likely interpretation – and a very revealing one it is – is that those who held to belief in resurrection in this period, that is, the Pharisees, had also developed regular ways of describing the intermediate state. In that world, nobody supposed the dead were already raised; resurrection, we have seen, describes new bodily life after a present mode of ‘life after death’. So: where and what are the dead now? To this, we may surmise (and verse 9 will demonstrate it further), the Pharisees gave the answer: they are at present like angels, or spirits. They are presently disembodied; in the future, they will receive their new embodiment.<sup>61</sup>

In Acts 12:14-15 Christians are praying for Peter who, unknown to them, has just been miraculously released from prison. Peter knocks at the door and after hearing Peter’s voice Mary (Mark’s brother) announces to everyone, “It’s his angel!” Regarding this, Wright explains,

‘It’s his angel’, in other words, does not mean, ‘He has been raised from the dead.’ It is a way of referring to the intermediate ‘angelic’ state in which the person will now remain, with his body dead and buried, until the resurrection. And it is this intermediate state, in whatever form it is described, that the Sadducees seem to have denied, along with the doctrine of resurrection itself.<sup>62</sup>

After considering a number of sources, Wright makes clear the view of the Pharisees,

We must assume, from everything else we know of the Pharisaic tradition... that these great sages believed in eventual resurrection; here they seem to have been employing new concepts of a body/soul dualism to explain what happened between bodily death and the final state of blessedness.<sup>63</sup>

Elsewhere, he writes,

Part of the Pharisaic belief in future bodily resurrection is the belief that some sort of continuing personal identity, however hard it may be to describe, is necessary if the person being raised at the last day is after all to be identical with the person who has died. If that is not the case, the whole theological rationale for resurrection, namely, the reward of justice in the future life, collapses in ruins.<sup>64</sup>

Clearly, the Pharisees, Peter and Paul, held to a disembodied state between death and resurrection.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>62</sup> N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God, Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol. 3* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), p. 134.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>65</sup> The Sadducees denied the of the resurrection and life after death in general. For Wright’s treatment of the Sadducees on this, see *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, pp. 131-40.

Furthermore, Wright argues that Jesus sided with the Pharisees on this issue. Wright makes his case from Jesus' response when questioned by the Sadducees regarding marriage after the resurrection (Mk. 12:18-27, Mt. 22:23-33, Lk. 20:27-40).<sup>66</sup> Jesus concludes his reply by saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. He is not God of the dead, but of the living." According to Wright, this is an argument for a disembodied existence between death and resurrection.<sup>67</sup> Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are dead, and have not been resurrected, yet are alive before God in a state Wright refers to as 'disembodied' and 'non-bodily.'<sup>68</sup> Therefore, Jesus believed in a disembodied intermediate state before the resurrection.

SUBSTANCE DUALISM has a very natural account of the disembodied intermediary state.<sup>69</sup> Before death, I exist as an embodied soul. At death, my body dies and eventually ceases to exist, yet I remain as a disembodied soul. I retain my personal identity, until the general resurrection when I receive a new glorified body. It must be understood; SD advocates hold that this disembodied state is both "abnormal" and a kind of "minimal existence."<sup>70</sup> It is a state in which persons cannot flourish.<sup>71</sup>

The Christian physicalist faced with the grim task of explaining our disembodied existence in the intermediate state.<sup>72</sup> Consequently, Christian physicalists have largely denied that human persons exist in such a state. For the Christian physicalist, persons either do not exist at all in between death and resurrection or they exist as some sort of material object, which raises severe difficulties for their view.<sup>73</sup> However, Wright's view faces a far worse difficulty.

### 3.2 Wright's Dilemma

Wright is faced with a serious dilemma: embrace SUBSTANCE DUALISM or deny the disembodied intermediary state. If he rejects SD, then what is it that exists in the intermediate state?<sup>74</sup> It can't be my body. My body is dead and not before God. Notions of narrative and relational ontology will not help, because narrative does not ground personal identity, but is rather an expression of one's identity. Likewise, relational ontology is of no help either, because there must be something that exists if it is to be in relation to God.

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<sup>66</sup> According to Wright, the answer Jesus gives here is the most important passage about the resurrection in the Gospels. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, p. 415.

<sup>67</sup> Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, pp. 423-26.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 424, and p. 425.

