AFFECTIONS OF PENTECOST: ATONEMENT, REDEMPTION, AND THE SEXUALLY VIOLATED BODY

by

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ABSTRACT

This study constructs a doctrinal articulation of atonement using a Pentecostal feminist methodology, applying a critical and constructive theology of the body. This somatology responds to the question of how those who have suffered traumatic sexual violation experience bodily redemption—particularly redeemed sexual relationality. It engages feminist critiques that reject Christ's atonement as salvific and locate redemption elsewhere. These feminists assume atonement upholds ethical ideals of passivity, in which abused persons are expected to surrender their right to bodily autonomy as Jesus surrendered himself to the Father's will on the cross. Other theologians have offered alternative views of atonement in response to this critique. This study responds by drawing from Pentecostal resources, for which embodied spiritual praxis and theological reflection and construction are co-informing. These resources show how feminist rejections of atonement share an underlying assumption of bodily autonomy that limits their ability to cast a vision of redemption after traumatic violation.

Despite using rhetoric of embodiment and interdependence, feminist theologies that assert the right to autonomy over the body envision the body as property controlled by human will. While upholding the right to protection against harm, this view of autonomy cannot envision bodily redemption in terms of mutual, communal agency in the remaking of the self following sexual abuse. Theologically, applying this understanding of bodily autonomy to Christ's role in atonement fails to offer a hopeful, relational view of bodily redemption. The study traces the developments of these feminist theologies on bodily autonomy, showing their effects on trauma-informed views of atonement and redemption. Finally, the thesis

develops a Pentecostal feminist heuristic tool, 'affections of Pentecost.' Applied to atonement, this heuristic derives from an understanding of agency in which human selves operates in trusting relationality with Christ's transformative work through the Holy Spirit via affective embodied religious practices. 'Affections of Pentecost' offers a lens for doctrinal engagement that reflects findings from trauma literature about how those who have suffered sexual bodily trauma can live well in its aftermath, as well as presenting a theological vision of atonement that speaks to the hope of embodied redemption.

For Mom, and Samantha Harper-Robins.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract i

Dedication iii

Acknowledgements iv

Table of Contents vi

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: Feminist Conceptions of Bodily Autonomy, Sexual Violation, and Redemption 12

Part I: Developing a 'Critical Somatology' to Evaluate Bodily Autonomy 17

Part II: Applying a Critical Somatology to a Feminist Critique of Atonement 37

Part III: Feminist Theology, Bodily Autonomy, and Next Steps 63

Chapter 2: A Somatological Analysis of Feminist Critiques of Atonement 65

Part I: A Somatological Analysis of Brock, Brown, and Parker's Atonement Critiques 67

Part II: *Spirit and Trauma* and *Resurrecting Wounds*: A Somatological Analysis of Shelly Rambo 102

Part III: Bodily Ownership and Its Limitations for Envisioning Redemption 114

Chapter 3: A Somatological Analysis of Kathryn Tanner's Atonement Theology 118

Part I: The Effects of a 'Disembodied' Atonement Doctrine on Embodied Trauma 120

Part II: Embodiment, Agency, and Tanner's Feminist Articulation of Atonement 138

Part III: Somatological Atonement Applied to Brock, Brown, and Parker's Interpretation of the 'Satisfaction Tradition' 158

Part IV: Overcoming the 'High/Low' Christological Binary in Atonement Theologies 173

Chapter 4: Pentecostal and Academic Theology: Corporal Knowledge and Corporal Ignorance of Redemption 178

Part I: Pentecostal and Academic Corporal Knowledge of Bodily Autonomy 181

Part II: Pentecostal and Academic Corporal Ignorance of Bodily Autonomy 198

Part III: Corporal Knowledge (and Ignorance) of Bodily Redemption: A Pentecostal Feminist Response to Shelly Rambo 219

Conclusion: The Path for a Feminist Pentecostal Somatology of Atonement 229

Chapter 5: Atonement as 'Affections of Pentecost': A Pentecostal Feminist Constructive Theology 231

Part I: Consequences of 'Crucicentric' Atonement for Imagining Redeemed Sexual Relationality 236

Part II: 'No Atonement Without Pentecost': Affective Bodily Worship Praxis and Bodily Redemption 250

Part III: Affections of Pentecost: A Heuristic for Framing Atonement 267

Part IV: The Promise of a Feminist Theology of Pentecost for Atonement Theology 290

Conclusion: The Promise of Pentecost for Ecumenism: Uniting the Body of Christ 293

Bibliography 309

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, feminist theologians have critiqued the ways in which Christian doctrines have been constructed based on patriarchal assumptions that can perpetuate systems of oppression and abuse. The relationship between doctrinal construction and the perpetuation of sexual abuse has received renewed attention in the wake of the #MeToo social media movement.[1] Christian women named their own experiences of sexual abuse using the hashtag #ChurchToo. As a result, feminist and other scholars have named the need for appropriate academic theological, ethical, and pastoral responses.[2] This thesis enters into this stream of feminist theology to address the issue of doctrine as it touches the lives of those who have experienced sexual abuse.

My thesis focuses on the Christian doctrine of atonement from a trauma-informed perspective, bringing together insights from feminist and Pentecostal theologies in an attempt to provide a theological reconstruction that offers a vision of flourishing for survivors of sexual abuse and the faith communities that support them. *Atonement* here refers in a broad sense to the doctrine of Jesus' work in reconciling humanity with God, traditionally centering on his death on the cross, but including his life and resurrection. (And, as this study will show, the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit as well.) Part of feminist Christian theologians' task is 'to reconstruct the basic theological symbols of God,…sin and redemption, and the church, in order to define these

[1] Jayme R. Reaves and David Tombs, '#MeToo Jesus: Naming Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse,' *Review & Expositor* 117, no. 2 (2020).

[2] Linda M. Ambrose and Kimberly Alexander, 'Pentecostal Studies Face the #MeToo Movement: Introduction,' *Pneuma*: *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 41, no. 1 (2019); Jennifer W. Davidson, 'Editorial Introduction: #MeToo and #ChurchToo: Reflections on the Intersections of the #MeToo Movement on Churches, Seminaries, and Theological Studies,' *Review & Expositor* 117, no. 2 (2020).

symbols in a gender-inclusive and egalitarian way.'[3] In their critical assessments aimed at human liberation, feminists consider 'theological formulations from the viewpoint of women's experience and on behalf of women's well-being.'[4] As part of this reconstructive work, feminists have critiqued models of atonement that make violence and life-destroying self-sacrifice ethical ideals for survivors of sexual abuse.

Feminists reject expressions of atonement in which Jesus is understood to absorb abuse meted out by God that human beings rightfully deserve, by way of standing in their place and receiving the punishment due them. They argue that this logic has 'sustained a culture of abuse and led to the abandonment of victims of abuse and oppression.'[5] Elaine Heath notes how such views destroy survivors' conceptions of God: 'We knew that with all our human faults we would never subject our children to torture and murder in order to pay off someone's offense…. Was God a sadist? Was Jesus a masochist?'[6] Rita Nakashima Brock refers to 'atonement Christologies,'[7] meaning conceptions of Christ's work in which atonement plays a role in salvation, as 'cosmic child abuse'[8] for this reason. Likewise, Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker reject classical models of atonement for promoting 'divine child abuse.'[9] For those who have experienced sexual abuse, images of God that sanction violence and murder as necessary

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[3] Rosemary Radford Ruether, 'The Emergence of Christian Feminist Theology,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, ed. Susan Frank Parsons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 4.

[4] Flora Keshgegian, 'The Scandal of the Cross: Revisiting Anselm and His Feminist Critics,' *Anglican Theological Review* 82, no. 3 (2000): 476.

[5] Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?' in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse: A Feminist Critique*, ed. Joanne Carlson Brown and Carol R. Bohn (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press 1989), 9.

[6] Elaine A. Heath, *We Were the Least of These: Reading the Bible with Survivors of Sexual Abuse* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011), 130.

[7] Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York, NY: Crossroads Publishing, 1988), 55.

[8] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 56.

[9] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?' 2.

for salvation—particularly when construed as an ethical ideal—cannot promote a vision of flourishing. Contextualising the cross for those who have experienced sexual violence is therefore a necessary task for Christian theology. While feminists from many Christian traditions have contributed to the academic literature on atonement, feminist Pentecostals have not yet engaged at length with this doctrine. This thesis aims to demonstrate how a feminist-informed somatology (theology of the body), drawing from the resources of feminist theologians working from Pentecostal and charismatic traditions, offers unique and necessary insights for developing a critical and constructive atonement theology.

A quick note on word usage. Scholars debate the most appropriate term to use when speaking of those who have experienced sexual abuse. Many prefer the term 'survivor' over the term 'victim,' to demonstrate a sense of identity that does not center the experience of victimization, recognising that complex factors influence how persons self-identify.[10] Others prefer to use another term that does not identify the victim within the space of the experience of past abuse, for example, 'thriver.'[11] My own preference is to use the full term 'those who have experienced sexual abuse.' However, as this is too awkward to use repetitively, I choose the dominant terminology of 'survivor,' while recognising the limitations of the term. In addition, some scholars use the term 'recovery' to describe the process of coming to live well in the aftermath of traumatic violation.[12] However, more recent scholarship problematises this

[10] Kaitlyn M. Boyle and Kimberly B. Rogers, 'Beyond the Rape "Victim"/"Survivor" Binary: How Race, Gender and Identity Processes Interact to Shape Distress,' *Sociological Forum* 35, no. 2 (2020): 323–45.

[11] Nicola Price-Tebbutt, 'The Theology of Safeguarding,' in *Methodist Conference Agenda* 2 (2021), 27.1.6, online at https://www.methodist.org.uk/documents/6562/conf-2021-27-the-theology-of-safeguarding_NsSFKxd.pdf.

[12] For example, Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror; With a New Epilogue by the Author*. New York: Basic Books, 2015. Herman's book is considered a classic in the field of trauma studies.

terminology, since it can oversimplify the complexity of how trauma sufferers come to a sense of selfhood. I prefer Karen O'Donnell's term 'post-traumatic remaking,'[13] and refer to the process of living relationally well following trauma with terms such as reconstruction of the self rather than recovery, for this reason. At the same time, when engaging with scholars who use the term 'recovery,' I employ that term in context. All biblical quotations refer to the New Revised Standard Version, unless otherwise stated.

Thinking doctrinally about the effects of trauma on the body, and how doctrine has to touch life to hold meaning, leads to my research question. Namely, how do those who have experienced sexual abuse come to know fullness of embodied life and relationships in the aftermath of traumatic violation? Put in theological terms, how can one speak of the Christian promise of bodily redemption, and the process of how humans come to know it, in the context of traumatic sexual violation? Since the germination of this research project in 2020, a number of academic works have been published calling on the church to recognise experiences of trauma in conjunction with theological studies, specifically within feminist theologies.[14] Most directly related to this study, *When Did We See You Naked* presents the claim that Jesus' crucifixion as narrated in the Gospel accounts describes him as a victim of what we today would recognise as sexual abuse.[15] It is the insights from this latter work that most closely guide how I approach the question, and why I choose atonement rather than redemption as a theological locus.

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[13] Karen O'Donnell, 'Surviving Trauma at the Foot of the Cross,' in *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse*, ed. Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs and Rocío Figueroa (London, SCM Press, 2021), 263.

[14] Karen O'Donnell and Katie Cross, eds., *Feminist Trauma Theologies: Body, Scripture and Church in Critical Perspective* (London: SCM Press, 2020); Karen O'Donnell and Katie Cross, eds., *Bearing Witness: Intersectional Perspectives on Trauma Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2022).

[15] Reaves, Tombs, and Figueroa, *When Did We See You Naked?*

Given the effects of trauma on the body and selfhood, I seek to name how the traumatic experience of sexual bodily violation informs an *embodied* Christian understanding of redemption. If redemption includes embodied relationality, both within our bodies and in relationship with others, the role Jesus' body plays in a Christian view of redemption—particularly when reconciliation is understood to come as a result of Jesus' death on the cross—becomes key. Put another way, I wonder, along with other feminists, how the violent torture and death of Jesus' body can be connected with a vision of flourishing life for those who have experienced sexual bodily violence. This study also asks how Christian faith and practice can help victims recover the sense of empowering personal agency needed to thrive. These questions drive a central exploration of this thesis: how conceptions of the body, particularly feminist concerns for bodily autonomy, affect a theological understanding of atonement. In other words, what part does the death and resurrection of Jesus' body mean for our redemption? The choice of atonement as a theological locus allows the space to explore the relationship between Christ's body and ours in redemption.

I incorporate insights from Pentecostal theology and the body in my constructive work, particularly as they have been enriched by feminist scholars working within that tradition. I use the term 'Pentecostal theology' to refer to the theology arising from global Christian communities that are recognised as part of the broad pentecostal and charismatic traditions.[16] Pentecostalism offers valuable theological resources that have been marginalised in broader feminist discourses which can broaden our understanding of doctrine and praxis. Feminist

[16] See Amos Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 4–7.

theologies offer resources for challenging patriarchal assumptions and empowering women. Since many feminist scholars consider Pentecostalism inherently misogynistic, Pentecostal theology has been neglected as a resource for feminists who do not work from within those traditions, and scholars within those traditions largely use feminist resources for internal critique. My research breaks that binary by naming and incorporating the connection points where Pentecostal theology can speak to feminist concerns, based in its own inherent resources. While my own work uses these resources, it does not limit its application to communities that identify as Pentecostal or charismatic. Yet, it is a Pentecostal theology in the sense that it names as central the Holy Spirit's work at Pentecost as it touches all areas of life and doctrine. How I understand Pentecost as central to Christian transformation, specifically through the affections and our relational vulnerability in expressing them, forms the core of this thesis.

All Christians recognise the day of Pentecost as a key event in the history and development of the church. Yet outside pentecostal circles, the event's significance for the development of doctrine has been largely overlooked. To address this limitation, I use Wolfgang Vondey's approach to Pentecostalism as an ecumenical bridge. Vondey identifies the crux of pentecostalism *theologically* in a way that encompasses the broader Christian tradition. The movement 'can be identified by the day of Pentecost as the concern for an immediate encounter with God through the Spirit of Christ manifested in discernible signs and wonders as evidence of God's transforming and redeeming presence directing all life towards the kingdom of God.'[17] This definition of Pentecostal theology serves the goals of this thesis in important ways. It identifies the core of theologising with an event that is universally shared across Christian traditions,

[17] Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (London: T&T Clark, 2017), 4.

offering ecumenical potential. It also concerns itself with concrete embodied experiences and practices rooted in Christian narrative and tradition (the history and practices of the day of Pentecost), and oriented toward the goal of redemption.

Feminists who begin from a Pentecostal theological approach bring concerns for pneumatology and God's interceding presence to their understanding of questions of gender, power, etc. I have elsewhere argued that Pentecostal feminists possess a 'somatic pneumatology,' which I identify as 'a theological approach in which embodied encounters with Christ through the Holy Spirit, resulting in physical, affective and social transformation and narrated through individuals' and faith communities' testimonies, form a basis for critical and constructive work.'[18] This is the framework I use for my own study. Methodologically, I develop a somatology, or a critical and constructive theology of the body, to explore my research question, based on an understanding of relational embodiment with and through the Holy Spirit's redemptive work in Christ.

I proceed as follows. Chapter One establishes the history of second-wave North American feminist understandings of bodily autonomy. Because feminist concerns for bodily autonomy are central to the development of feminist theologies, how the body is conceptualised necessarily affects how doctrine overall is understood, critiqued, and constructed. I introduce two contrasting views of bodily autonomy: the 'bodily ownership' view, where the body is conceived as property owned and controlled by a person's will; and the 'bodily integration' view, which acknowledges complex agency in how persons develop (and lose and reconstruct) a self. I argue

[18] Faith Van Horne, 'Somatic Pneumatology: A Pentecostal Contribution to Feminist Liberation Theology,' *Journal of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* 44, no. 1 (2024): 40.

that the feminist theologies that have most impacted subsequent critical and constructive work hold to the 'ownership' view, and name the consequences of this view for theologising about traumatised bodies. Chapter Two deals with feminist critiques of atonement theology in particular. I outline how theological critiques by Rita Nakashima Brock, Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Ann Parker have shaped subsequent feminist discourses of atonement. I then identify how their conception of bodily autonomy, arising from the 'ownership' view, have consequences for theologising atonement and redemption that contradict the needs of those with traumatised bodies. I then show how Shelly Rambo's trauma-informed theology carries with it assumptions of bodily autonomy rooted in the 'ownership' view in terms of the human/divine relationship, despite her language of embodiment and relationality, and the consequences to viewing humans' relationship with God.

Chapter Three somatologically critiques Kathryn Tanner's feminist response to rejectionist views of atonement. Tanner serves as a representative for feminist approaches that seek to maintain an understanding of atonement as theologically necessary. Yet her approach also shows the limitations of existing feminist constructive work. Her marginalization of the Holy Spirit presents a view that does not sufficiently speak to the affective, embodied needs of survivors. And her Christology maintains a binary ('high' vs. 'low' Christology) that creates barriers for offering a holistic theological vision. Tanner's limitations set up the remaining work of the thesis: establishing and constructing a feminist-informed view of atonement that centers the Holy Spirit's work, at Pentecost.

Chapter Four shows how academic theology and Pentecostal worship praxis reflect different ways of bodily knowing. It concludes that an embodied knowledge of possession and

control in the theological academy has marginalised Pentecostal perspectives. When freed from these constrictions, Pentecostal theology offers a challenge to current academic assumptions that offers a somatically relevant way of constructing doctrine. Finally, Chapter Five engages in this constructive work. I develop a heuristic device for framing atonement, called 'affections of Pentecost'.

By complicating the nature of how we understand the affections, I demonstrate with 'affections of Pentecost' that affective responses include the difficult, even terrifying, alongside joyful and enthusiastic responses. Understood holistically, we experience a full range of Christian affections, our relationality through witness with one another in expressing them, and the possibilities that God opens up through our encounter with Christ in integrating these responses. This relational, affective understanding of Christ's atoning work makes bodily redemption available for survivors—and for all humanity. This feminist Pentecostal theological tool offers a needed constructive element that other scholars can use to inform their constructive work on doctrine more broadly, and that speaks to the needs of all bodies.