<sup>69</sup> For a defense of the coherence of disembodied existence, see: Paul Helm, 'A Theory of Disembodied Survival and Re-embodied Existence', *Religious Studies* 14 (1978), pp. 15-26; and Richard Purtill, 'The Intelligibility of Disembodied Survival', *Christian Scholars Review* 5 (I) (1975), pp. 3-22.

<sup>70</sup> Stephen T. Davis, *Risen Indeed: Making Sense of the Resurrection* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), p. 90.

<sup>71</sup> Plantinga, 'Materialism and Christian Belief', p. 99.

<sup>72</sup> See for example, Keith E. Yandell, 'Materialism and Post-Mortem Survival' in Thomas M. Crisp and Matthew Davidson (eds.), *Knowledge and Reality: Essays in Honor of Alvin Plantinga* (Netherlands: Springer, 2006), pp. 257-98.

<sup>73</sup> Davis, *Risen Indeed*, p. 89.

<sup>74</sup> To be clear, I am not arguing that preserving personal identity between death and resurrection is difficult on a materialist view, although I think it is. There are a variety of materialist accounts: the simulacrum view (Peter van Inwagen, 'The possibility of Resurrection', *International Journal of Philosophy of Religion* 9 (1998), pp. 114-21), the fusion view (Dean Zimmerman, 'The Compatibility of Materialism and Survival: The 'Falling Elevator' Model', *Faith and Philosophy* 16 (1999), pp. 194-212), the constitution view (Lynne Rudder Baker, 'Material Persons and the Doctrine of Resurrection', *Faith and Philosophy* 18 (2001), pp. 151-67), and the animalist view (Trenton Merricks, 'How to Live Forever Without Saving Your Soul: Physicalism and Immortality' in Kevin Corcoran (ed.), *Soul Body and Survival* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001). However, none of these philosophers hold to a disembodied intermediate state. Because Wright is committed to a disembodied intermediary state, Wright faces an even worse dilemma than most Christian materialists.

Narrative and relation presuppose personal identity; they do not provide grounding for or even an account of identity.

Plantinga has argued that individuals have an impossible time understanding how matter could think, not because they can't understand the science, if there were such a science, but because when faced with modal intuitions, they "see" that matter is not a candidate for thinking. It is as irrational a proposition as, "The number five weighs 5 pounds."<sup>75</sup> Reflecting on those concepts reveal it's impossibility. The same applies to the conjunction a disembodied intermediate state and the rejection of SD. It is inconceivable that if when a thing ceases to exist, that it continue to exist in any state, including an intermediate state.<sup>76</sup> Given the nature of identity if  $x$  is identical to  $y$ , and  $y$  ceases to exist at  $t_1$ , then  $x$  likewise ceases to exist at  $t_1$ . Consequently, if SD is false and you are identical to your body, then when your body ceases to exist you cease to exist. However, if  $x$  is not identical to  $y$ , and  $y$  ceases to exist at  $t_1$ , then  $y$  may still exist at  $t_1$ . This later view is the SD thesis: that a human person is not identical to a body, and therefore can exist even if their body does not. Wright's commitment to a spiritual and disembodied intermediate state commits him to SD.

### 3.3 Can Wright Recover the Soul?

Wright emphatically states his rejection of mind-body dualism. I have argued he cannot. There is, however, a way forward for Wright. I suggest Wright abandons his rejection of the soul and understands his arguments as rightfully aimed at a particular view of the soul. Careful reflection reveals that Wright's objections are not as he thinks. He has not provided any reason to abandon the soul. Rather, he has provide objections to an extreme version of anthropological dualism, which has three features:

EXTREME ANTHOPOLOGICAL DUALISM (EAD): (i) the soul is special to God, but the body isn't, (ii) the afterlife is valuable, but this life is not, and (iii) the soul is autonomously immortal.

Recall the thesis of SUBSTANCE DUALISM:

SUBSTANCE DUALISM (SD): Human persons are not identical to their bodies, but consist of a physical body and a non-physical substantial soul, provided that having a physical body is not necessary for being a human person.

EXTREME ANTHOPOLOGICAL DUALISM and SD are disparate views. Moreover, I have argued that SD does not entail any individual tenant of EAD. Consequently, Wright's argument must be modified to a rejection of EAD. With this modification, I am in full agreement with Wright. EAD is neither biblically nor philosophically defensible. However, Wright mistakenly aims his arguments against SD in general. He need not continue in this mistake. Notice that the rejection of EAD does not entail the rejection of SD. That is, one can accept SD and reject EAD. The extreme anthropological dualism Wright rejects is simply not a live option among Christians doing work in the philosophy of mind. Hence, Wright can keep his rejection of EAD without also rejecting SD. In this way, Wright can save the soul.

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<sup>75</sup> Plantinga, 'Materialism and Christian Belief', p. 109.

<sup>76</sup> This isn't an issue of knowing the science of consciousness or even of what God can do miraculously. God cannot do things that are metaphysically impossible, such as, make an elephant a proposition.

## 4. Substance Dualism and the Resurrection of the Dead

Historic Christian faith, like historical Jewish faith, is typically expressed not in terms of the immortality of the soul, but through faith in the resurrection of the dead. One might argue that the immortality of the soul is not essential to historic Christian faith, but that the resurrection of the dead is essential. Historically, Christians, such as Thomas Aquinas, look forward, after the final judgment, to the soul re-animating a glorified body to experience the next stage of its existence. A human soul enjoying only a separate existence would be an incomplete and not a satisfied soul. One could argue that SD largely abstracts from this historical dimension, to the point that many Christians would not recognize their faith in the pronouncements of SD.<sup>77</sup>

There is much to say in reply. I agree that belief in a Platonic immortal soul is not essential to historic Christianity. However, belief in a Platonic immortality of the soul is not essential to SD either. The Early Church knew this well. For example, the 4<sup>th</sup> century Christian bishop, Nemesius advocated for SD, yet rejected Plato's immortality of the soul in favor the biblical teaching on the life of the soul after death. He writes,

There are many proofs of its [the soul's] immortality in Plato and the rest, but those are very difficult, hard to comprehend and scarcely we—understood by those brought up in the sciences. For us let the teaching of the sacred books suffice as a proof of the soul's immortality, for it is reliable in itself, since it is divinely inspired.<sup>78</sup>

SD does not logically entail Platonism and the Early Church understood this.

Of course it is true that historic Christianity has never understood eternal life as a disembodied existence, but rather as a final existence with a resurrected body. However, this is also true of historic Christian thinkers who adopt SD. Recall, in section 2.3 I listed a number of reasons given by Medieval Christians for why the soul must be brought back together with a resurrected body. This shows that the conjunction of SD and the eschatological hope of a resurrected body is certainly a part of the historical Christian view.

Consider historical Christian confessions of faith. When the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) says that 'my only comfort in life and death is that I belong, body and soul, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ,'<sup>79</sup> the reference to 'body and soul' presupposes SD. This is evident when the same catechism says later, explaining the resurrection of the dead, that 'not only will my soul be taken immediately after this life to Christ its head, but even my flesh, raised by the power of Christ, will be reunited with my soul and made like Christ's glorious body.'<sup>80</sup> The Heidelberg Catechism's view of what happens at death is not unique or unusual, but reflects the historical Christian eschatological picture. Certainly, SD is not essential to mere Christianity. However, I have argued that the doctrine of the disembodied states that proceeds the resurrection of the dead is best accounted for in terms of SD.

Still, one could argue that SD does have difficulty accounting for why we need resurrected bodies. If the person is a soul, then a resurrected body seems unnecessary, as it

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<sup>77</sup> This objection was raised by an anonymous reviewer.

<sup>78</sup> Nemesius, *On the Nature of Man*, translated by R. W. Sharples and P. J. van der Eijk (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2008), section 2, 38, p. 77.

<sup>79</sup> *Heidelberg Catechism, A New Translation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Reformed Board of Publications, 1975), question and answer 1.6.

<sup>80</sup> *Heidelberg Catechism*, question and answer 57.

is unclear why it is true on SD that resurrection requires a bodily life after death.<sup>81</sup> Although, this does not give us cause to reject SD, it does reveal an underdeveloped aspect of contemporary SD. As of late, most SD advocates have not offered a positive thesis about the embodiment of the soul and why a soul requires a resurrected body.<sup>82</sup> I do not have space to develop and defend such an account here.<sup>83</sup> What I aim to do is offer a sketch of what such an account could look like, which also fits historical Christian commitments to the resurrection of the body without undermining the historical Christian belief in the disembodied intermediate state. Such a view must hold that we are not identical to our body, so we can exist while disembodied, yet require that we have a resurrected body to satisfy the eschatological intentions of God.