According to the most recent *World Christian Encyclopedia* statistics, '8.3 percent of the world population…one in twelve persons today is a pentecostal or charismatic Christian.'[19] However, this shift has not yet been reflected in academic theology, which struggles to incorporate charismatic worship praxis into its theological reflection and construction. As such, academic theology remains unreconciled in terms of reflecting the breadth of the global Christian tradition. Scripture affirms that 'in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting

[19] Nimi Wariboko and L. William Oliverio, Jr., 'The Society for Pentecostal Studies at Fifty Years,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 42, no. 3–4 (2020): 328.

their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us' (2 Cor 5:19, NRSVUE). In somatological terms, God has done something through Christ's body that enables the reconciliation (at-one-ment) of human bodies—individually, collectively, relationally. The change in our bodies that Christ has made possible includes the ability to trust God, since God entrusts us with a particular call: the message of reconciliation. A somatology of atonement that speaks to bodily redemption uncovers how, through Christ, a body that has been violently cut off from the ability to trust (God, others, and self) becomes reconciled to a state of trusting relationality, and, as a result, becomes enabled to share the 'message of reconciliation'.

I argue that this thesis' constructive theology of Pentecost has the potential to creatively engage feminist concerns associated with traditional atonement doctrines in a way that balances both orthodox Christian convictions and the lived realities of sexual abuse survivors. Such a *renewal* approach can bridge the still-lingering liberal/fundamentalist divide that has framed 'Pentecostal' and 'feminist' as seemingly incompatible theological traditions. As renewal theology, a Pentecostal feminist approach 'is not the property of one particular discipline, institution, or practice,' but rather 'pushes the boundaries of the orthodox agenda.'[20] Renewalist theologies are by nature interdisciplinary, affirming 'a possibility of encounter with God that despises no form or method of approach, no discipline, no worldview, and no ideology.'[21] By crossing disciplinary and ideological boundaries, my Pentecostal feminist theological approach

[20]Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 201.

[21] Wolfgang Vondey, 'Conclusion: Christianity and Renewal—A Plea for Interdisciplinarity,' in *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life: Historical, Interdisciplinary, and Renewal Perspectives*, ed. Wolfgang Vondey (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 223.

itself therefore engages in the healing, reconciling mission of God, promoting an ecumenical vision of Christian unity.

CHAPTER 1

FEMINIST CONCEPTIONS OF BODILY AUTONOMY, SEXUAL VIOLATION, AND REDEMPTION

This thesis addresses the question, how do those who have experienced sexual abuse come to know fullness of embodied life and relationships in the aftermath of traumatic violation? Put in theological terms, how can one speak of the Christian promise of bodily redemption in the context of traumatic sexual violation? From a trauma-informed perspective, the question of how Christian survivors of sexual abuse understand themselves in relation to their bodies cannot be separated from how they understand Jesus' abused body, and how the death of Jesus can be understood to play a role in God's work of redemption.

All victims of violence can identify with the death Jesus faced. Yet I argue that this point holds particular significance for those who have experienced sexual violence. I begin from Hilary Scarsella and Stephanie Krehbiel's definition of sexual violence, which includes 'any mode of interpersonal or systemic abuse, coercion, manipulation, silencing, or violence that has a sexual form of expression, a sexual logic, or both.'[1] A growing body of recent scholarship posits that Jesus' public stripping and mocking as recorded in the Gospel texts should be considered sexual violence.[2] Per the definition offered above, which includes acts involving a sexual form of

[1] Hilary Jerome Scarsella and Stephanie Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence: Christian Theological Legacies and Responsibilities,' *Religion Compass* 13, no. 9 (September 2019): 2–3.

[2] Wil Gafney, 'Crucifixion and Sexual Violence,' *Wil's Blog*, March 28, 2013, accessed June 21, 2021, https://www.wilgafney.com/2013/03/28/crucifixion-and-sexual-violence/; Elaine A. Heath, *We Were the Least of These: Reading the Bible with Survivors of Sexual Abuse* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011), 121–32; Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs, and Rocío Figueroa, eds., *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse* (London, SCM Press, 2021); David Tombs, 'The Crucifixion of Jesus: Torture, Sexual Abuse, and the Scandal of the Cross (Oxon: Routledge, 2023); 'Crucifixion, State Terror, and Sexual Abuse,' *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 53 (1999): 89-109; 'Crucifixion, State Terror, and Sexual Abuse: Text and Context,' *Centre for Theology and Public Issues* (NZ: University

expression or logic, I agree with these authors that Jesus' stripping and mocking constitute acts of 'sexual humiliation.'[3] The notion that Jesus experienced sexual abuse may be deeply disturbing for those who have not before considered it. Yet, I consider naming Jesus' crucifixion an act of sexual violence a necessary component in articulating doctrine. This observation contextualises the cross in a significant way for those who have experienced this same violence, and more honestly and fully conveys the Christian hope of bodily redemption—including redeemed sexual relationality.

Acknowledging a sexual component to the violence committed against Jesus' body has important implications for Christian doctrine, especially atonement. Atonement is the reconciling act of Jesus Christ on behalf of humanity, including the promise of bodily resurrection in the aftermath of death. Atonement connects the historical event of the crucifixion with God's cosmic salvific plan in Jesus Christ, including his life, death, resurrection, and ongoing saving work through the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, through which we corporeally, affectively participate. The historical reality of Jesus' embodied suffering and resurrection points toward the eschatological Christian hope of survivors' own fully embodied redemption in our resurrections, even as we live towards that end now. Followers of Jesus take on the responsibility of being 'God's coworkers' (1 Cor 3:9 New Revised Standard Version) in God's redemptive plan, through the power of the Holy Spirit. That work includes the communal remaking of life after the death of bodily violation, both for those who have experienced sexual violence and those who support them.

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of Otago, 2019); and Michael Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse: How the Gospel Passion Narratives Inform a Pastoral Response* (Victoria: Morning Star Publishing, 2014).

[3] David Tombs, 'Crucifixion, State Terror, and Sexual Abuse: Text and Context,' *Centre for Theology and Public Issues* (Otago, NZ: University of Otago, 2019), 3.

Living towards the promise of bodily redemption requires honestly witnessing the testimonies of those who have experienced sexual bodily violation. Witnessing involves participating in the Spirit's work of grieving loss, working in the shadow-space of painful rebuilding, and ushering in new life.[4] Christian theology has struggled to understand sexual relationality within this framework. This difficulty stems from an individualist soteriology (confessing one's personal sins so one's soul can be saved) combined with a view of sanctification which envisions the 'fleshliness' of the body as inherently sinful.[5] Feminist theologians have successfully critiqued the resulting limitations of historical atonement models for addressing the realities of embodied violence, and how certain views of salvation and purity do not account for the goodness of creation, including the liberating potential of healthy sexual relationships. At the same time, they have introduced their own sets of assumptions that hinder envisioning redemption. This chapter details those limitations in terms of how feminists have understood bodily agency in the human-divine relationship, and the implications of those assumptions for articulating a vision of bodily redemption.

I contend that a certain approach to atonement arising from second-wave North American feminist theology is undergirded by a flawed, limited conception of bodily autonomy, which hinders its ability to offer a holistic vision of embodied redemption. We can refer to this view as the 'bodily ownership' view, understood as a right of the willing self to exercise its preferences over the body—essentially viewing the body as property and bodily autonomy as the

[4] I extrapolate this understanding of witnessing from Cheryl Bridges Johns, 'Grieving, Brooding, and Transforming: The Spirit, the Bible and Gender,' in *Grieving, Brooding and Transforming: The Spirit, the Bible and Gender*, 7–19, edited by Cheryl Bridges Johns and Lisa P. Stephenson (Leiden: Brill, 2021). This framing and process is developed in depth in Chapter Five of this thesis.

[5] See Chapter Five of this thesis.

self's exercise of property rights over it. This view envisions salvation as existing internally to human bodies, both individual and communal, who are empowered by exercising their right to refuse to engage in injustice and instead choosing to work for liberation. In terms of the human-divine relationship, empowerment for liberation is not received from the God of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, who enables the transformation of life toward justice. Rather, Jesus is understood as the manifestation of the spirit within all of us.[6] Human communities devoted to following Jesus' way empower one another by preserving the memory of his death and choosing to live toward life. This view of the body holds particular theological consequences for understanding the relationship between what happened to Jesus' body, not only on the cross, but also in conceiving what resurrection and bodily redemption mean. I argue that it creates profound problems for those who have experienced the violation of sexual abuse and hinders a holistic vision of embodied Christian redemption.

Since 'the perception of the body is influenced by the different modes of representation of the body in different times,'[7] how the body is perceived in our own time and contexts shapes Christian doctrinal reflections about the body. This study aims to make explicit the implicit assumptions about embodiment that undergird theological construction in the contemporary (particularly North American) feminist context. My suspicion is that the 'bodily ownership' view grounds the strain of feminist theologies that reject atonement as a locus for redemption. From a trauma-informed perspective, an understanding of empowerment that does not acknowledge situations in which dependency, surrender, and relational re-formation are necessary makes it

[6] This sentence is paraphrased from Rita Nakashima Brock's presentation, 'Let's Bury Atonement Soteriology for Good,' given to the Feminist Theology Network meeting on March 25, 2024, via Zoom.

[7] Sigurdson, 'How to Speak,' 26.

difficult to imagine how a body becomes 'unstuck' from trauma. Theologically, a view of empowerment that arises from within human bodies cannot conceive of power received from the Spirit who corporeally raised Jesus' body from the dead and offers the promise of bodily resurrection.[8] It may even be assumed that such a hope is an oppressive imposition on those experiencing trauma. A Christian hope of bodily redemption through resurrection would then be seen as inherently at odds with responsible engagement with trauma.

In this chapter I argue that such a conception of the body creates a paucity of theological imagination. It stunts the potential for the liberation of bodies towards God's good ends in this life. This chapter develops a somatology, or theology of the body, to explore these questions of embodiment, violation, and redemption that will be employed from different angles throughout the thesis. It then employs this somatology to reveal how the 'bodily ownership' view of autonomy arose within twentieth-century feminist theological scholarship. I show how the assumptions behind this view regarding dependency and power have shaped the direction of subsequent feminist theological responses to issues of soteriology. I begin by defining approaches to bodily autonomy and contrasting two views: the 'bodily ownership' view and the 'bodily integration' view, and show the consequences of each for understanding how those with traumatised bodies can live well in the aftermath of violation. I then show how the development of feminist Christianity within North America reflects the 'bodily ownership' view, and how those corporeal assumptions have shaped feminist conversations around bodies, dependency, and empowerment. I conclude by suggesting how the 'bodily integration' view offers a stronger basis for envisioning bodily redemption. Findings from trauma theory about the need for liberative

[8] See Romans 8:11.

embodied practices demonstrate the link between a 'bodily ownership' view and a stunted approach to imagining life in the aftermath of traumatic violation. I introduce the connection between embodied prayer practice and sexual liberation that feminist Pentecostal scholarship has hinted at. Making this link explicit will serve as a connection point between a 'bodily integration' view of autonomy and a renewed view of atonement, which will be fully developed in the subsequent discussion.

Part I: Developing a 'Critical Somatology' to Evaluate Bodily Autonomy

Examining views of bodily autonomy requires a method of evaluating the body, in order to determine what it means to act as a responsible agent in relationship to one's body. Since 'the body as well as the experience of the body always exist situated,'[9] one can never speak of 'the body' on its own. It always exists in relationship to other bodies, things, etc. To critically evaluate the differing conceptions of bodily autonomy in feminist theologies, I develop a somatology, or theology of the body. As Ola Sigurdson observes, 'To understand the body as a…theological problem, one needs an insight into the history of embodiment or the historicity of the body in order to achieve a more differentiated conception of the body.'[10] This project achieves critical distance for evaluating bodily autonomy and atonement by developing and employing a critical somatology. The below discussion shows how feminist, Pentecostal, and trauma-informed

[9] Ola Sigurdson, 'How to Speak of the Body? Embodiment Between Phenomenology and Theology,' *Studia Theologica* 62, no. 1 (2008): 35.

[10] Sigurdson, 'How To Speak,' 26.

theologies, as well as interdisciplinary contributions from feminist philosophy, create space to 'open up the body' in envisioning redemption.

This chapter outlines the development of second-wave North American feminist theology's concerns surrounding autonomy and the body, in order to establish the context that informs feminist critiques of atonement that appear in Chapter Two. Trauma theory and feminist philosophical approaches to bodily autonomy serve as tools of critical analysis in developing this somatology. When employed together they show how Pentecostal conceptions of bodily autonomy challenge Western academic theological paradigms and therefore offer important alternative considerations in constructive theologies. While this project centers on atonement theology, my hope is that scholars across the theological spectrum can use this analysis as a jumping-off point to consider other doctrines from a somatological perspective. Given the scope of this project and its limitations, the intended outcome of this examination will be a more nuanced view of bodily autonomy that informs a constructive approach to atonement in the North American context, one that promotes holistic flourishing.

Defining Autonomy and Bodily Autonomy

Within a political philosophical context, the concept of autonomy broadly describes what it means to be one's own person, possessing 'the authority to make decisions of practical importance to one's life, for one's own reasons, whatever those reasons may be.'[11] Autonomy can

[11] Catriona MacKenzie, 'Relational Autonomy, Normative Authority and Perfectionism,' *Journal of Social Philosophy* 39, no. 4 (2008): 512.

also be understood as 'self-determination,' and 'includes the ability to shape our own lives and to live authentically rather than being directed by external forces that manipulate or distort us.'[12] A 'negative liberty' view of autonomous choice requires two minimal conditions: it cannot 'cause harm to others' and must be 'non-coerced and reasonably voluntary…to a reasonable degree informed and the result of rational deliberation.'[13] At this basic level, *bodily* autonomy then 'protects a person's capacity to make his or her own decisions *in relation to his or her body*.'[14] Rebuilding the capacity to make decisions about one's body in a safe environment is crucial for those who have experienced traumatic violence, including the collective trauma inflicted on oppressed and marginalised peoples. Oppressors understand that violations to a victim's body fundamentally disrupt their sense of selfhood and agency. Protection *against* bodily intrusion and *support for* decision making regarding one's body are therefore necessary rights.[15] However, as numerous feminist philosophers point out, a *right* to bodily autonomy does not contain the concept. And when applied to one's body, conceptions of agency and autonomy become increasingly complicated.

Possessing the normative authority to make autonomous choices requires 'the capacity, the right and the responsibility to exercise this authority.'[16] However, numerous factors can impair an agent's ability to exercise autonomy. For example, oppressive social conditions and institutional injustice can warp someone's sense of self to the point that her self-perception is

[12] Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper, 'Introduction,' in *Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender*, 1.
[13] MacKenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 419.
[14] Herring and Wall, 'Nature and Significance,' 575. Emphasis in original.
[15] Catriona Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' in *Handbook of Phenomenology and Medicine*, ed. S. Kay Toombs (Norwell, MA, USA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 420–21.
[16] MacKenzie, 'Relational Autonomy,' 512.

false.[17] In that case, some philosophers and legal professionals argue that one's capacity can become so impaired that her choices cannot be said to be autonomous.[18] When one's *capacity* to exercise autonomy is impaired, respecting her *right* to autonomy becomes fraught. From a legal perspective, a distinction can be made between bodily *integrity* and bodily *autonomy*. The difference is that persons 'do not have a *right* to act autonomously,' since autonomy 'is a morally relevant property that requires…moral deliberation.'[19] From a relational view of autonomy expanded beyond a rights framework, institutions have a moral obligation to promote social structures that enhance autonomy in order to facilitate social justice.[20]

The point here is that the ability to act autonomously is always defined and delimited within broader community and societal influences. In feminist scholarship on autonomy, 'there is now a fair amount of agreement that autonomous agency is saturated with self-other relations.'[21] There is no single, definable right to autonomy apart from outside factors, and one's exercise of autonomy is always a matter of degrees, contingencies, and constraints. Such a relational account of autonomy cannot be understood apart from other persons, social conditions, and institutions that hinder or enhance one's ability to make free choices, and communal and social obligations to support others in developing autonomous abilities.

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[17] I am using Natalie Stoljar's definition of oppression, which 'occurs when a group suffers systematic injustice due to institutional structures or background social practices.' Natalie Stoljar, 'Autonomy and Adaptive Preference Formation,' in *Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender*, 228.

[18] Herring and Wall, 'Nature and Significance,' 587; Mackenzie, 'Relational Autonomy,' 512; Veltman and Piper, 'Introduction,' 1–3. For a summary of numerous feminist philosophers' positions on how gender and racial oppression hinder autonomy, see Stoljar, 'Autonomy and Adaptive Preference Formation,' 227–29.

[19] Herring and Wall, 'Nature and Significance,' 584. Emphasis mine.

[20] Mackenzie, 'Relational Autonomy,' 529–30.

[21] Veltman and Piper, 'Introduction,' 4.

Bodily autonomy adds a further degree of complexity because of the nature of the relationship between self and body. Bodily autonomy is deeply impacted by experiences of sexual violation: 'a rape victim suffers the psychological scar of having a profound sense of diminished personal agency.'[22] In other words, the specific nature of the violence against her body has material effects on her autonomy. The traditional view of autonomy does not account for special considerations when applied to the body. It is understood simply as 'an extension of autonomy of the will through satisfaction of preferences and desires relating to the body.'[23] The traditional account assumes an instrumentalist understanding of bodily autonomy, whereby the body is seen as 'a tool or instrument of our rational agency.'[24] Rape is therefore a problem because it violates an individual's *will*: 'Because rape is an act against a person's will, it disrespects her desires or interests having to do with how her body is treated.'[25] Feminists disagree about how the right to bodily autonomy relates to the role of the will: 'generally liberal American feminists…insist that what we are and what we have should be the result of the free exercise of independent wills.'[26] This contrasts with some French feminists, 'who view with suspicion the affinity between liberal conceptions of the self and capitalist conceptions of ownership.'[27] This criticism of the role of the individual will, bodily ownership, and agency becomes a key point regarding the ways in which North American feminist theologians conceptualise atonement, and the implications of this

[22] Anita Superson, 'The Right to Bodily Autonomy and the Abortion Controversy,' in *Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender*, 319.

[23] Superson, 'Right to Bodily Autonomy,' 305.

[24] Herring and Wall, 'Nature and Significance,' 577.

[25] Superson, 'Right to Bodily Autonomy,' 311–12.

[26] Jennifer Church, 'Ownership and the Body,' in *Feminists Rethink the Self*, ed. Diana Tietjens Meyers (CO, USA: Oxford, 1997), 89.

[27] Church, 'Ownership and the Body,' 89.

understanding for the embodied redemption of survivors. Because of the outsized influence of North American feminist theology in shaping critiques of atonement, this latter point is salient.

Rather than understanding bodily autonomy as a right exercised by an individual's will, feminist philosophers propose alternative relational views. 'Relational autonomy' takes into account 'the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which agents are embedded,' acknowledging that humans in the exercise of agency 'are not only rational but also 'emotional, embodied, desiring, creative and feeling.''[28] Feminist philosophers have developed a variety of relational approaches to bodily autonomy. I engage particularly with Catriona Mackenzie's bodily integration model because it aligns well with concerns for the loss and reconstruction of agency that victims of sexual abuse face.

Using a phenomenological approach drawn from Paul Ricoeur, Mackenzie demonstrates two models for understanding the way 'in which a person's body belongs to her,'[29] and the implications of each for grounding a right to bodily autonomy. She summarises these as 'belonging in the sense of what one owns or possesses or has, that is ownership; and belonging in the sense of who one is, or identity.'[30] She argues that the former, which I refer to as the 'bodily ownership' model, is insufficient to address issues faced following 'events that disrupt our everyday taken-for-granted bodily existence.'[31] Changes to the body, particularly traumatic violations such as sexual abuse, 'can induce a sense of loss of self that can have profound effects on the agent's emotional responses, intimate relationships, and sense of the future.'[32] The

[28] Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper, 'Introduction,' in *Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender*, 4.
[29] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 421.
[30] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 421.
[31] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 421.
[32] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 421.

identity-shattering effects of violation disrupt the conception of bodies as property, over which the willing self exercises its rights and preferences. The expectation that those who have experienced the bodily violation of sexual abuse will exercise agency through choice, even when given resources and information to inform that choice, misunderstands the nature of trauma. Theologically, it hinders a vision of embodied Christian redemption.

Feminist theologians who reject atonement as necessary to a vision of Christian salvation privilege the rhetoric of relationality, interdependence, and embodiment. Yet I argue that the way they apply these concepts to their theologies ultimately represents a 'bodily ownership' view, particularly in regard to the human-divine relationship. Concerns for protection against further abuse can become equated with viewing all outside intervention that changes one's internally chosen way of being as inherently manipulative and further violating. On such a view, being changed to become like another—within a Christian framework, being 'conformed to the image of [God's] son' (Rom 8:29), and 'transformed into the same image' (2 Cor 3:18) through the Spirit—would be viewed as relinquishing one's autonomy, being subverted by oppressive power. On such a view, there is no apparent need for an internal transformation to effect reconciliation with a power outside ourselves—no need for atonement. However, both trauma theory and Christian theological commitments, borne out in testimonies of life-giving transformation through the power of the Spirit, contradict the 'bodily ownership' view. The following section details how the 'bodily ownership' view creates psychic problems for those who have experienced sexual abuse, before showing how that view has influenced feminist theologians and ethicists working to support survivors.

Conceptions of Bodily Autonomy and Sexual Abuse

Understanding bodily autonomy as the right to exert one's willing self over one's bodily property represents a popular strain of feminist thinking, and political liberalism more broadly, in the United States. That includes conceptions of sexual relationality and other bodily decision-making. As Anita Superson observes, 'When many feminists discuss rape…they espouse a 'hands-off' view that might be defended with the libertarian assumption of self-ownership of the body.'[33] Mackenzie notes that 'rights-based models' of bodily autonomy undergird many American feminist arguments for a woman's right to abortion.[34] This type of property-rights model is 'quite explicit in such feminist slogans as, 'Keep *your* filthy laws off *my* body.''[35] Such a view hinges on a woman's 'right to preserve the integrity of her body boundaries, and control what happens in and to her body, in the same way she has a right to dispose of her property as she sees fit.'[36] However, this grounding for reproductive rights misunderstands bodily autonomy, since it does not account for 'the kind of reflective bodily perspective that arises from a phenomenological account of pregnant embodiment.'[37] This is because the experience itself of *being* one whose body is living in a pregnant state 'affects a woman's mode of being-in-the-world both physically and morally and, as a consequence, re-shapes her sense of self.'[38] In other words, the self who makes a decision regarding pregnancy cannot be understood separately from her continually

[33] Superson, 'Right to Bodily Autonomy,' 306. For a full explanation of libertarianism, self-ownership, and bodily rights, See David Sobel, 'Backing Away from Libertarian Self-Ownership,' *Ethics* 123, no. 1 (2012): 32–60.

[34] Catriona Mackenzie, 'Abortion and Embodiment,' *Australian Journal of Philosophy* 70, no. 2 (1992): 136–37.

[35] Mackenzie, 'Abortion and Embodiment,' 150. Emphasis in original.

[36] Mackenzie, 'Abortion and Embodiment,' 150.

[37] Mackenzie, 'Abortion and Embodiment,' 137.

[38] Mackenzie, 'Abortion and Embodiment,' 150.

shifting, relational, culturally mediated, embodied experience of *being* a pregnant self. Ironically, reducing bodily autonomy in this context to a property rights issue 'comes close to regarding women's bodies simply as foetal containers,'[39] exactly the mindset feminists criticise abortion rights opponents of holding.

Instead, 'it is because my body is the medium through which I live my life that I must have a right to determine what happens in and to my body.'[40] From an external perspective, Mackenzie comes to the same conclusion regarding reproductive rights as the feminists she critiques: the right to make decisions regarding pregnancy ultimately lies with the women experiencing pregnancy. But grounding her understanding of bodily autonomy phenomenologically, against the 'bodily property' perspective she objects to (and, that I argue, strongly influences the strain of feminist theologians I am critiquing), has important consequences for survivors and those who seek to support them. I contend that Mackenzie's approach empowers survivors to imaginatively engage, with supportive others, their own capacities for embodied redemption following abuse, leading to greater potential for transformational remaking of the self. On the other hand, a 'bodily ownership' view restricts this transformational potential.

Mackenzie's phenomenological approach to bodily autonomy confronts the limitations of a 'conflict-of-rights framework'[41] for addressing humans' holistic, embodied needs. She names the damaging effects of the 'bodily ownership' model for survivors of traumatic violence particularly. Her argument is based on the significance of what she calls one's 'bodily

[39] Mackenzie, 'Abortion and Embodiment,' 150.
[40] Superson, 'Right to Bodily Autonomy,' 306.
[41] Mackenzie, 'Abortion and Embodiment,' 137.

perspective,' and she explains how understanding bodily autonomy as the exercise of one's will through control over the (owned or possessed) body is especially damaging to this perspective.

Mackenzie argues that people's decisions about their bodies arise from their 'bodily perspective,' defined as 'the meaning or significance of one's body for oneself.'[42] We respond physically and emotionally to our bodies based on our 'psychic representations' of them—the 'imaginary representations of our bodies as a whole, as well as of certain bodily capacities or parts.'[43] These psychic representations comprise one's bodily perspective. Both our own and others' emotional and physical responses to our bodies alter our bodily perspective. We are beholden to socially and culturally mediated messages about our bodies, including 'factors such as race, ethnicity, sexuality and class.'[44] Our bodily perspective also 'changes during the course of a life, in response to changes to one's body, one's situation and one's relations with others.'[45] We are active agents in constructing our bodily perspectives as we develop ourselves as persons. This is why traumatic violation of the body so devastates us: 'in constituting our bodily perspective in response to our bodily situation, we constitute ourselves. Any change to that situation has the potential to unravel our sense of self.'[46] In contrast to gradual, expected bodily changes from such experiences as puberty or aging, traumatic bodily violations have the potential to suddenly shatter our sense of self.

Academics and clinicians who study trauma have detailed its effects on the body, including the loss of self and detachment from one's embodied experiences that result from

[42] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 426.
[43] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 426.
[44] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 427.
[45] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 426.
[46] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 427.

traumatic violence. Research on traumatic violence outlines both the fracturing of agency that trauma brings, as well as the vulnerable and dependent trust on outside helpers needed to remake oneself in healthy ways in its aftermath.[47] A person's communication of their pain and how that communication is received by others are mutually informing: 'The ability to live sanely after a traumatic experience of pain is always dependent on the responses of others.'[48] The work of remaking a self after bodily violation requires not simply interdependence—a trait emphasised in feminist theologies, particularly in their critiques of atonement—but vulnerable dependence on external agents.

Bodily Alienation, Integration, and Remaking the Self After Trauma

An ethical theology that addresses the issue of sexual abuse requires 'a working knowledge of psychological trauma,' which 'is a physiologically and socially specific descriptor.'[49] *Trauma* stems from the Greek word meaning ''wound' or 'an injury inflicted upon the body by an act of violence.''[50] Psychological trauma encompasses 'events that are emotionally shocking or horrifying, which threaten or actually involve death(s) or a violation of bodily integrity (such as sexual violation or torture) or that render the affected person(s) helpless to prevent or stop the

[47] See Herman's *Trauma and Recovery*. This is considered a classic text in feminist studies of traumatic violence and recovery, and her arguments heavily shape what follows.

[48] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 83.

[49] Hilary Jerome Scarsella and Stephanie Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence: Christian Theological Legacies and Responsibilities,' *Religion Compass* 13, no. 9 (September 2019): 8.

[50] Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World*, 2nd ed. (TN, USA: Westminster John Knox Press, 2019), 12.

resultant psychological and physical harm.'[51] In her seminal work on trauma, psychiatrist Judith Herman notes that victims must entirely reconstruct their way of being in the world to live meaningfully in the aftermath of violence. In approaching the ultimate question of theodicy, ('Why me?') the survivor must 'become a theologian, a philosopher, and a jurist.'[52] To integrate her trauma story—a necessary step in remaking—she 'must examine the moral questions of guilt and responsibility and reconstruct a system of belief that makes sense of her undeserved suffering.'[53] In the past two decades, feminists have brought insights from trauma theory into theological construction to aid survivors in this task. This thesis joins that stream of scholarship, using insights from trauma theory to inform theologising around bodily redemption, with those who have suffered sexual abuse as a lens.

The experience of rape and its aftermath poignantly demonstrate the loss of self brought by trauma, as well as the communal, dependent process of 'remaking' a self. This section draws from Susan Brison's relational feminist perspective, which defines a self as 'both autonomous and socially dependent, vulnerable enough to be undone by violence and yet resilient enough to be reconstructed with the help of empathetic others.'[54] The definition of a self one uses 'depends in part on what explanatory work one wants the concept of a self to do.'[55] For 'traditional' ethicists the self is 'the locus of autonomous agency, that which freely makes choices and wills actions.'[56]

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[51] Gilbert Reyes, Jon D. Elhai, and Julian D. Ford, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Psychological Trauma* (Somerset: Wiley, 2008), 20.

[52] Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror; With a New Epilogue by the Author* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 145.

[53] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 145.

[54] Susan J. Brison, *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 38. Emphasis mine.

[55] Brison, *Aftermath*, 40.

[56] Brison, *Aftermath*, 59.

Because this self is freely responsible for its own decisions, it is 'an appropriate subject of praise or blame.'[57] But relational feminist philosophers like Brison challenge this individualistic autonomous understanding.

The self in a relational view is 'related to and constructed by others in an ongoing way,' both through others' relations with us, and 'because our own sense of self is couched in descriptions whose meanings are social phenomena.'[58] In other words, it is impossible for us to understand ourselves *as* selves, and therefore make decisions regarding our (embodied) selves, apart from the contexts and relationships that form us. A relational account demonstrates the limitations of a view of bodily autonomy that assumes the exercise of the freely willing self over the body, due to 'the transformation of the self as autonomous agent'[59] that occurs following trauma. Brison notes that 'the autonomy-undermining symptoms of PTSD *reconfigure the survivor's will*, rendering involuntary many responses that were once under voluntary control.'[60] In the wake of the reconfiguration of personal will, the ability to exercise autonomy is not like it was before the trauma. Neurobiological findings confirm the changes in bodily agency that traumatic violation instills.

Immediately following traumatic experience, the body enters a state of hyperarousal; 'the traumatised person startles easily, reacts irritably to small provocations, and sleeps poorly.'[61] For those who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the trauma lodges within their bodies. It remains as 'an abnormal form of memory, which breaks spontaneously into

[57] Brison, *Aftermath*, 59.
[58] Brison, *Aftermath*, 41.
[59] Brison, *Aftermath*, 59.
[60] Brison, *Aftermath*, 59. Emphasis mine.
[61] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 37.

consciousness, both as flashbacks during waking states and as traumatic nightmares during sleep.'[62] The loss of control that accompanies trauma response profoundly 'alters who one is, not only in that it limits what one can do (and can refrain from doing), but also in that it changes what one *wants* to do.'[63] A person loses control 'not only over herself, but also over her environment, and this, in turn, can lead to a restriction of the *boundaries of her will*.'[64] Brison gives the example that a survivor may stay home more and not go on walks if she was raped while out on a walk.[65] In other words, the choices that exist within her realm of possibility become limited; the boundaries of her exercise of will themselves shrink.

Additional barriers to autonomy arise for children who experience ongoing family trauma, sexual or otherwise. Children can only develop 'a secure sense of autonomy by forming inner representations of trustworthy and dependable caretakers.'[66] If this formation is interrupted by violent, traumatic experiences in those early relationships, the child on reaching adulthood 'is left with fundamental problems in basic trust, autonomy, and initiative.'[67] PTSD sufferers seeking to numb themselves from their traumatic memories also 'run a high risk of compounding their difficulties by developing dependence on alcohol or other drugs.'[68] These are not responses of a freely acting agent, but of one whose abilities to choose have been restricted by the aftereffects of trauma.

[62] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 38.
[63] Brison, *Aftermath*, 59-60. Emphasis in original.
[64] Brison, *Aftermath*, 60. Emphasis mine.
[65] Brison, *Aftermath*, 60.
[66] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 92.
[67] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 95.
[68] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 44.

The logic of a right to autonomous control *over* one's body affects one's sense of how her body *belongs* to her. A bodily ownership model 'treats the body as a separable item, like property, over which she exercises proprietorial rights. Once the person has been abstracted from her body in this way it then seems to make sense to think of bodily autonomy in terms of instrumental control over the body.'[69] However, as the above discussion has made clear, it is exactly this exercise of instrumental bodily control that sexual violation robs from its victims. If bodily autonomy is conceived as depending on the free exercise of one's will over the body, arguing that a survivor of trauma must first and foremost have a 'right' to bodily autonomy becomes a moot point. A relational model, on the other hand, provides a framework that demonstrates how survivors can recover *capacities* to exercise bodily autonomy while enforcing legal rights that protect them from harm.

Mackenzie's view of bodily autonomy 'involves the capacity to achieve an integrated bodily perspective,' which a person experiences as 'expressive of her embodied agency.'[70] Achieving this perspective requires 'an integration of the biological, socio-cultural and individual dimensions of embodiment in one's self-representation, such that there are no persistent and unresolved conflicts among these dimensions.'[71] Conflicts can occur within oneself that 'signal that the agent is in some sense alienated from herself or from aspects of her embodiment.'[72] One way a person can become alienated from her embodiment is through 'bodily violation, as in the case of sexual assault.'[73] When this occurs, victims experience 'disintegration among the

[69] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 424.
[70] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 429.
[71] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 429.
[72] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 429.
[73] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 429.

different elements of their embodiment, preventing them from regarding their bodies as expressive of their agency.'[74] Of course, no one acts from a perfectly centered place at all times; an integrated bodily perspective 'is a matter of degree.'[75] Allowing for ambiguity around a person's level of integration, Mackenzie stresses that the individual's self-perceptions are only partially indicative of autonomy. External influences also play a role.

Beyond an internal sense of identification with one's agency, potential distortions to one's perceptions by, for example, oppressive social conditions must be factored into evaluating autonomy. External authority is therefore required to determine if agents' decisions and actions are autonomous. A social obligation to address potential sources of self-alienation is, then, also a requirement of social justice. Rather than limiting bodily autonomy to individual liberty and control, 'in many cases, bodily autonomy is more likely to be enhanced by challenging and altering those oppressive social norms and practices that contribute to the experience of bodily alienation.'[76] From a feminist perspective committed to liberation, bodily autonomy *must* be inherently relational. For victims of trauma, achieving the level of integration required to allow for autonomy is an especially dependent, contingent process.

Survivors are ready to move into a place of healing when they have 'learned to be both appropriately trusting and self-protective'[77] in their relationships. With their therapists, they must have a 'reasonably secure alliance that preserves both autonomy and connection.'[78] Remaking depends on the 'empowerment of the survivor and the creation of new connections.'[79]

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[74] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 429.
[75] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 430.
[76] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 433.
[77] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 142.
[78] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 142.
[79] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 111.

Empowerment here is defined as 'the convergence of mutual support with individual autonomy.'[80] Within this relational context of empowerment, which depends on the invested connection of compassionate others, 'the survivor recreates the psychological faculties that were damaged or deformed by the traumatic experience…. Just as these capabilities are originally formed in relationships with other people, they must be reformed in such relationships.'[81] The need for reforming the self in relationship with others is key to conceiving of flourishing life following traumatic violation. The fracturing of self that destroys mind and body alike after trauma puts the lie to the notion that control can be maintained over the body through an independent act of will that must be protected from outside interference by others.

Many people who have undergone rape and other traumas experience themselves as having *died* as a result.[82] Brison invokes religious imagery when she observes that, following trauma, 'a self can be resurrected only with great difficulty and with the help of others.'[83] This self-resurrection is inherently relational: 'the victim finds some aspects of her lost self in another person and is able to reconnect with it and remake herself as one, surviving as an autonomous self.'[84] This process of remaking oneself requires relationships of mutual empathy where survivors can not only share their own narratives but interact with and be formed by the lives of others. After describing the nature of her own regaining of agency following rape, Brison concludes, 'These ways of enhancing my autonomy in the aftermath of my assault reinforced my

[80] E. Stark and A. Flitcraft, 'Personal Power and Institutional Victimization: Treating the Dual Trauma of Woman Battering,' in *Post-Traumatic Therapy and Victims of Violence*, ed. F. Ochberg (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1988), 141; quoted in Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 112.

[81] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 111.

[82] Brison, *Aftermath*, 38.

[83] Brison, *Aftermath*, 46.

[84] Superson, 'Right to Bodily Autonomy,' 320.

view of autonomy as fundamentally dependent on others.'[85] Both the process and outcome of the remade self are and must be relational; 'one remakes oneself by finding meaning in a life of caring for and being sustained by others.'[86] From a trauma-informed perspective, a conception of bodily autonomy that holds the possibility for remaking the self following sexual abuse cannot be limited to the exercise of a controlling will *over* the body. Rather, the body itself is expressive of, and constrained by, relationships and environment. The nuancing of this distinction is vital. The way we conceive ourselves in relationship to our bodies has a material effect on how we *experience* our bodies, both 'in our own skin' and in relationship with other bodies. It also shapes what we imagine to be possible in terms of living well (or, in theological terms, redemption) in the aftermath of trauma. This is because humans' imaginative abilities play a key role in remaking, even in how we experience the manner in which we govern ourselves.