## 4.2 The Resurrection of Bodily Souls

Elsewhere, C. Stephan Evans and I argue for a view we call ‘bodily souls’.<sup>84</sup> This view holds that the soul is the person and an immaterial substance. However, the self on this view is a bodily self. The soul is the form of the body, and the body is in a sense a form in which a soul exists when embodied. The body is not simply another object in the world. Rather, the body is the form or the mode in which I exercise my agency and relationality. It is how I exist as an object in the world. However, in another sense the body is something distinct from my self, another object in the world whose characteristics I must take account of when I act. Accordingly, the soul requires a body, not to exist, but to exist as God intended us to exist. Already these features of the bodily soul view begin to show why we require a body, including a resurrected body. What follows are further details I take as extension this bodily soul view. Some of these details help us understand why bodily souls require a resurrected body.

The following draws heavily from the Late Medieval Aristotelians<sup>85</sup>, and more recent work by E. J. Lowe<sup>86</sup> and J. P. Moreland.<sup>87</sup> On this view, the human soul is a non-physical mereologically simple spatially unextended substance. Although it is not complex with respect to parthood, it is quite complex with regard to its essence. It is the internal essence of the soul that contains the capacities for consciousness and for animating, enlivening, and teleologically developing its body. That is, it is the instantiated soul whose essence is the form of the body.

The human body, according to this view, is a mode of the human soul; it is an ensouled complex physical structure. As many Early Church thinkers would hold, the soul

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<sup>81</sup> See, for example, Lynne Rudder Baker, ‘Death and the Afterlife’ in William J. Wainwright (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook for the Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 376.

<sup>82</sup> This is likely a result from the fact that Christian philosophers largely make their arguments for SD in opposition to naturalism in general and physicalism or materialism about human persons in particular. Having said that, I am convinced that SD advocates need to offer an account of embodiment that makes sense of why we require a resurrected body.

<sup>83</sup> For a more developed account, see, Brandon L. Rickabaugh, ‘The Resurrection of Bodily Souls: A Neo-Aristotelian Account’, forthcoming.

<sup>84</sup> See, C. Stephen Evans and Brandon L. Rickabaugh, ‘What “What Does it Mean to Be a Bodily Soul?”’, *Philosophia Christi* 17 (2) (2005), pp. 315-330. Evans coined the term ‘bodily soul’. Here I add further details of what such a view could look like. However, these are my own additions and do not necessarily represent Evans’ view.

<sup>85</sup> See, Robert Pasnau, *Metaphysical Themes: 1274-1671* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2011); and Dennis Des Chene, *Life’s Form: Late Aristotelian Conceptions of the Soul* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000).

<sup>86</sup> E. J. Lowe, ‘Non-Cartesian Substance Dualism’, in *After Physicalism*, edited by Benedikt Paul Göcke (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), 48-71.

<sup>87</sup> See, J. P. Moreland, ‘Tweaking Dallas Willard’s Ontology of the Human Person’, *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 8 (2) (2015): 187-202; and ‘In Defense of a Thomistic-Like Dualism’, forthcoming.

can exist without the body, but the body cannot exist without the soul.<sup>88</sup> Accordingly, the parts of the body are inseparable parts, where  $x$  is an inseparable part of  $y$  means that  $x$  cannot be separated from  $y$  and continue to exist. The inseparable parts of the body stand in internal relations to each other and to the essence of the soul. Unlike materialist view, and some SD views, the body is not a mereological aggregate of separable parts. Notice that this view naturally leads to a high view of the body. The body is not a mere mechanical machine. Nor is the body purely physical. Rather, the body is a mode of the soul, an inseparable part of the soul.

What it means to be disembodied on this view is unique. Accordingly, to be disembodied is for the soul to lose a mode (being embodied) but to retain the potential to be modified differently at a later time (to be re-embodied). It is the soul that sustains one's personal identity in a disembodied state. A close analogy would be a shaped piece of clay losing part of its shape. The clay remains although it is modified by a change in shape. However, the shape cannot exist apart from the clay. Similarly, when I lose a limb, I no longer have an important component of my body (a very complicated structural mode), and the limb ceases to be a limb.

Accordingly, the soul is a bodily soul in the sense that the soul is what makes a body. One of the purposes of the essence of the human soul is to enliven, animate, and develop its body. Conversely, the body is dependent for its very existence upon the soul. The soul needs to be embodied to fulfill its telos, its purpose, as God created it. In order to be fully alive according to God's intentions for humanity, we must be embodied. Because the body is a mode of the soul, this view maintains that embodiment is a power of the soul. That is, it is the very nature of the soul that it is fulfilled in embodiment.

Likewise, this view provides a natural account for why my soul requires this body to be glorified and resurrected. My body is uniquely and inseparably a part of me. I ensoul my body. It is the essence of my soul that makes my body what it is. At death, I no longer ensoul matter, but will again at the final resurrection. Because the essence of my soul makes my body what it is, when I am re-embodied, my soul forms not just any body, but my body. This is possible because the body is not merely physical and is a highly complex physical structure. It is not a mere aggregate of separable parts, which cannot be replaced and remain the same.

Moreover, this version of neo-Aristotelian or hylomorphic SUBSTANCE DUALISM entails the necessity of the body for the natural functioning of the soul's powers. Denis Des Chene explains,

The human soul is not merely joined with the body in fact. It is the *kind* of soul which, though capable of separate existence...nevertheless by its nature presupposes union with a body, and moreover with a particular kind of body, a body with organs, in order to exercise all its powers—even reason insofar as reason needs the senses to give it material for abstraction.<sup>89</sup>

Elsewhere, Des Chene notes, 'Even the intellect requires, so long as the soul is joined with a body, a certain disposition of the brain.'<sup>90</sup> Consequently, specific neurological conditions closely associated with the soul's capacity for consciousness. Accordingly, a dysfunctional body can very easily bring about a dysfunctional soul if the damaged part of the body is

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<sup>88</sup> See for example, Nemesius, *On the Nature of Man*, section 2, 37, p. 77.

<sup>89</sup> Dennis Des Chene, *Life's Form: Late Aristotelian Conceptions of the Soul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 71. Cited in Moreland, 'In Defense of a Thomistic-Like Dualism', forthcoming.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 96.

relevant to the function of some aspect of the soul. The soul cannot function in its normal and intended way without a specific body naturally structured precisely for that soul's functioning.

What this means is that the soul cannot flourish or naturally function without a body. However, by God's grace, in the disembodied state, the soul may still be able to function in some regular ways. Other examples would be in near death experiences, where these individuals accurately report seeing and hearing specific things. This of course is not the natural state of the soul. In its embodied state, the powers of the soul, when functioning according to God's design, require a body for its full normal activation. As Bonaventure argued, the human soul has a natural inclination to be joined to its body.<sup>91</sup> Of course, this explanation bottoms out with God's creative purposes of us, but all ultimate explanation will bottom out with God's intentions. Moreover, this view fits perfectly within the historical Christian view. On this version of SD, we can exist as persons in the disembodied intermediate state. Moreover, the resurrection of the body is not a mere afterthought, but necessary for each of us to fulfill our eschatological telos as a bodily soul.

## Conclusion

I have defended two propositions. First, SUBSTANCE DUALISM remains unscathed by Wright's criticisms. Secondly, Wright's work on the New Testament regarding the disembodied intermediate state assumes SUBSTANCE DUALISM. Either Wright must abandon his rejection of the soul or his commitment to the New Testament view of a disembodied intermediate state. I have repeatedly shown that Wright fails to interact with the actual views of SD advocates. Unfortunately, this is a mistake is common with other SD opponents like Nancy Murphy, Warren Brown, and Joel Green.<sup>92</sup> Recently, materialist philosophers have admitted that the common philosophical and scientific objections to SD fail.<sup>93</sup> I have argued the same is true regarding the most common theological objections to SUBSTANCE DUALISM.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Bonaventure, *Commentarius in Librium Sententiarum* IV, d. 43, a. 1, q. 1, 4.884.

<sup>92</sup> This is shown quite well in, John W. Cooper, 'Exaggerated Rumors of Dualism's Demise: A Review Essay on Body, Soul and Human Life,' *Philosophia Christi* 11 (2009), pp. 453-64.

<sup>93</sup> José Gusmão Rodrigues, 'There are No Good Objections to Substance Dualism', *Philosophy* 89 (2) (2014), pp. 199-222; and William G. Lycan, 'Giving Dualism its Due', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 87 (4) (2009), pp. 551-63.

<sup>94</sup> I am grateful to J. P. Moreland and John W. Cooper for helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

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