Self-governance is a necessary competency in order to exercise autonomy. It requires abilities ranging from 'cognitive skills…to more complex capacities for critical reflection and reasons [sp] responsiveness.'[87] A number of factors can compromise self-governance, including 'weakness of will, self-deception, failures of self-control, and prudential irrationality.'[88] Relational theorists name additional factors that compromise self-governance. Mackenzie argues that 'philosophers have overly rationalised the competencies required for critical reflection while neglecting an array of other skills.'[89] These include 'emotional skills,' as well as 'imaginative skills, which are necessary for envisaging alternative possible courses of action, or "imagining oneself

[85] Brison, *Aftermath*, 61.
[86] Brison, *Aftermath*, 66.
[87] Mackenzie, 'Three Dimensions of Autonomy,' 32.
[88] Mackenzie, 'Three Dimensions of Autonomy,' 33.
[89] Mackenzie, 'Three Dimensions of Autonomy,' 33.

otherwise," and engaging in self-transformative activities.'[90] A relational account is 'responsive to the facts of human vulnerability and dependency rather than assuming a conception of persons as self-sufficient, independent, rational contractors.'[91] Recognising that human beings are embodied and culturally embedded, relational theories hold to a 'conception of persons that emphasises the role of embodied social practices (including linguistic and cultural practices), social group identities, and historical contingencies in the formation of our individual practical identities.'[92] The creative and interactive development of critical reflection is necessary for survivors to function not only as individuals, but as responsible agents in community. If one's faculties for normatively assessing their actions are damaged, they cannot be said to exercising bodily autonomy. Conversely, one's actions can only be normatively assessed within relationships with others. This is why Mackenzie concludes that 'autonomy is not liberty; it is an achievement, not an entitlement.'[93] This achievement is always partial and contingent, and develops in the midst of a compassionate, supportive community with whom the survivor is able to creatively be formed by, as well as contribute to the formation of, others.

The way we imagine our relationship with our bodies affects both how we experience and understand acts of bodily violation, as well as the resources we have available to draw on in its aftermath—both in our internal conceptions and how we embody our (necessarily dependent) relationships with others in the remaking process. For example, rather than viewing rape as a problem because it violates an individual's will, a relational understanding sees rape as a

[90] Mackenzie, 'Three Dimensions of Autonomy,' 33.
[91] Mackenzie, 'Three Dimensions of Autonomy,' 21.
[92] Mackenzie, 'Three Dimensions of Autonomy,' 21.
[93] Mackenzie, 'On Bodily Autonomy,' 432.

'violation of your very person, through your body… It sends a message not just that a certain interest you have does not count but that you are the kind of being whose interests—any and all of them—do not count.'[94] This conception of bodily autonomy therefore 'allows for a deeper sense of the account of rape being 'against your will.''[95] In other words, rape does not simply oppose our preferences for how our bodily property should be used. It violates our deepest conceptions of *who we are* and hinders our ability to act as autonomous agents. Bodily autonomy from this perspective is not about ownership rights to be exercised, but about relational capacities that can become fractured through the actions of others and restored through connection with others. Finding an integrated personal identity in the aftermath of trauma means being reshaped into a new embodied life narrative, paradoxically empowered through surrender and re-formation through loving others. In this way, trauma survivors become enabled to live relationally well, as mutually responsible agents.

The findings from trauma theory and feminist philosophy presented above demonstrate that a relational account of bodily autonomy—understood as a self in which one's bodily perspective comprises an integrated whole—offers richer resources for post-traumatic remaking than a view in which autonomy is understood as the individual's exercise of proprietary rights over the body. In a relational view of bodily autonomy, the individual is supported in a communal movement toward an integrated bodily perspective. The following section demonstrates the relevance of these findings for trauma-informed feminist theology that addresses the needs of survivors of sexual abuse. It applies a somatological analysis to a feminist perspective that

[94] Superson, 'Right to Bodily Autonomy,' 312.
[95] Superson, 'Right to Bodily Autonomy,' 312.

critiques atonement theology on the basis of a concern for bodily autonomy. While the authors incorporate practices of communal engagement in supporting survivors, a somatological analysis reveals a view of the body as an instrument of autonomous control of the individual's will. This perspective limits the authors' ability to imagine the role of divine agency in guiding and empowering human communities in the work of post-traumatic remaking. It therefore presents a stunted imaginative space for bodily redemption, restricting survivors' capacities to incorporate their trauma narrative into a space of corporeal remaking through the body of Christ. By contrast, a 'bodily integration' conception of autonomy provides greater conceptual space for both imagining and living into a theological account of embodied redemption than the 'bodily ownership' view they imagine.

Part II: Applying a Critical Somatology to a Feminist Critique of Atonement

In the previous section, my somatology engages primarily with a secular context. This section brings those insights to the theological task of envisioning bodily redemption. From a Christian perspective, one cannot understand salvation independently of the body, both one's own and the collective body of Christ: 'God saves people in families and communities, even while people are saved not only as souls but as embodied, as material, economic, social, and political creatures.'[96] However, feminist liberation theologians observe that 'the bodies of women have been expected

[96] Amos Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 230.

to carry a great weight under patriarchal theology.'[97] For those whose bodily integrity has been violated, and whose right to protect themselves and be protected from harm is necessary, how should our theologising reflect concerns for both personal agency and communal relationship and responsibility?

To answer this question, I apply the somatology developed above to a feminist ethical and theological critique of atonement that I argue demonstrates the 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy. The context is an article on Christian theological responsibilities in addressing the church's history of sexual violence and the importance of a trauma-informed perspective for theological critique and construction. This example serves as a starting point to discuss the complex arguments surrounding bodily autonomy in Christian conceptions of redemption, specifically implications for atonement theology as it pertains to those who have experienced sexual violence. I chose this article because its authors, Hilary Scarsella and Stephanie Krehbiel, are doing important, necessary work in advocating for sexual abuse survivors in Christian contexts. They work for an organization that seeks accountability for abusers and consults with faith communities to challenge and reform damaging theologies. Their stated theology also clearly links their organization's approach to bodily autonomy with their critique of atonement. I argue that the relationship between these authors' understanding of bodily autonomy and their critique of atonement arise from the same theological strain as Brock, Brown, and Parker, whose rejection of atonement theology has been central for shaping subsequent responses. My goal is

[97] Lisa Isherwood and Elizabeth Stuart, *Introducing Body Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 15.

to use these authors' understanding of bodily autonomy and atonement to map their underlying commitments within a larger feminist theological framework.

Scarsella and Krehbiel are staff members of an organization called Into Account, which offers '[s]upport for survivors & allies seeking justice, accountability, & recovery in Christian contexts.'[98] Into Account's website notes that the organization is 'not faith based,' but instead 'religion informed.'[99] The organization also consults with Christian leaders and communities to help make their 'theological vision, language, worship, and religious practices more trauma-informed.'[100] In an article discussing Christian communities' culpability in perpetuating sexual violence through harmful theology, Scarsella and Krehbiel recount an email disagreement with a faith leader they call Mark. The exchange concerns Into Account's first core principle: 'We believe that no institution, family, or community is more important than our right to autonomy over our own bodies.'[101] The authors never define 'autonomy' or what they mean by the phrase 'autonomy over our own bodies.' This is a significant omission, since the remainder of their disagreement with Mark about the role of bodily autonomy in Christian theology hinges on this concept. To make the significance of this omission clear, I use the somatology developed above to unpack their implicit assumptions about the meaning of 'autonomy over our own bodies' based on their statements.

Scarsella and Krehbiel begin with Mark's disagreement with the first principle. He argues, 'As a person of faith…there are MANY things more important than my very life, let alone

[98] *Into Account*, accessed April 1, 2024, https://www.intoaccount.org.
[99] 'Our Approach,' *Into Account*, accessed June 21, 2021, https://www.intoaccount.org/our-approach.
[100] *Into Account*.
[101] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 1; also 'About Us,' *Into Account*, accessed April 1, 2024, https://intoaccount.org/about-us/.

autonomy over my body.'[102] The authors assess his position as follows: 'Mark's critique rested on the common Christian theological position that Jesus' willingness not to claim autonomy over his body ('Not my will, but yours be done') and to, instead, sacrifice his body on the cross for the salvation of undeserving sinners, stands as an ethical model Christians are constrained to follow.'[103] They challenge the assumption that a Christian 'ought not to claim autonomy over their body…following Jesus requires a willingness to relinquish bodily autonomy in service of self-sacrificial love.'[104] Next they contrast 'the call for Christians to emulate Jesus' self-sacrifice for the sake of the underserving…with what victims of sexual violence have deemed essential for their survival and wellbeing (autonomy over their bodies).'[105] In their assessment, the traditional Christian view of bodily autonomy is in 'direct conflict with survivors' basic needs,' and does not 'make space for survivors of sexual violence to refuse others a calamitous claim to their bodies.'[106] They also claim that the doctrine of atonement as expressed through classical models 'most directly informs Mark's critique of sexual violence survivors' assertion of autonomy over their bodies,' since 'willing, violent, abusive self-sacrifice is held to be the source of salvation and, therefore, the quintessential expression of Christian piety.'[107] Finally, they argue that the pervasiveness in churches of the belief that 'bodily autonomy is an inappropriate priority for Christian survivors of sexual abuse to maintain…can also lead victims to minimise their own

[102] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 1.
[103] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 1.
[104] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 2.
[105] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 2.
[106] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 2.
[107] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 4.

experiences with sexual violence.'[108] Based on these statements, what can we glean about Scarsella and Krehbiel's understanding of bodily autonomy and its significance?

Of course, the authors' views cannot be captured in a single passage, and it would be unfair to reduce them to that. Also, Scarsella and Krehbiel do not reproduce the email from Mark that they quote in its entirety. Therefore, it is impossible to know how much of their assessment of Mark's personal theology of atonement is based on his actual statements and how much is drawn from their own inferences. My analysis must be limited to the text that they present of Mark's argument and the conclusions they draw from what they have presented. With those caveats in mind, here is what my somatology reveals about the relationship between their conception of bodily autonomy and their theological views of redemption.

Somatological Analysis of Scarsella and Krehbiel's View of Bodily Autonomy

Scarsella and Krehbiel's disagreement with Mark about the role of bodily autonomy in Christian theology reveals a conception of the body that prioritises the protection of bodily property against outside intrusion. This concern for protection of bodily boundaries seems most linked to the first stage of post-traumatic remaking: ensuring survivors' immediate safety. This stage 'begins with control of the body and moves outward toward self-protection and the organization of a safe environment.'[109] Even establishing bodily control can be difficult, 'because of the degree to which the survivor has come to view her body as belonging to others.'[110] At this stage, the

[108] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 6.
[109] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 136.
[110] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 136.

survivor does not yet have the internal basis required for the re-formation of the self. Removing the violated person from danger and establishing a trustworthy, protective space is therefore a necessary priority in this first stage.

Understanding the body in terms of an owned, controlled self presents a paradox: establishing the degree of autonomy needed to function well relationally after bodily violation requires immense levels of self-sacrifice, both from survivors and all those who support them. Protection of bodily integrity expressed as a right to autonomous control over the body, absent a necessarily relational dependence on outside intervention to empower the ability to exercise that right, does not make conceptual space for this need. Herman notes, 'Because no one can establish a safe environment alone, the task of developing an adequate safety plan always includes a component of social support.'[111] Especially at this early stage, a successful therapist/patient relationship requires that the survivor 'voluntarily submits herself to an unequal relationship in which the therapist has superior status and power.'[112] The survivor must exercise great vulnerability, trust, and dependency, and the therapist must be held to the highest standard of accountability. At this stage, part of the therapist's task is '[w]idening the survivor's sphere of autonomy.'[113] Bodily autonomy is never established separately from a supportive community and is always in a state of process.

One's body can only belong to them if 'the psychological states of that body are integrated through reflection in such a way as to constitute a person or a self…nothing can be

[111] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 132.
[112] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 112.
[113] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 139.

your body if there is no *you*.'[114] Remaking oneself in the wake of trauma requires dependence on supportive and nurturing others, not strictly a right to autonomous control of one's bodily property. The question then becomes, does Scarsella and Krehbiel's theology allow for that level of dependence? It appears that one must have already integrated the necessary external, relational resources for 'imagining oneself otherwise' in order to develop the self that their theology assumes is already in place and able to be drawn from. The result is a paradox: 'the self to be liberated from external control must be subjected to the control of a liberating self already and always free, aware, and in control of its own desires.'[115] There is a gap between being and becoming in Scarsella and Krehbiel's theology, and I argue that a misunderstanding about the nature of bodily autonomy and dependency is one of its sources.

Into Account does important work to support survivors of sexual abuse, all of which trauma theorists recognise as necessary for remaking the self. Into Account advocates for survivors through connecting them with resources and presenting them with options for holding those who have abused them accountable.[116] In addition, through the associated blog at *Our Stories Untold*, survivors are offered the space to narrate their accounts of trauma.[117] The ability to narrate and reframe one's trauma story in the presence of supportive witnesses is a key process in post-traumatic reformation of the self.[118] In practice, then, Into Account's activities

[114] Church, 'Ownership and the Body,' 92. Emphasis in original.
[115] Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 73.
[116] 'Survivors,' *Into Account*, accessed June 21, 2021, https://www.intoaccount.org/survivors.
[117] 'Our Stories Untold: Survivors of Sexual Violence Speak Out,' accessed June 21, 2021, https://www.ourstoriesuntold.com.
[118] Karen O'Donnell, 'Surviving Trauma at the Foot of the Cross,' in *When Did We See You Naked?* (260–77), 268. The role of Christian witness in the remaking process will be detailed more fully in Chapter Five.

that assist survivors support a more interdependent view of bodily autonomy than its stated first principle.

The assertion that 'no institution, family or community is more important than our right to autonomy over our own bodies' assumes that communal connection and autonomous control of the body can be understood and prioritised separably. Yet the support Into Account provides belies this assumption. Offering space for survivors to access help, taking responsibility for offering that help, and empowering survivors through witnessing and making space for them to publicly share their stories demonstrates an understanding of mutual autonomy—that personal control can only be (re)formed *through the intercession and support of community*. Into Account's practices reveal that bodily autonomy is constituted through community—Into Account's community of support. In other words, their actions (thankfully for survivors' well-being) contradict their stated first principle. The question then becomes why the first principle supports so strongly a more individualistic model *in theory*.

Teasing out the implications of Scarsella and Krehbeil's view of bodily autonomy is not just semantic hair splitting. Their centralising of the right to autonomy over one's body grounds a lengthy critique that implicates Christian theology in perpetuating sexual violence—particularly atonement theology. It is the crux of their disagreement with Mark. But, given the above argument, I want to posit the possibility that Mark (and others like him) might not dismiss the concept of bodily autonomy as a whole, but rather *this particular expression* of it, even if neither he nor Scarsella and Krehbiel could consciously articulate the difference. Particularly since part of Into Account's work is helping leaders like Mark craft responsible theological visions, making

explicit the implicit assumptions that ground their view of bodily autonomy addresses this gap in understanding, and therefore allows for more productive engagement.

Scarsella and Krehbiel rightly name the dangers of a quiescent, violence-endorsing atonement theology that oversimplifies forgiveness, pressures victims to remain in situations of abuse, and absolves abusers.[119] However, the understanding of bodily autonomy they present (the right of control *over* a body one possesses like property, demonstrated through an individual's exercise of will) is insufficient to ground a redemptive theological vision. Framing bodily autonomy as a right (and also responsibility) to 'claim' *over* one's body, and the practice of self-sacrificial love as an oppositional relinquishment of that 'claim,' has concrete ramifications for how their theology is constructed, appropriated, and lived. The fact that they name and elaborate on atonement theology in their outworking of their view of bodily autonomy is evidence of this. Jesus' death on the cross, from their perspective, is conceived as a failure to take responsibly for exercising his bodily autonomy. The implication is that women who are abused are then pressured to follow suit, allowing violence against their bodies to continue unchallenged. The alternative is to refuse violence and claim one's right of bodily control.

Scarsella and Krehbiel's assertion that 'beliefs like Mark's—that *bodily autonomy* is an inappropriate priority for Christian survivors of sexual violence to maintain,'[120] implies that the 'ownership' view is the only (or only correct) understanding of bodily autonomy they assume. But as this somatological analysis has demonstrated, a model in which the *capacity* for bodily autonomy is reconstructed through communal engagement—and therefore cannot be separated

[119] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 5.
[120] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 6. Emphasis mine.

from its social dimension—is necessary for remaking the self. Further, Into Account's actions to support survivors' embodied needs and the view of bodily autonomy they express contradict one another. Scarsella and Krehbiel place a 'bodily ownership' view of autonomy in contrast to Mark's view. They bring this assumption of bodily autonomy into Christian theological reflection, conceiving of Jesus' atoning action within the framework of a right to autonomous control over the body. However, their work to support survivors demonstrates a more complex understanding of bodily autonomy, in which supporters are empowered not by claiming a right of autonomy, but by the witness and intercession of others who can guide them towards support.

As Michael Trainor observes, 'what occurs to the body is more than a physical act to an individual. It has ramifications for the totality of the person and for the wider cosmic and political body.'[121] Victims of sexual abuse (or any other form of abuse) should never be pressured to stay in environments where they are experiencing harm. Indeed, feminist theology is at its strongest when it names and exposes the abusive ways that the cross has been used by the powerful to manipulate and control victims and excuse and absolve their own abusive behavior. That said, questions of bodily autonomy and relationality in North American Christian feminist scholarship must be understood within their context. If one agrees that '[t]he body is both the site and recipient of liberation,'[122] what does it mean for a body to *receive* liberation? In Christian theological terms, how is the violated (sinned-against) body transformed toward redemption?

The 'ownership' conception of bodily autonomy necessarily circumscribes the possibilities one imagines regarding what redemption of the body can mean. Translating a legal concern for

[121] Trainor, *Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse*, 12.
[122] Isherwood and Stuart, *Introducing Body Theology*, 11.

protection against bodily violation to a theological commitment to the right of the willing individual to exercise autonomy over her body, especially absent a necessary communal aspect, is insufficient to ground an understanding of embodied redemption. The ownership view reduces the ability to creatively engage Christian theology beyond a false binary of autonomous control and irresponsible surrender of that control. Relationships in which dependency and communal reshaping are required for empowerment contradict this framework, opposing both what trauma literature shows is necessary for remaking once relative safety has been achieved, and a Christian promise of bodily redemption. By contrast, a transformed view of bodily autonomy allows for an understanding of humans' dependence on God that answers feminist concerns surrounding dependence and patriarchal abuse, and also offers a stronger view of empowerment.

Scarsella and Krehbiel insist that a responsible student of theology 'must become able to identify, first, the conditions under which any particular concept functions to exacerbate sexual violence, and second, what makes for the kind of theological integrity needed for resistance.'[123] I agree. I contend that the model of bodily autonomy that grounds Into Account's first core principle creates barriers to crafting a holistic, embodied theological vision of redemption for survivors. Theological integrity demands an integrative model, where the self does not exercise proprietary rights *over* the body like a landowner, but instead recognises mutual dependence on and with others. I share Scarsella and Krehbiel's understanding of trauma awareness as 'a set of practices' that 'insists on *space* for victims and survivors, both figuratively and literally.'[124] By exploring the nuances in these differences in understanding, I aim to fulfill this goal by opening a

[123] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 5.
[124] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 8.

conceptual space in theological construction for survivors, one that frees both imaginative and physically embodied constrictions. This goal guides my evaluation of feminist theologies of atonement.

The following section traces the development of theological thinking around embodiment and autonomy within second-wave North American feminism, the movement and timeframe that established subsequent engagement with atonement critiques. The goal is to demonstrate how the 'ownership' model is implicit within much feminist theological construction and critique, even while framed in terms of interdependence, embodiment, and relationality. It also traces a theological strain of feminism that has challenged these assumptions, understanding divine empowerment with a framework of liberative surrender of control. The latter strain of thinking informs feminist Pentecostal theological views, which will be detailed more fully in Chapters Four and Five.

Contextualising Embodiment and Autonomy within Feminist Theologies

This section applies my somatology to issues of bodily autonomy as they have developed within second-wave North American feminist theologies, beginning in the 1970s.[125] It critically assesses how conceptions of bodily autonomy inform theological critiques of models of redemption that necessitate human dependence on God, and the continuing influence of this way of understanding the body in subsequent feminist theological reflection. Insights from British

[125] For a summary of the three 'waves' of feminist theological thought and their significance for contemporary feminist theologians, see Caryn D. Riswold, *Feminism and Christianity: Questions and Answers in the Third Wave* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2011), 5–8.

feminist theologians inform this discussion, while acknowledging the influence of North American feminist theologians on their thinking.[126]

Valerie Saiving's 'The Human Situation: A Feminine View,' first published in 1960,[127] is considered '[o]ne of the most important indicators of the arrival of significant visible feminist presence in theology.'[128] Scholars largely agree that the article marks 'the inauguration of feminist theology.'[129] Once 'The Human Situation' was collected in *Womanspirit Rising* in 1979, it spurred an explosion in feminist theological responses.[130] Saiving's most noted contribution has been 'the recognition of the gendered nature of experience and the striking implications that this has for theology.'[131] She specifically mentions the significance of men's and women's differing *embodied* experiences for distinguishing their experiences of sin. For example, women's physiological experiences of 'menstruation, defloration, childbirth, [and] menopause'[132] shape the way they live in the world differently than men. In her view, pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding are passive acts, 'things which *happen* to a woman more than things that she *does*.'[133] Saiving also contrasts active and passive roles in the sex act between men and women; in rape particularly, 'the passive structure of female sexuality unquestionably appears.' This is

[126] See Angela Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters: The Methods and Strategies of Feminist-Informed Christian Theologies* (Oxford: Routledge, 2019), 27–28.

[127] Valerie Saiving Goldstein, 'The Human Situation: A Feminine View,' *Journal of Religion* 40, no. 2 (1960): 100–12.

[128] Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters*, 12.

[129] Rebekah Miles, 'Valerie Saiving Reconsidered,' *Journal of Feminist Studies* 28, no. 1 (2012): 79. Both Miles and Pears cite numerous feminist theologians' statements on the centrality of Saiving's article to their own work.

[130] Valerie Saiving, 'The Human Situation: A Feminine View,' in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, new ed., ed. Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (New York, NY: Harper San Francisco, 1992), 25–42. All subsequent references to Saiving's 'Human Situation' come from this publication.

[131] Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters*, 13.

[132] Saiving, 'Human Situation,' 31.

[133] Saiving, 'Human Situation,' 31. Emphasis in original.

unlike men, for whom '*active* performance in the sexual act is absolutely required for its completion.'[134] Here, power is framed within a binary of active control or passive acceptance. She uses this embodied experiential basis of masculinity and femininity to conclude that men's lives are marked by 'objective achievement and a greater degree of self-differentiation'[135] than women.

Because women do not share men's embodied experiences of active achievement, Saiving argues that sin for them cannot be understood in terms of pride or will. Instead they tend toward passivity, including 'dependence on others for one's own self-definition,' resulting in 'underdevelopment or negation of the self.'[136] Yet in the modern context, some educated women are able to 'transcend the boundaries of a purely feminine identity,'[137] and can raise their daughters 'to be independent, differentiated, free human beings.'[138] Feminists were quick to attack Saiving's gender essentialism and universalising of women's experience.[139] Yet her insight about correcting women's self-abnegation—assumed to stem from embodied experiences of passivity—through independent self-differentiation remains central to later feminist reflection.

Women's embodied experiences of oppression are also tied to feminist concerns for autonomy in theological reflection and construction. Contemporary Western suspicions of external sources of authority affect our understanding of the role of human agency in divine revelation: 'The heart of the modern offence with revelation is the problem of authority, because

[134] Saiving, 'Human Situation,' 32. Emphasis in original.
[135] Saiving, 'Human Situation,' 32.
[136] Saiving, 'Human Situation,' 37.
[137] Saiving, 'Human Situation,' 36.
[138] Saiving, 'Human Situation,' 39.
[139] For a summary of feminist responses to Saiving, see Miles, 'Valerie Saiving Reconsidered.'

it appears to violate human autonomy.'[140] Feminist theologians object to how the authority of a perceived male God has been used to justify and perpetuate systems of domination and abuse, and how the deepest symbols of Christianity are shaped by this logic. As a result, doctrine and abuse have gone together: 'as the church predominantly perpetuates a notion of a patriarchal male God who subordinates Jesus and women to violence, the issue of violence against women is intrinsically tied to the doctrines of the Trinity and atonement.'[141] Issues of authority, autonomy, and bodily violence led feminists to question whether Christianity has any redeeming aspects for women, or if it is inseparable from patriarchy and abuse. Mary Daly marks the start of a rejectionist critique that has shaped subsequent feminist doctrinal reflection.

In *Beyond God the Father*, considered potentially 'the most important text…for locating the development and identity of Christian feminist theologies,'[142] Daly concludes that Christianity's symbols and effects are inherently patriarchal and abusive, and that feminists must therefore reject Christianity altogether. Daly's detailed critique and demand for rejection forced a response that indelibly shaped subsequent feminist responses that argue for remaining inside the Christian tradition.[143] Likewise, Daphne Hampson's 'post-Christian feminist'[144] theology rejects the Trinity as a model that can empower women, since '[t]he Son has a relationship of *dependence* on the Father.'[145] She argues that 'feminists no longer want to define themselves as

[140] Linda Peacore, *The Role of Women's Experience in Feminist Theologies of Atonement* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010), 174.

[141] Ally Moder, 'Women, Personhood, and the Male God: A Feminist Critique of Patriarchal Concepts of God in View of Domestic Abuse,' *Feminist Theology* 28, no. 1 (2019): 86.

[142] Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters*, 19.

[143] Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters*, 18–19.

[144] Daphne Hampson, 'On Power and Gender,' *Modern Theology* 4, no. 3 (1988): 243.

[145] Hampson, 'On Power and Gender,' 246. Emphasis in original.

weak,' but rather 'self-directed, free, effective, and inter-dependent with others.'[146] Early rejections of Christian views of God like these forced a response from other feminists within this contextual frame—understanding autonomy, embodiment, and self-directed interdependence in opposition to dependence, especially in understanding the divine. Key to feminist arguments for redeeming Christianity have been the insistence that it can promote women's autonomy, in contrast to any perceived dependency. Objections to theological views of God as a parent have been central to this defense.

Rosemary Radford Ruether's reformist approach, drawn from Catholic liberation theology, has been instrumental in shaping the direction of subsequent feminist theologies, due to her prolific output and wide readership.[147] She sharply denounces dependent relationality in Christian conceptions of God, writing, 'Patriarchal theology uses the parent image of God to prolong spiritual infantilism as virtue and to make autonomy and assertion of free will a sin.'[148] Instead women need to 'start with language for the Divine as redeemer, as liberator, as one who fosters full personhood and, in that context, speak of God/dess as creator, as source of being.'[149] Rather than depending on God as a parent—as the Son depends on the Father—God/dess as creator acts as a catalyst for women's own redemption of themselves. Ruether argues for revised God-language that will not limit women to 'a stifled, dependent self.'[150] She connects an egalitarian view of gender in Christian language and symbolism with relational embodiment. She believes such a shift will 'cherish the hard-won fruits of transcendence and spiritual personhood,'

[146] Hampson, 'On Power and Gender,' 248.
[147] Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters*, 19.
[148] Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Towards a Feminist Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 70.
[149] Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 70.
[150] Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 71.

allowing both men and women to become 'fully personalized autonomous selves and also persons in relation to each other, not against the body, but in and through the body.'[151] Embodied relationality framed within an understanding of interdependence that opposes dependence, either on other humans or the Divine, is evident in Ruether's influential works.

Ruether's framing of women's empowerment as the development of an independent self, not reliant on a God for salvation, has remained central for this strain of feminist theology, particularly regarding atonement. For example, Carter Heyward draws on this line of thinking in her rejection of 'the dominant Christian atonement tradition,' since it is rooted in 'the patriarchal logic that has produced a deity—Father or even perhaps a Mother—who reigns above us and seeks our 'submission' or 'obedience' as children to a parent.'[152] Within this theological stream, 'The ethical stance of feminism demands that women no longer consider themselves like children, but as independent, autonomous adults.'[153] Rejection of relationships of dependence are women's right and responsibility from this view. However, as this chapter has demonstrated above, such an insistence on autonomy cannot address the embodied needs of those who have experienced traumatic self-alienation. The following section details feminist theologians who have named and sought to address this relational limitation.

[151] Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism* (New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1974), 179; quoted in Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters*, 21.

[152] Carter Heyward, *Saving Jesus From Those Who Are Right: Rethinking What It Means to be Christian* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 160.

[153] Peacore, *Role of Women's Experience*, 175.

Alternative Feminist Theological Views of Bodily Autonomy

The insistence on independent autonomy as framed by Daly and Ruether is not universal among feminist theologians. Mary Fulkerson critiques the feminist appeal to experience since it 'invokes a free, autonomous self…linked with individualistic notions of agency.'[154] If feminist theologians rely on this conception of autonomy, 'their aim to transform a pervasively sexist social reality will be greatly hindered.'[155] Objections to feminist views of interdependence that assume a body able to be autonomous in this way have also arisen from disability theology.[156] Womanist theology, which names the unique challenges of black women who cannot claim the same levels of privilege as white middle-class feminists, also challenges white feminists' assumptions of power.[157] As the above discussion has demonstrated, a 'bodily ownership' understanding of the autonomous self also hinders survivors' ability to reconstruct themselves in a mutually dependent way in the wake of trauma.

Ironically, one of the strongest critiques of Saiving's early arguments around autonomy and embodiment comes from Saiving herself. In a later paper, she revisits her assumptions in light of her experiences of arthritis and aging. She notes that when she was younger she did not 'feel divorced from my body in an essential sense,' and was able to maintain 'that habitual bodily

[154] Mary McClintock Fulkerson, 'Sexism as Original Sin: Developing a Theacentric Discourse,' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 59, no. 4 (1991): 654.

[155] Fulkerson, 'Sexism,' 654.

[156] A classic disability theology text is Nancy L. Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994); and more recently, Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007).

[157] Classic Womanist texts are Katie J. Cannon, *Black Womanist Ethics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1988); Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989); and Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenges of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993). Contemporary Womanists working from Pentecostal traditions include Yolanda Pierce from an American context, and Selina Stone from a British context.

stance which says, Don't come near me, I can take care of myself.'[158] She notes her growing awareness of age-related diseases which 'progress inexorably toward a state in which one will be totally dependent on others for one's most minimal needs.'[159] Saiving postulates that 'our difficulty in affirming sickness, death, and aging' may be linked to the assumption 'that there is an entity we call the 'self,' and that we know what the nature of that entity is.'[160] She concludes that 'before we can re-vision our relationship to our bodies in their wholeness, we need to think more carefully about the self,' and that this re-visioned view might 'place our selves in a wider context, in a larger whole in which the self participates and finds itself affirmed.'[161] It is telling that as she experiences loss of the capacity for individual bodily control, Saiving reverses her own early understanding of embodiment and autonomy that so much later feminist theology has used as its basis.

So many critiques of feminist arguments have arisen from women from different racial, ethnic, class, and sexuality backgrounds that we might better "now to speak of 'feminist-informed theologies' rather than 'feminist theologies.''[162] Despite these objections, concerns for women's differing experiences of power and oppression have become foundational for subsequent theological and pastoral reflection, particularly as they affect women's lived experiences of abuse. By recognising how women's differing experiences of violence have affected all aspects of Christianity, including its theology, Carol Adams and Marie Fortune note that educators and faith leaders can 'address and change the structural foundations of our

[158] Valerie C. Saiving, 'Our Bodies/Our Selves: Reflections on Sickness, Aging, and Death,' *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 4, no. 2 (1988): 118.
[159] Saiving, 'Our Bodies/Our Selves,' 121.
[160] Saiving, 'Our Bodies/Our Selves,' 124.
[161] Saiving, 'Our Bodies/Our Selves,' 125.
[162] Pears, *Feminist Christian Encounters*, 35.

churches which have allowed this violence to go unchallenged for so long.'[163] The question for this thesis is, how heavily do unexamined assumptions about bodily autonomy continue to influence feminist theological responses to oppressive theologies of atonement—our ultimate understanding of what reconciliation with God, self and others means? How might assumptions of bodily autonomy that minimise the necessarily dependent aspects of remaking after sexual abuse also reject potentially necessary understandings of our dependence on God in terms of our embodied redemption?

Bodily Integration, Divine Dependence and Empowering Embodied Praxis

The role of bodily autonomy in feminist critiques of atonement is deeply connected to power. As political theologies, feminist theologies 'take seriously issues of power, including the ways in which power is embedded as truth.'[164] Feminist theologies are committed to revealing 'the body as an arena where different power relationships become visible.'[165] In the broader Western understanding of individual autonomy and responsibility, 'agency means the self-ownership of the individual to whom external power always signifies a potential threat.'[166] Questions of empowerment and the body—how those who have experienced sexual bodily violence become disempowered, where is power located, and how can they become empowered—are central to this thesis' examination of trauma and bodily redemption.

[163] Adams and Fortune, 'Preface,' 13.
[164] Keshgegian, 'Scandal of the Cross,' 476.
[165] Sigurdson, *Heavenly Bodies*, 19.
[166] Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 75.

Alternative feminist positions acknowledge empowerment that arises from embodied engagement with others, and ultimately the divine other, in ways more consistent with findings about post-traumatic remaking. Sarah Coakley's more nuanced approach to empowerment and submission, particularly as it has been adapted within feminist Pentecostal theology, exemplifies this alternative view, which is fleshed out in Chapter Five of this thesis. Addressing the 'cultural fear of 'heteronomy'—of submission, dependence, or vulnerability,'[167] in feminist theologies, Coakley argues that 'the apparently forced choice between dependent 'vulnerability' and liberative 'power' is a false one.'[168] Acknowledging the concerns surrounding submission for those who have suffered sexual abuse,[169] Coakley argues for developing a '*practiced* dependency on God…from which our (often necessary) dependencies on others may be assessed with critical discernment,'[170] through embodied prayer practice. Andrea Hollingsworth connects Coakley's insights about ecstatic prayer practice with charismatic prayer expressions in global Pentecostalism, emphasising how they demonstrate evidence of women's social liberation.[171] Hollingsworth mentions the connection between sexual and spiritual ecstasy that led to the patristic fathers' marginalization of charismatic prayer practice in doctrinal construction, while also connecting ecstatic experiences of the Spirit with women's personal and social liberation.[172] However, she stops short of linking ecstatic experiences of spiritual liberation in worship with the potential for embodied, liberated sexual relationality.

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[167] Sarah Coakley, *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), xiv.

[168] Coakley, *Powers and Submissions*, xv.

[169] Coakley, *Powers and Submissions*, xv, n15.

[170] Coakley, *Powers and Submissions*, xx. Emphasis in original.

[171] Andrea Hollingsworth, 'Spirit and Voice: Toward a Feminist Pentecostal Pneumatology.,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 29, no. 2 (2007),

[172] Hollingsworth, 'Spirit and Voice,' 197–98.

I pick up on this elision. My feminist Pentecostal approach to atonement makes explicit the link between body and spirit in terms of redeemed sexual relationality. This view of atonement is consonant with Pentecostal practices of salvation, which 'depend on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the gift of regeneration,'[173] and in which 'the Spirit enables the human being to participate in the redemptive work of Christ.'[174] This embodied, empowering dependence on the Spirit, in community, informs theological reflection and doctrinal construction. For this study, it specifically informs the construction of a view of atonement that connects embodied sexual relationality with liberation through Christ in the Spirit. I situate an alternative view within the 'bodily integration' model. From a Christian theological perspective, how a survivor becomes enabled through the Spirit to embody and narrate her experience of becoming integrated into the body of Christ becomes central for understanding what 'atonement' means.

A view of bodily autonomy that makes space for liberating surrender—beginning from the Spirit to empower the possibility of liberating sexual surrender with another—cannot be limited to a view of the body as property over which a self exercises rights of controlled boundaries. There must be a sense of 'power-in-vulnerability'[175] that acknowledges both the alienation from trusting vulnerability that results from sexual bodily violation, as well as the Christian hope for bodily redemption (including redeemed sexual relationality). Critiques of both feminist and Pentecostal views of sexuality and the body are required to make this connection, and an

[173] Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel*, (London: T&T Clark, 2017), 53.
[174] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 57.
[175] Hollingsworth, 'Spirit and Voice,' 197.

alternative view of bodily autonomy and relationality is required. Here, the intersection between feminist and Pentecostal emphases on embodiment and spirituality become valuable.

Exploring these questions requires continually confronting the ways religious views of a violent God who insists on total dependency and control have been used to justify and perpetuate abuse. For example, in domestic abuse, perpetrators incite fear and gain compliance through 'unpredictable outbursts of violence and by capricious enforcement of petty rules,' in order 'to convince the victim that the perpetrator is omnipotent, that resistance is futile.'[176] Once the abuser terrorises the victim into a state of dependency where they feel gratitude whenever they are spared from violence, 'the victim may come to view the perpetrator, paradoxically, as her savior.'[177] As Chapter Two demonstrates, this cuts dangerously close to the logic of some common expressions of atonement that feminists rightfully condemn.

In constructing a new, healthier self-narrative, a survivor often faces a 'rupture in her sense of belonging within a shared system of belief…not only must she rebuild her own 'shattered assumptions' about meaning, order, and justice in the world but she must also find a way to resolve her differences with those whose beliefs she can no longer share.'[178] In the communal work required to remake a self after sexual trauma, churches must ensure our mostly deeply held convictions concerning redemption do not contribute to survivors' alienation, but instead provide a basis for transformational healing. In mutual dependence, their stories must also shape ours as we discern the Holy Spirit's work together.

[176] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 69.
[177] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 69.
[178] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 145.

Addressing these issues requires confronting 'the tension within feminist theory between, on the one hand, the desire for connection and fear of alienation…and, on the other hand, the desire for autonomy and fear of invasion.'[179] This tension is palpable in Scarsella and Krehbiel's statements on atonement, especially their proper insistence that survivors must maintain the right to 'refuse others a calamitous claim to their bodies.'[180] Brison presents an elegant resolution of the tension in feminist theory between connection and fear of invasion:

> [T]he main reason all of us, especially women, have to fear violent intrusions by others is that they seriously impair our ability to be connected to humanity in ways we value. It is this loss of connection that trauma survivors mourn, a loss that in turn imperils autonomous selfhood. In order to reestablish that connection in the aftermath of trauma, one must first feel able to protect oneself against invasion. The autonomous self and the relational self are thus shown to be interdependent, even constitutive of one another.'[181]

The complex relationship between dependency, vulnerability, and bodily autonomy makes the question of bodily redemption in Christian understandings of atonement a challenge to articulate in life-giving ways.

Like Coakley, I seek 'a more creative theological way through our dilemma via a *reformulation* of the very notion of divine power and its relation to the human.'[182] Coakley asserts that 'the urgent matter of the integration of beliefs and [spiritual] 'practices'…is arguably more obvious to the emergent feminism of the 'two-thirds' world than it is to the spiritually

[179] Brison, *Aftermath*, 61.
[180] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 2.
[181] Brison, *Aftermath*, 61.
[182] Coakley, *Powers and Submissions*, 22. Emphasis in original.

desiccated [sic] elite of the educated West.'[183] I argue that a Pentecostal integration of belief and spiritual practice fits this pattern as well, in its expressions both in the West and its global presence in the two-thirds world. It also fits well with the most recent findings on the need for affective embodied practices in post-traumatic remaking.

Helping survivors establish bodily autonomy requires a 'strong behavioral focus on conditioning the body, as well as the psychological dimensions of determination and courage.'[184] A 'top-down' approach to therapy, in which 'allowing ourselves to know and understand what is going on with us, while processing the memories of the trauma,'[185] offers only a partial response. Treatment must also originate from the 'bottom up: by allowing the body to have experiences that deeply and viscerally contradict the helplessness, rage, or collapse that result from trauma.'[186] A Pentecostal approach, in which the body is 'formed not so much through the cognitive theological understanding of what it means to be a worshipper but through theological practice,'[187] answers the absence of embodied participation in feminist (and Western more broadly) theologies of atonement.

A Pentecostal view of *salvation as praxis*,[188] in which 'the human being participates in the work of redemption through a joining of the Spirit of God with the human Spirit,' through 'affective and experiential'[189] encounter, can therefore serve as a strong basis for reformulating

[183] Coakley, *Powers and Submissions*, xvii–iii.

[184] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 142.

[185] Bessel Van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (New York, USA: Viking, 2014), 26.

[186] Van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score*, 26. Van der Kolk's findings will be more fully explored in a later section on embodied Pentecostal practices.

[187] Michael Wilkinson, 'Worship: Embodying the Encounter with God,' in *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, 120.

[188] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 51–58.

[189] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 53–54.

our understanding of divine and human power in atonement theologies. Pentecostalism's congregational practice of transformational worship also reflects the relational nature of bodily autonomy that this chapter has shown is necessary to aid in reconstructing the self following traumatic violation. For example, the practice of the altar call 'emphasiz[es] salvation as a ritual of the entire community in which the individual response to God is embedded.'[190] The embodied relationality that Pentecostal practices bring to doctrinal construction can answer feminist critiques against the potential for abuse and oppression that traditional atonement models hold. At the same time, a feminist approach is needed to acknowledge how 'Pentecostal bodies appear to be defined by a series of dualisms.'[191] A feminist critique does not hesitate to name the potential for those dualisms to further oppressive conditions and hinder redemption for those who have suffered sexual abuse.

Understanding bodily autonomy not as a private property right defined by ownership, but rather as an inherent constitution of one's identity that accounts for one's embeddedness, has necessary implications for Christian faith and practice. A bodily integration conception answers feminist concerns for victims' rights and our collective responsibilities for justice. It also reflects biblically rooted commitments that chafe against isolated, individualistic conceptions of the body. For example, when Paul writes that 'you are not *your own*,' but have been 'bought with a price; therefore glorify God *in your body*' (1 Cor. 6:19, 20 NRSV), this need not be read as an oppressive assertion of patriarchal control. A bodily integration view instead allows us to read this as an affirmation of our communal belonging in Christ and to one another, inseparable from the

[190] Wolfgang Vondey, 'Soteriology at the Altar: Pentecostal Contributions to Salvation as Praxis,' *Transformation* 34, no. 3 (2017): 227.

[191] Wilkinson, 'Worship,' 125.

collective, embodied nature of our redemption. Understood theologically, a bodily integration view does not see our dependence on God as a hindrance to be overcome in order to *achieve* redemption. Rather, it makes plain that our vulnerable dependency—with others and on God, the Ultimate Other—is a *condition of* redemption.

Part III: Feminist Theology, Bodily Autonomy, and Next Steps

The somatology (theology of the body) developed in this chapter elucidates the need for a feminist-informed approach to theology that takes seriously the vulnerability of violated bodies. By applying my somatology to two models of bodily autonomy—the 'bodily ownership' model and the 'bodily integration' model—the chapter demonstrates the differing implications of these views of the body as they impact survivors of sexual abuse. Using trauma theory and relational feminist philosophy, I have argued that feminist theologies using the 'bodily ownership' model do not provide an adequate basis for a theological model of embodied redemption. By tracing the development of thinking around embodiment and autonomy in North American feminist theologies, this somatology reveals their severe limitations in envisioning redemption.

The chapter's discussion of findings from trauma literature demonstrates the need for embodied practices in post-traumatic remaking. My somatological analysis shows how these practices challenge assumptions around embodiment and autonomy that inform North American feminist theologies. Finally, the chapter connects this need with embodied Pentecostal spiritual practices as a way to reconceive the human/divine relationship. These explorations have established the basis for bringing feminist theologies of atonement into conversation with

Pentecostal embodied practices. Incorporating insights from worship practices into feminist-informed theological methodology addresses these limitations, as the remainder of this thesis demonstrates.

CHAPTER 2

A SOMATOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF FEMINIST CRITIQUES OF ATONEMENT

Chapter One established the theological approach employed to answer this thesis' central question: how can the Christian doctrine of atonement be expressed in a way that is consistent with the hope and reality of embodied redemption for survivors of sexual abuse? A critical somatology, or theology of the body, was introduced and developed to explore this question. I introduced two differing conceptions of bodily autonomy and the consequences of each conception for a theological understanding of embodied redemption for survivors of sexual abuse. Drawing from feminist philosopher Catriona MacKenzie, these were labelled the 'bodily ownership' and 'bodily integration' models. I demonstrated that the 'bodily ownership' view, in which the body is conceptualised as property subject to property rights and responsibilities exercised by the rational, willing self, was the dominant understanding of bodily autonomy influencing second-wave North American feminist theologians. Drawing from trauma literature, I demonstrated how this conception of bodily autonomy fails to account for the embodied effects of trauma that constrict an individual's ability to exercise agency in the way the 'bodily ownership' model requires. I then raised the question of how this underlying conception of bodily autonomy has continued to shape feminist theological critiques of atonement and alternative views of redemption.

This chapter examines theological understandings of redemption offered by feminist scholars who reject atonement theology based on the critique that it is inherently abusive and perpetuates abuse. Part One examines the critical and constructive theologies of Rebecca Parker,

Joanne Carlson Brown, and Rita Nakashima Brock, using the somatological analysis described in Chapter One. There are three purposes for this examination. First, to establish whether their conceptions of bodily autonomy are more consistent with either the 'bodily ownership' or 'bodily integration' models described in Chapter One. Second, to determine how their conceptions of bodily autonomy influence their rejections of atonement theology and alternative understandings of redemption. Finally, to determine the degree to which their critical and constructive approaches to atonement offer a sufficient theological basis for an embodied redemption for survivors of sexual abuse, in regard to the work of post-traumatic remaking.

Part Two uses a somatological analysis to examine Shelly Rambo's trauma-informed approach to atonement and redemption. It shows how Rambo's critique of atonement draws from and expands upon the theological conclusions of Brock, Brown, and Parker described in Part One. The influence of Rambo's work in trauma-informed theologies demonstrates how this shared view of bodily autonomy and atonement continues to inform contemporary trauma-informed feminist approaches to the doctrine. As in Part One, the goals are to determine which model of bodily autonomy more closely informs Rambo's theology, the effects of this understanding of bodily autonomy on her views of atonement and redemption, and the potential of her theology to provide an embodied redemptive vision for survivors of sexual abuse. Part Three offers concluding remarks and points ahead to the work of Chapter Three: a somatological analysis of Kathryn Tanner's feminist response that retains atonement based on a Logos Christology.

Part I: A Somatological Analysis of Brock, Brown, and Parker's Atonement Critiques

Brock, Brown, and Parker have been influential in their rejection of atonement as a theological category based on the connections they make between atonement theology and abuse against women, children, and marginalised peoples. Their works align with the feminist theological assertion that 'Christian theology has long imposed upon women a norm of imitative self-sacrifice based on the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth…. When the cross is also interpreted as the salvific work of an all-powerful paternal deity, women's well-being is as secure as that of a child cowering before an abusive father.'[1] Many theologians have since engaged the authors' assertions of 'divine' or 'cosmic child abuse.'[2] This evaluation limits its scope to how the authors' engagement with atonement theology reveals their assumptions about bodily autonomy and redemption and the implications of their assumptions for survivors of sexual abuse. By assuming an owned, controlled body, my somatological evaluation shows that these authors' theological visions of atonement are constricted.

For God So Loved the World: Brown and Parker's Critique

In their groundbreaking essay *For God So Loved the World?* Brown and Parker draw direct links between atonement theology, violence, and the negation of women's selfhood that they argue result in ongoing cycles of abuse. Brown and Parker's analysis draws from the lived experiences

[1] Elizabeth Bettenhausen, 'Foreword,' in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse: A Feminist Critique*, ed. Joanne Carlson Brown and Carol R. Bohn (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1989), xii.

[2] See footnote 19 of this chapter.

of women who have been pressured to accept abuse and suffering, implicating a theology of the cross in perpetuating abuse. They argue that 'women have been assigned the suffering servant role.'[3] As a result, women's 'acculturation to abuse leads us to keep silent for years about experiences of sexual abuse, to not report rape, to stay in marriages in which we are battered.'[4] They therefore reject the notion that Jesus' death can in any way be said to play a part in redemption and argue that a different theological location for redemption is necessary.

Brown and Parker name atonement as the doctrine most clearly responsible for the abusive nature of Christianity. The problem they see is that 'Jesus' suffering and death—and God's responsibility for that suffering and death. Why we suffer is not a fundamentally different question from why Jesus suffered.'[5] They argue that the 'fundamental tenet of Christianity—Christ's suffering and dying *for us*—upholds actions and attitudes that accept, glorify, and even encourage suffering. Perhaps until we challenge and reject this idea we will never be liberated.'[6] An analysis of three classical atonement models—Christus Victor, satisfaction/Anselm, and moral influence—as well as contemporary 'suffering God' and liberationist responses, follows. From this analysis they conclude that all models are implicated in continuing violence against women and children, since in each case suffering is seen as necessary for redemption.

Brown and Parker interpret the Christus victor view to say that Jesus' death is cast as a 'mythic drama' in which 'Jesus' death becomes a paradigm for a stage in a psychological process that is to be patiently endured.'[7] Connecting a 'mythic' view to physical death holds no

[3] Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse*, 3.

[4] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 2.

[5] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 4.

[6] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 4. Italics in original.

[7] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 6.

redemptive potential for them: 'When whatever psychological value exists in facing one's inner darkness on the path to greater wholeness and healing is equated with the real death of Jesus, the meaning of suffering is obscured…. In a theological effort to show evil and darkness as not ultimately true, the death of Jesus becomes not ultimately real.'[8] From a somatological perspective, Brown and Parker's view holds that the bodily death of Jesus exists independently of psychological growth. The former is 'real', while the latter—a psychological journey toward healing within a mythic framework where inner darkness is overcome—is not 'real'.

The danger, for Brown and Parker, is that disciples who embrace Christus victor may believe they must 'endure suffering as a prelude to new life.'[9] Suffering may be viewed as a gift that reveals God's purposes for one's life. However, this is ultimately destructive; 'victimization never leads to triumph. It can lead to extended pain if it is not refused or fought.'[10] In their view, the Christus victor model 'den[ies] the reality of suffering and death,' which 'defames all who suffer and trivialises tragedy.'[11] They conclude that this model of atonement must therefore be rejected.

Brown and Parker particularly name the satisfaction model of atonement first described by Anselm as responsible for justifying and perpetuating abuse. In their reading, Jesus satisfies God's need for justice by taking on the wrath humanity deserves due to its sinfulness. Because Jesus is without sin, he is able to fulfill God's need to punish wrongs and therefore bring sinful humanity into right relationship. Jesus' 'holiness is crowned by his willingness to be perfectly

[8] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 6.
[9] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 7.
[10] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 7.
[11] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 7.

obedient to his father's will.'[12] They argue that a society that accepts this view of God will see child abuse as also justified: 'when parents have an image of a God righteously demanding the total obedience of "his" son…what will prevent the parent from engaging in divinely sanctioned child abuse?'[13] In analysing the subsequent Abelardian 'moral persuasion' view, which rejects Anselm's focus on violence, they find that humans instead 'need to be persuaded faithfully to believe in God's overwhelming mercy.'[14] Yet, this model is also insufficient, since 'only an innocent, suffering victim for whose suffering we are in some way responsible has the power to confront us with our guilt and move us in a new direction.'[15] In their analysis, no classical view of atonement presents a view of a God who does not demand suffering and abuse in order to be appeased.

Contemporary 'suffering God' theologies and even other feminist views that do not explicitly reject the cross as a potential site of salvation are also rejected. Jesus as the one who suffers in solidarity with humanity on the cross does not meet their understanding of redemption through just action. Brown and Parker acknowledge that God as co-sufferer is an improvement against previous assumptions of impassability, and that Jesus' intimate connection with humanity and inspiration to new community 'indeed has a right to be called redemption.'[16] However, they question the necessity of Jesus' suffering and death in establishing this connection: 'Was God not with us in our suffering before the death of Jesus? Did the death really initiate something that did not exist before?'[17] They conclude, 'We do not need to be saved by Jesus' death from some

[12] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 7–8.
[13] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 9.
[14] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 11.
[15] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 12.
[16] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 17.
[17] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 18.

original sin. We need to be liberated from the oppression of racism, classism, and sexism, that is, from patriarchy. If in that liberation process there is suffering it will be because people with power choose to use their power to resist and oppose the human claim to passionate and free life.'[18] In their analysis, sin is encapsulated by the oppression of patriarchy. Redemption, then, comes through human action to oppose and end this oppression through the willing effort of choosing justice.

A Somatological Analysis of Brown and Parker

Scholars, including other feminist theologians, have noted a variety of consequences resulting from Brown and Parkers' revisioning of Jesus' importance to Christian faith.[19] This analysis focuses on the implications of their rejection of atonement and alternative view of redemption for the bodily redemption of survivors of sexual abuse. From a somatological perspective, Brown and Parker's concerns for the realities of embodied suffering in atonement theories lead to

[18] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 27.

[19] See for example, Mark D. Baker and Joel B. Green, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2011), 117–20; Cynthia Crysdale, 'Making Sense of Atonement: What Kind of Sense?', *Anglican Theological Review* 101, no. 3 (2019): 467–81; Kathryn Greene-McCreight, *Feminist Reconstructions of Christian Doctrine: Narrative Analysis and Appraisal* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), especially Chapters Four and Five; Elaine A. Heath, *We Were the Least of These: Reading the Bible with Survivors of Sexual Abuse* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011), 131–2; Flora Keshgegian, 'The Scandal of the Cross: Revisiting Anselm and His Feminist Critics', *Anglican Theological Review* 82, no. 3 (2000): 475–92; Linda Peacore, *The Role of Women's Experience in Feminist Theologies of Atonement* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010), especially Chapter Five; Darby Kathleen Ray, *Deceiving the Devil: Atonement, Abuse, and Ransom* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1998), especially Chapter Six; Cynthia L. Rigby, 'Taking Our Place: Substitution, Human Agency, and Feminine Sin', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 4, no. 3 (2004): 220–34; Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 247–73; J. Denny Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 155–62; and Linda Woodhead, 'Spiritualising the Sacred: A Critique of Feminist Theology', *Modern Theology* 13, no. 2 (1997): 191–212. This is a small selection of the scholars who have critiqued the rejection of atonement and alternative understanding of redemption presented by Parker, Brown, and Brock.

removing the particularity of Jesus' crucified and resurrected body from any view of redemption. Their critiques of atonement point out the real-life dangers that come from abusively interpreting theological views of violence and suffering. If pastors counsel women to endure relational abuse in order to perform the 'suffering servant' role as Jesus did, this interpretation must be challenged and rejected. And if Jesus' death is conceptualised as a divine father's demand for the deadly punishment of his son, requiring unquestioning obedience, it is correct and necessary to explore how 'discipline' understood as violent punishment against the bodies and minds of children could come to be justified. Pastors and worship leaders must carefully discern how they select worship music, read biblical texts, preach, and teach in light of these critiques.

However, Brown and Parker's alternative understanding of redemption fails to offer liberation to those who are experiencing the embodied, physiological effects of sexual abuse. Their language around suffering and redemption is framed in terms of the decisions and choices of fully self-sufficient, self-contained individuals. Such a view of the self is operant in their rejection of the 'promise of resurrection,' since it shapes women to 'endure…violation of our sacred rights to self-determination, wholeness, and freedom.'[20] Women are the agents of their own redemption when they cease choosing to accept suffering: 'The question…is not, Am I willing to suffer? but [sic] Do I desire fully to live?'[21] Responsibility for redemption falls on the individual's choices of acceptance or refusal, which are patterned on the same type of divine choice: 'Redemption happens when people refuse to relinquish respect and concern for others…refuse to give up seeing, experiencing, and being connected and affected by all of life.

[20] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 2.
[21] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 18.

God must be seen as the one who most fully refuses to relinquish life.'[22] Brown and Parker assume an independent, individual willing self in full control of its own embodied actions and decisions, which must take responsibility to both reject the violence done against it and enact a justice-centered response on behalf of others.[23]

Based on a somatological analysis, Brown and Parker's critiques of the atonement tradition and alternate views of redemption reveal the 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy described in Chapter One of this thesis. From this viewpoint, bodily autonomy is conceived as the exercise of the willing self's preferences over the body, which exists as 'a tool or instrument of our rational agency.'[24] This individualistic view of autonomy as self-determination understands the body 'in terms of the agent's preferences and desires. Bodily autonomy, then, can be viewed as an extension of autonomy of the will through satisfaction of preferences and desires relating to the body.'[25] This conception of bodily autonomy fails to account for the physiological effects of embodied trauma that prevent survivors from making a cognitive choice to act in the ways Brown and Parker deem necessary in order to effect one's own redemption. The following discussion explains the limitations of their 'bodily ownership' view of autonomy.

Traumatic events such as sexual violation create physiological changes that restrict the body's ability to function as an agent capable of freely making choices in the ways Brown and

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[22] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 19.

[23] Brown and Parker's insistence that individuals possess both the right and responsibility to choose to act as agents of their own redemption could be more broadly understood within Charles Taylor's explanation of modern selfhood and identity. See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Press, 1989), 11–14; and *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers Volume I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 27–35.

[24] Jonathan Herring and Jesse Wall, 'The Nature and Significance of the Right to Bodily Integrity,' *Cambridge Law Journal* 76, no. 3 (2017): 577.

[25] Anita Superson, 'The Right to Bodily Autonomy,' in *Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender*, eds. Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 305.

Parker assume.[26] These authors provide no understanding of redemption that can move survivors of violence from a place of reactivity and enable them to act in the way they deem necessary to participate in redemption. Victims, in their view, seem to accept suffering because of received poor theology. The solution, then, is to make an intentional decision to refuse to suffer anymore. They suggest that beliefs are responsible for the failure to act against abusers: 'If you believe that acceptance of suffering gives life, then your resources for confronting perpetrators of violence and abuse will be numbed.'[27] But recent neuroscience has shown that the numbing response that prevents abuse victims from confronting their perpetrators is not limited to a false belief about the need for suffering that can be corrected by accepting a new perspective. The following discussion of findings from trauma literature demonstrates the limitations of Brown and Parker's assessment of choosing to change beliefs and act differently.

Constriction or 'numbing' can occur as a protective response against traumatic bodily violation. Numbing keeps the body from having to deal with the full reality of the violence enacted upon it. However, as a result, the survivor's ability to act as an autonomous agent is diminished.[28] As such, survivors of violence cannot simply choose to act as agents of their own redemption in the way Brown and Parker assume. That is not to say that beliefs that encourage victims of abuse to endure suffering do not contribute to justifying and perpetuating abuse. But the theological vision of redemption that Brown and Parker offer is insufficient. A victim of sexual abuse experiencing PTSD in a violent situation cannot simply choose to leave it. Placing the

[26] See Chapter One of this thesis for a full description of the physiological effects of sexual abuse on embodied functioning.

[27] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 18.

[28] Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror; With a New Epilogue by the Author* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 42–45.

responsibility for a survivor's own embodied redemption entirely on her own 'refusal' to endure suffering and instead choose liberation risks blaming her for her continuing victimization when she fails to act in such a way, an outcome that Brown and Parker surely do not intend. In reality, survivors' capacities must be strengthened through the engaged, compassionate intervention of others, to help in the work developing and expanding survivors' capacity to exercise bodily autonomy.

Brown and Parker's understanding of atonement theology is fundamentally shaped by their assumption of bodily autonomy as a personal act of will over one's bodily property. This view fails to account for how the embodied limitations of the latter cannot be separated from the former. As such, these authors cannot offer a view of redemption which accounts for the realities of embodied sin that sexual abusers have been subjected to. I argue that theology stemming from this 'ownership' view of bodily autonomy is reflective of 'an individualism wherein liberation comes out of one's choice to live a life modeled on Jesus' life. It lacks a cosmic dimension and reflects a failure to understand the magnitude of human sin'[29]—in this case, the embodied reality of sin committed against survivors, which restricts them from choosing to act as free agents of their own liberation.

Post-traumatic remaking of the self depends on the survivor's first confronting the reality of the trauma, affectively and eventually verbally, as a step toward integrating it into a coherent life story. This integrative work 'challenges an ordinary person to become a theologian, a philosopher, and a jurist…. In order to develop a full understanding of the trauma story, the survivor must examine the moral questions of guilt and responsibility and reconstruct a system of

[29] Peacore, *Role of Women's Experience*, 122.

belief that makes sense of her undeserved suffering.'[30] Then the survivor completes the meaning-making process through engaging in just action—but only *after* this integrative step is complete.[31] When Brown and Parker assert, 'The travesty of the suffering and death of Jesus is not redeemed by the resurrection', and, 'suffering is never redemptive, and suffering can never be redeemed,'[32] they short-circuit the necessary process of confronting and integrating—in other words, redeeming—one's own embodied suffering within the historical Christian narrative.

When Brown and Parker ask if Jesus' death initiates something that did not exist before,[33] they do not connect the significance of his death with his bodily resurrection, and the Christian hope of believers' future bodily resurrection. This 'disembodiment' of the crucifixion and resurrection is consistent with an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy. The biblical narrative connects Jesus' resurrection from the dead with God's intervention, through the Spirit that raised him from the dead (Rom 8:11). A body conceived of as individually autonomous, owned and controlled property could not allow such outside intervention and still be said to be exercising its right to bodily autonomy. Yet, this complex interaction of remaking through others' intervention is exactly the initiation of a new way of being for survivors that did not and could not exist before, without the shaping intervention of others. From a Christian somatological perspective, when one removes the embodied reality of Jesus' own suffering on the cross, and the believer's embodied participation in dying and rising with Christ—a healing partially known in the present and with a promise of ultimate fulfillment in our own embodied resurrection—what hope is

[30] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 145.
[31] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 145.
[32] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 27.
[33] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 18; see n17 above.

offered for the embodied redemption of sexual abuse survivors living with the enslaving constrictions of the sin of sexual bodily violation? Brown and Parker's theology, rooted in the 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy, cannot provide such a hope.

Resurrection is possible and the sinful constriction of the body can be redeemed, but not by an individual choice to 'refuse' the trauma through an act of will. Brown and Parker's individualist view of the 'owned' body, which the willing self can freely choose to control, limits their ability to offer a theological vision of embodied redemption for survivors. Their interpretation of the cross is also limited by a perspective that does not account for the relational, dependent connectedness of bodies that is required for the work of healing and redemption. They therefore fail to see potential understandings of the cross which might foster a divine-human relational connection that can transform embodied trauma and expand personal agency.

Brock's Analysis: 'A Little Child' and Journeys by Heart

Brock's assessment of atonement begins from her rejection of a Christology in which Jesus holds a unique role in human salvation. She shares with Brown and Parker a rejection of atonement on the charge that any version of the doctrine promotes patriarchal control and child abuse: 'Jesus, in his human aspect, is sacrificed as the one perfect child…. The sacrifice of this perfect son is the way to new life with god the father. The death of the child and the intervention of the father after

the punishment is inflicted, through the resurrection, are celebrated as salvific.'[34] Atonement Christology on her view is rooted in a patriarchal Western conception of sin, one 'aligned with blame, punishment, and guilt, and blame has usually been assigned to woman as the originator of sin.'[35] She instead understands sin in terms of broken relationships, a state of being she calls brokenheartedness. In her understanding, 'Sin is not something to be punished, but something to be healed.'[36] And for Brock, healing comes from within, from what she calls 'heart.'

Brock uses *heart* as 'a metaphor for the human self and our capacity for intimacy [that] involves the union of body, spirit, reason, and passion through heart knowledge, the deepest and fullest knowing.'[37] She critiques the church for its patriarchal focus on original sin, whereby believers are 'to be outraged by the sinfulness of "man," and to seek redemption through the suffering of another.'[38] Healing instead comes through reconnecting with 'original grace'. Humans suffer brokenheartedness through damaging relationships, beginning in childhood. Healing on Brock's view requires us to

> 'take the responsibility for recognising our own damage by following our hearts to the relationships that will empower our self-healing…we are called not to absolve ourselves of the consequences of an inherited flaw. We are called to remember our own brokenheartedness, the extent of our vulnerability, and the depth of our need for relationships. Hence we are called not to dependence on a power outside ourselves, but

[34] Rita Nakashima Brock, 'And A Little Child Will Lead Us: Christology and Child Abuse', in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse*, 51–2. Brock's critique of atonement and revised Christology are outlined in this essay and expanded in her book, *Journeys by Heart*.

[35] Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing, 1988), 6.

[36] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 7.

[37] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, xiv.

[38] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 23.

to an exploration of the depths of our most inner, personal selves as the root of our connections to all others.'[39]

Since brokenness is not a pre-given state into which humans are born, the theological task is not to be redeemed from sin but to recover the memory of original grace, before it was destroyed through damaging human relationships.

Brock differs from Brown and Parker by naming relationships as necessary for healing. She also connects selfhood with the body, noting, 'Reclamation of the body is part of the reclamation of the self.'[40] However, relationality and embodiment still begin with the individual toward the ultimate end of self-acceptance. Relationships with others are necessary to restore our own original grace. Reconnecting with heart 'requires a loving presence who helps the search…and who can mirror back our buried and broken heart, returning us to a healing memory of our earliest pain and need for love.'[41] Brokenhearted individuals require 'a community of support'[42] where they can safely face and integrate their memories. Connecting with our deepest heart memories 'binds us to the suffering of others and provides us the routes to empowerment and self-acceptance.'[43] We need others because 'we can only come into flower with connections to other self-accepting selves.'[44] Once 'we reclaim our own fragile original grace,' we can 'live in connection and beyond separation and dependency.'[45] This is how Brock understands interdependence.

[39] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 16.
[40] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 21.
[41] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 17.
[42] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 22.
[43] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 23.
[44] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 24.
[45] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 24.

Brock rejects traditional Christological doctrines for upholding systems of unilateral patriarchal power and control. Systems where God is envisioned as a paternal figure in a father-son relationship 'focus love on outside authority and obedience to another's will for us…. In seeking to orient us to a transcendent, external power, such systems encourage faintheartedness and make self-awareness and personal power difficult.'[46] This 'patriarchal father-god fosters dependence and, in his latent, punitive aspects, haunts many atonement doctrines.'[47] Rather than Jesus existing in a unique, particular relationship with God as 'the' Christ, Brock reconceptualises Christ in terms of 'Christa/Community,' rooted in 'erotic power…the power of our primal interrelatedness.'[48] Rather than the Son attested to in the creeds, 'Jesus participates centrally in this Christa/Community, but he neither brings erotic power into being nor controls it.'[49] Humans 'become the fullest incarnation of erotic power when our bodies, feelings, needs, and awarenesses [sic] are affirmed as an integral aspect of our ongoing existence and as the route of our connection to and cocreation of others.'[50] Jesus is 'a wounded healer…who by his own experience understands vulnerability and internalized oppression.'[51] He participates in Christa/Community's healing when 'the willingness of those who seek help to make themselves vulnerable create the space for erotic power to emerge…. Through their mutual touching, Christa/Community is cocreated as a continuing, liberating, redemptive reality.'[52] Reclaimed, redemptive images of Jesus can serve to foster this communal healing.

[46] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 54.
[47] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 55.
[48] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 26.
[49] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 52.
[50] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 63.
[51] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 81.
[52] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 81.

In Brock's reading of Christology, 'The Gospel writers use Jesus, his community, a past faith heritage, and their own life contexts to create distinctive images of faith and hope.'[53] Those images which continue to serve erotic power may be maintained, while those rooted in hierarchical patriarchy must be rejected. The earliest disciples were shattered by Jesus' death, yet the emergence of erotic power was 'enough to empower the community to withstand and integrate tragedy.'[54] They transformed their own suffering after his death when 'they brought him back through memory and a visionary-ecstatic image of resurrection.'[55] This collective image was empowering to the extent that it affirmed the disciples' 'refusal to give up on life, and the maintenance of healing presence [to] give meaning to the resurrection as a profound affirmation of *this* life.'[56] However, those disciples erred who understood their experience of Jesus through a lens of patriarchy, who 'made him an authority, a salvific protector. His special status to them was as a substitute for their punishment, for they could not give up their need to worship hierarchical powers.'[57] For Brock, resurrection continues to serve as an empowering image when it is understood within the context of the Christa/Community's role in living redemptively through refusal to be overcome by oppression.

Somatological Analysis of Brock

[53] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 69.
[54] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 99.
[55] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 100.
[56] Brock, 'And a Little Child', 58–9. Emphasis in original.
[57] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 94.

Brock's emphasis on the role of community is a helpful correction to Brown and Parker. A supportive community that offers 'recognition and restitution'[58] is necessary for post-traumatic remaking of the self. Communities that provide a protected space for survivors to confront painful memories, bearing witness and affirming the reality of what has happened to them, as well as taking action to hold those who have caused harm accountable are vital for the reparation of the self.[59] And as a 'Japanese-Puerto Rican immigrant American,'[60] Brock's perspective adds needed diversity to white North American feminist voices. She also names the importance of a 'critical recollection of the past,' as well as 'the integration of sensation, feeling, and thinking' to overcome polarization and allow transformation.[61] However, a somatological analysis of Brock's understanding of the embodied self in relationship reveals a similar 'bodily ownership' conception of bodily autonomy. The below discussion shows how this assumption of the embodied self limits the potential of Brock's theology to offer a transformative redemptive vision following trauma.

Brock assumes each individual has an ideal inner self, which others serve to mirror back and help the individual recover through memory. However, this assumption does not reflect what current trauma research shows about how integration and transformation become possible.[62] Brock considers self-awareness the central aspect of 'self-in-relationship,' in which 'we are

[58] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 63.

[59] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 63–66; 175–95. While Herman uses the language of recovery to describe living well in the aftermath of trauma, I follow Karen O'Donnell's reasoning and use the language of post-traumatic remaking. See the Introduction to this thesis.

[60] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, xvi.

[61] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 42.

[62] Brock has more recently addressed trauma theory in her Christology (for example, in her presentation entitled 'Let's Bury Atonement Soteriology for Good,' delivered to the Feminist Theology Network on March 25, 2024, via Zoom). However, her assertion that healing arises from within the human community remains.

empowered to respond and act toward intimacy instead of dependency and toward greater openness and self-affirmation instead of self-sacrifice.'[63] But these contrasts present an overly simplistic view of relationality and establish false binaries, creating the same type of oppositional, polarised thinking Brock seeks to overcome. Understanding relationality from the viewpoint of a powerful individual self who requires other powerful individual selves to regain 'awareness' of her own power reflects an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy. It therefore cannot offer an adequately relational vision of embodied redemption.

Contra Brock, trauma research demonstrates that humans do not 'know best "by heart",'[64] and assuming that they do is particularly harmful for abuse survivors. Even non-traumatised persons' minds function to hide the reality of embodied states from conscious decision-making. To more efficiently address external concerns, we often 'use our minds not to discover facts but to hide them.'[65] Beyond our intention or awareness, our minds can screen us from parts of ourselves, especially our awareness of 'the inner states of the body.'[66] The practice of agency begins with interoception, an awareness of 'body-based feelings…. Knowing *what* we feel is the first step to knowing *why* we feel that way.'[67] A lingering effect of trauma is disconnection from one's own bodily states. Survivors can be cut off from the internal cues that signal which persons and situations are dangerous, as well as which are 'safe and nourishing.'[68] As a result, survivors living with unintegrated trauma run a high risk of revictimization.[69] As such,

[63] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 34.
[64] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, xiv.
[65] Antonio Damasio, *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness* (London: William Heinemann, 1999), 28.
[66] Damasio, *Feeling of What Happens*, 28.
[67] Van Der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, 95–6.
[68] Van Der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, 96.
[69] Van Der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, 99.

counselling those living in the aftermath of trauma toward 'following our hearts to the relationships that will empower our self-healing'[70] is dangerous advice.

Self-awareness alone cannot empower survivors of sexual abuse to act as responsible agents capable of experiencing bodily redemption. Confronting trauma memories is painful work that requires more than other 'self-accepting selves' to act as mirrors. Redemption of oneself requires considerable self-sacrifice on the part of survivors and those in their circle of care. Reaching the stage of recovery where the survivor is ready to confront traumatic memories often first requires the intervention and resources of others (with the survivor's request and permission, of course), on whom the survivor may be dependent for such basics as shelter, childcare, food, etc. Loved ones' sacrifices, and the survivor's sacrifice of all that she has known, are essential steps in the recovery of her agency and development of a sense of empowerment.[71] What is unclear in Brock's Christic view is how a collective of 'self-accepting selves' is responsible for the well-being of others.[72] If one accepts Brock's position that it is incumbent on trauma survivors to 'follow their hearts' to healing, and their relationships exist to serve as mirrors pointing them inward, back to their own inner truth, where does collective responsibility enter in when that 'truth' is skewed? When something new must be learned about how to live with oneself and others? When survivors become difficult, and need food, shelter, and care for their children in addition to affirmation? In Christian terms, where does the role of faith formation and collective responsibility as the body of Christ enter in?

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[70] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 16.

[71] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 133, 140–41.

[72] See Paul Babie and Michael Trainor, *Neoliberalism and the Biblical Voice: Owning and Consuming* (Oxford: Routledge, 2018), 29–31. They name the movement toward individual vs. collective responsibility as it exists in the 21st century American capitalism 'neoliberal rationality'.

Brock's dichotomies of intimacy vs. dependency, and self-affirmation vs. self-sacrifice, do not account for the complex and difficult nature of embodied recovery for trauma survivors. Dichotomising relationships between embodied selves in this way also demonstrates an 'ownership' understanding of bodily autonomy. The self that Brock envisions can only interact with other selves in a way that offers protection from perceived invasion, assuming a 'sphere of inviolability'[73] between distinct individual selves. But this distinction does not allow for the difficult navigation of agency and reliance on others necessary to help the survivor develop the embodied skills needed to expand her autonomy. As Herman asserts, 'Awareness alone is not sufficient to change long-entrenched patterns of relationship. Repeated practice is required.'[74] Survivors need a safe space to practice these skills. Beyond self-affirmation, remaking requires acknowledging 'maladaptive behavior without excessive shame,'[75] and learning new patterns of relationship with others.

Particularly for survivors, becoming a moral agent able to care for oneself and work toward justice for others requires more than rediscovering a lost child self. That self has suffered the death of trauma, and as a result, 'life is reshaped in light of death.'[76] Persons do not become agents of justice simply by remembering their childlike vulnerable state. While integrating memories into a cohesive life narrative requires honesty and vulnerability, the goal of this integration is to be shaped into responsible adults. Such a strong, resilient self requires others we can depend on to develop that dependability in ourselves. It also requires self-knowledge to

[73] Babie and Trainor, *Neoliberalism and the Biblical Voice*, 34.
[74] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 189.
[75] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 189.
[76] Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 25.

address faulty perceptions that hinder us from developing into such a self, which means our inner knowledge must sometimes be challenged and changed, not affirmed. Survivors of bodily violation especially must develop new ways of relating that challenge negative self-images that distort their identity and hinder their sense of agency. One's ideal self must be reformulated into a 'coherent moral story'[77] in relationship with those who can appropriately challenge and affirm one's strengths and limitations, toward the end of becoming a responsible ethical and moral agent.

Brock's Christology, stripped of Jesus' unique role as the one who offers a redemptive promise which both includes and surpasses present human life and flourishing, is a drastic rewrite of doctrine and reconceptualization of Christian hope. From a somatological perspective, it also reflects the 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy. She imagines Jesus' resurrection not as God's embodied action in history, but rather a visionary experience for which the disciples are fully responsible. The human-divine relationship from this view of resurrection is entirely constructed by human imagination, not an embodied event initiated by God of which the apostles are witnesses. Even God cannot pass within the 'sphere of inviolability' that surrounds human bodies—even Jesus' body—on Brock's view. It is no wonder that Brock rejects 'atonement Christologies' in her revisioning of redemption. If humans are not subject to the Fall, or any sense of original sin, the true task of theology is not redemption, but recovery of a memory of original goodness. If the task of theology is to awaken the erotic power that arises from relationships

[77] Kent Dunnington, *Humility, Pride, and Christian Virtue Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 125.

between a collective of self-accepting selves, no divine action from beyond the material human sphere is necessary.

Despite Brock's emphasis on the role of community and her purported rejection of the 'illusion of self-sufficiency,'[78] healing on her understanding ultimately stems from individuals, who already possess all that is required for flourishing, needing others only to reflect back and remind them of their own wholeness. Rather than demonstrating integrative, whole-making divine action through God's embodiment in Jesus, biblical healing accounts 'reveal the redemptive nature of relationships in which woundedness—vulnerability—is claimed.'[79] Brock's retelling of the resurrection removes the material reality of Jesus' physical body. In her view, resurrection becomes the disciples' agreement on a collective, internal psychic account rather than a narrative recounting of their physically embodied encounters with him. Allowing for the possibility of a historical event in which God's presence is revealed in Jesus' physically resurrected body, as the Gospel authors of Matthew, Luke, and John attest,[80] is unimaginable from an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy. The resurrection of Jesus, rejected as an embodied, physical event in history, becomes literally disembodied.

Given Brock's assumption of a fully capable self in which relationships with others serve as reminders of one's own wholeness, it makes sense that she would focus her assessment on the shorter ending of the Gospel of Mark, since it does not explicitly include the disciples' embodied encounters with the risen Jesus. But to structure Christian theology based on a

[78] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 28.
[79] Brock, *And a Little Child*, 55.
[80] Brock uses biblical examples only from the shorter ending of the Gospel of Mark precisely to avoid the Gospel accounts of bodily resurrection. See *Journeys by Heart*, Chapter Five.

fragment of a single Gospel narrative is to silence the other voices that attest to Jesus' embodied resurrection. Brock's narrow, disembodied reduction of resurrection using a singular Gospel is an act of theological silencing, denying the testimonies of those she does not wish to hear. Indeed, she assumes the Markan community experienced the risen Jesus as a collective vision, yet the Gospel itself is silent on this account. So, what is the basis for her assumption? To assume anything about the resurrection at all, she must draw on the other Gospels, which she does not name or recognise.

She also does not account for aspects of the Gospel narrative that sustain the Markan community when they do not fit her own narrative. For example, the Markan community did not form itself solely around those who had suffered, in which Jesus was a participant but not the central focus. They recorded Jesus' words as including a call to give one's life away for a specific purpose: the kingdom of God. For example, in Mark 8:31–37, the author records Jesus as saying he must undergo suffering, and that 'those who lose their life *for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel*, will save it' (NRSV 8:35). So, the community's own narrative, which has sustained it in their time of trauma and given them life, does include a call to self-sacrifice, and *for Jesus' sake* particularly. The call is to give one's life *for the sake of the gospel*, the good news of the kingdom, where relationships of wholeness bring life. It is not difficult to determine that staying in a situation of oppression and abuse, where the outcome is death rather than life, does not fall under the category of 'good news.' Therefore, while other forms of self-giving that co-create life are part of discipleship, staying under the powers of violence is not. Jesus' way of self-giving negates this destructive interpretation.

Mark's author records that Jesus' purpose is 'to give his life as a ransom for many' (10:45). Therefore, this understanding of the meaning of Jesus' death forms a necessary part of the community's sustaining narrative. It is true that communities can sustain themselves through unhealthy narratives, and these distortions must be named. However, the Christian community was able to grow and support one another in healthy, life-giving ways based on this narrative, which stresses a particular understanding of self-sacrifice.

Brock's reinterpretation of the resurrection also risks silencing the disciples' witness. As witnesses to Jesus' execution, his disciples are also survivors of trauma.[81] Their community has survived its collective trauma, healed, and grown based on the narrative account offered by the Gospel author, including those understandings of Jesus' death Brock disagrees with. Would the community Brock attempts to speak for accept her telling of Jesus' significance? Would they agree that a collective vision of Jesus, understood within a psychological frame absent his body, was their perception of their reality? By discounting the testimony of Jesus' significance maintained by the other three Gospel authors and placing her own frame around it, is she silencing the voices of survivors of trauma, negating their shared narrative of healing and co-creation?

Finally, Brock's claim that 'No one else can die for us or bring justice, liberation, and healing'[82] is proven false when applied to the reality of a wounded, suffering body. Organ donation is one example of a body requiring the sacrifice of another to sustain life. Firefighters

[81] David M. Carr, *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* (New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 2014), 156–75; Karen O'Donnell, 'Surviving Trauma at the Foot of the Cross,' in *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse*, ed. Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs, and Rocío Figueroa (London: SCM Press, 2021), 260–77.

[82] Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 106.

who give up their lives to rescue those trapped by flames are rightly named heroes for their intervention on behalf of others. Or consider a car accident in which the victim loses consciousness and is quickly losing blood. Persons in such a state are unable to claim their own woundedness and seek out their own healing. They are dependent on the intervention of skilled EMTs and doctors. They require the physical donation of blood from others. Their healing process will likely require an extended period of dependence on others. We demonstrate a collective implicit understanding of this reality in the aftermath of disasters, when we flock to blood drives. Blood donation requires time, travel, the insertion of a needle, the temporary effects of some blood loss—sacrifice. Giving blood creates a wound. Yet we realise that we are collectively responsible for others' lives in this way—that only by our wounds can others be healed.[83] Even without consciousness, this process still requires embodied interdependence; our bodies will only accept blood from others with certain blood types.[84] Assuming that no one else can intervene to liberate us, or provide healing we are not capable of ourselves, is only possible if one conceives of the body in an individualised, proprietary manner, owned property under our conscious control and subject to our will.

Another problem arises when one eliminates the physical reality of Jesus' body in the crucifixion and resurrection from the Christian narrative of salvation and redemption. In the wake of his death and resurrection, Jesus does not rediscover a whole, perfect child self. Instead, he shows that the wounds from the cross still mark his resurrected body.[85] This is a vital, salient

[83] See 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5.

[84] Thanks to my supervisor, Wolfgang Vondey, for making this important observation about bodily interdependence.

[85] See Luke 24:39–40; John 20:20, 27.

point for survivors. Healing after trauma does not mean recovering the memory of an unmarked child self. It means accepting that the body has become something else through the embodied realities that trauma leaves behind. Revealing his wounds does not glorify the violence of his crucifixion but shows his disciples his complete identification with their own embodied reality, marked by trauma.[86] In Jesus' resurrection, the presence of his living body to his disciples matters. His physical demonstration that there is life after the death that results from trauma—a transformed bodily life, one that is made new even while carrying the embodied scars of the past—matters. His death and bodily resurrection are the basis for Christian hope, the intervention that opens the way to renewed life.

Brock is correct that Christians must critique narratives of redemption that fail to reflect the embodied realities of those who suffer the most under oppression. But their own sustaining narratives cannot be silenced in the process. The historical reality of Jesus' resurrection into a living, flesh-and-blood body cannot be swapped out for a visionary experience constructed on the part of grieving disciples. To do so fundamentally changes how we experience the human-divine relationship, as well as our relationships and responsibilities with one another. Disembodying Jesus' resurrection in this way reflects a paucity of Christian imagination. Brock's disembodiment of the resurrection is bounded by a view of bodily autonomy that closes off human selves from God's relational intervention through the same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead; it negates the Christian hope of bodily redemption. Within a Christian frame of co-creative hope for post-traumatic remaking of the self, the reality of Jesus' bodily death and

[86] For a discussion of the significance of Jesus' wounds for those with bodies marked by disability, see Nancy L. Eiesland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 98–105.

resurrection must remain the basis of any understanding of embodied redemption for those who have suffered a violation like his.

Proverbs of Ashes: Brock and Parker's Analysis

Proverbs of Ashes is the joint effort of Rebecca Ann Parker and Rita Nakashima Brock.[87] Their goal is to address the Christian doctrines they find most troubling, especially atonement, in order to 'construct a theology that speaks differently about Jesus.'[88] Rather than offering new theological ideas not presented in their previous works, they instead share personal accounts of how they came by those theologies, making their work accessible for lay audiences through storytelling. These stories include those who sought them out as pastors, showing how parishioners and others continued to suffer abuse because of harmful expressions of atonement theology they received from the church. They also vulnerably share their own experiences of abuse—Parker, of coming to terms with childhood sexual abuse, and Brock, of the alienation she faced as an immigrant separated from her family—in the context of how their theologies of the cross shaped their lived responses. Both conclude, as in their previous works, that atonement theology must

[87] Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for What Saves Us* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001).

[88] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 3.

be rejected. The message of Christianity should shift from self-sacrificial love to taking on the responsibility to act as 'steady witnesses'[89] to empower the healing of others.

It is notable that their theological arguments remain unchanged, since over a decade passes between the publication of *Proverbs of Ashes* and the works where they presented their initial critiques of atonement.[90] In that time theologians from feminist, womanist, and disability backgrounds had engaged with issues of agency, violence, and suffering in atonement, some in direct response to the concerns Brock and Parker raised in their earlier works.[91] So, for example, when Parker repeats the critiques of atonement she first laid out in 'For God So Loved the World?' and again concludes that 'every theology of the cross…mystified violence and offered dangerously false comfort,'[92] it is difficult to believe she is unaware of the many responses she inspired in her colleagues, who addressed each of her concerns from a variety of theological perspectives. Following a series of sermons in which she rejects each approach to atonement in turn, Parker shares that a number of her parishioners leave the church where she serves as pastor, citing needs for 'respite from the pain,' 'words of comfort and strength,' and 'a faith I can

[89] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 250.

[90] Parker's co-authored article, 'For God So Loved the World?' was published in 1989; Brock's *Journeys by Heart* was published in 1988.

[91] See, for example, Cynthia S.W. Crysdale, *Embracing Travail: Retrieving the Cross Today* (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1999); Eiesland, *The Disabled God*; Jacqueline Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989); Mary Grey, *Redeeming the Dream: Feminism, Redemption, and Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1989); Ray, *Deceiving the Devil*; JoAnne Marie Terrell, *Power in the Blood? The Cross in the African American Experience* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998); Leanne Van Dyk, 'Vision and Imagination in Atonement Doctrine', *Theology Today* 50, no. 1 (1993): 4–12; Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993); and Linda Woodhead, 'Spiritualising the Sacred: A Critique of Feminist Theology', *Modern Theology* 13, no. 2 (1997): 191–212, a small selection of the many, much-discussed works that include responses to Brock and Parker's early critiques. Engagement with atonement in response to Brock and Parker has continued to the present. It is notable that, in *Proverbs of Ashes*, Brock and Parker do not address the range of responses that address their charge of 'divine child abuse,' and the alternative understandings of atonement offered by other scholars that do not result in the rejection of the doctrine Brock and Parker continue to insist is necessary.

[92] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 48.

count on,'[93] which they cannot find in the critical views she offers. As she recounts these conversations, it is notable that she does not mention these same concerns raised by her feminist colleagues, and the myriad responses they offer that would answer the deep needs of those who left.

When Brock concludes that the entirety of the Christian atonement tradition cannot permit Christians to 'affirm their own agency, to resist abuse, to take responsibility for ethical discernment, and to work for justice,'[94] she neglects her colleagues' nuancing of her earlier critiques. When she continues to argue that any theology that connects salvation to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection 'maintains inappropriate forms of dependence,' since 'Jesus is presented as the obedient son, accepting violence because his father wills it,'[95] she acts as though she is unaware of the scholars who have engaged with this criticism. Many scholars note that she and Parker raise essential points about such reductionistic, abusive understandings of atonement, while demonstrating that the historical and present Christian tradition informed by feminist voices has other ways of viewing the cross.[96] While she and Parker may disagree with others' conclusions, by the time of this book's publication, it is worth noting their choice not to acknowledge or engage with them.

Both Parker and Brock share their how their own experiences of abuse and alienation have shaped their theologies of the cross. Since Parker's critique explicitly draws from her own experience of sexual abuse in making broader theological claims, I focus on her conclusions to

[93] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 45.
[94] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 156.
[95] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 156.
[96] See especially Peacore, *Role of Women's Experience*, 124–32, and Keshgegian, 'Scandal of the Cross,' for detailed arguments that Brock and Parker's view of atonement as 'divine child abuse' is reductionistic.

maintain relevance for my own question: how survivors of sexual abuse can experience embodied redemption. Recounting her own experience of childhood sexual abuse, Parker notes that an 'awareness of presence,'[97] which she understood as divine, helped her survive the experience. As a result, she is offended 'when the murder of Jesus is lauded as revelatory of God's presence,' due to the 'pious suggestion that such experiences are, therefore, a blessing. If I hadn't been raped as a child, I wouldn't have experienced the blessing of this divine revelation.'[98] She asserts that God's presence must be understood within all of life, without special divine weight upon instances of death and violation: 'Jesus didn't have to die for us to know God is present. He didn't have to rise from the dead for us to know that God's creative power is greater than death…. Furthermore, *nobody* has to suffer for God to be made known to us.'[99] In her view, Jesus' death and resurrection do not change the human relationship with God, or vice versa.

A Somatological Analysis of Proverbs of Ashes

I begin my somatological analysis by commending Parker for vulnerably sharing her own experience of violation. She makes essential points about the damaging potential of an abstract, disembodied understanding of salvation, in which Jesus' death is conceived as the sole site of divine revelation separately from his life of ministry and bodily resurrection, and murder and bodily violation themselves are sacralised. At the same time, Parker's summary of the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection display a narrow view of atonement theology, centering on

[97] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 215.
[98] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 212.
[99] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 212–13.

responsibility and blame for Jesus' death. As she maintains the theological arguments first raised in *For God So Loved the World?*, her theological construction continues to fall short in addressing the gap that can move survivors from a state of immobility to the empowered agency reflected in her own life story. 'Presence' as she describes it is not an empowering enough force, and more is demonstrated in her own story.

While the 'presence' she envisioned allowed her to initially compartmentalise her trauma so she could continue to function, she shares that her healing occurred over a period of many years, during which others made repeated, costly personal sacrifices on her behalf. As one example, Parker is able to immediately take two weeks off from her job as a seminary president in the middle of a semester with no notice, spending that time alone in a Buddhist retreat center to aid her recovery.[100] She does not mention the many sacrifices that must have been made to ensure her seminary was able to complete its semester without her. The willingness of her associates to take on those extra burdens on her behalf, to ensure she could embody the healing that would have been impossible without their intervention, is an exemplary demonstration of the self-sacrificing love that she rejects in her analysis of atonement theories. The experiences she names as pivotal in her healing are instead internal and individualistic. For example, Parker notes how a visionary dream she had 'broadened my consciousness to embrace…a vivid sense of future possibility,' and 'enabled me to make a decision to affirm rather than do violence to life.'[101] She concludes, 'I was not saved that night by an act of sacrifice. I was saved by a restoration of presence.'[102] Throughout her account of abuse and recovery, the examples she names in her

[100] See Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, Chapter Five.
[101] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 116.
[102] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 116.

healing do not account for the sacrificial interventions by others that are necessary to allow the transformational space for those experiences to occur.

Parker's failure to acknowledge the self-sacrificial love of others on her behalf is evidence of the restriction of relational vision that an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy promotes. When the body is understood as a possession, protected by private property rights, operating under the decisions of one's will, the degree to which one's embodied reality is dependent upon and shaped by others become invisible. In her telling, her recovery stems from receiving additional information that changes her consciousness, enabling her to choose alternate decisions for how she lives her life moving forward—a remarkably disembodied view. Her rejection of any notion of the necessity of suffering is also explained by such an understanding of the body. Underlying Parker's claim that '*nobody* has to suffer for God to be made known to us'[103] is an assumption that suffering is inherently a matter of choice, that humans can somehow decide not to suffer. Yet *all* bodies suffer. All experience loss, weakness, and ultimately death. No theology that does not account for the reality of living in a contingent, mortal, physical body can speak to the depth of this reality of the human condition.[104]

That God through the suffering and dying body of Jesus shares our universal human experience shows that God's presence with us is not limited to those with strong, powerful bodies, the brief, privileged experience of some who exist, at best, as '"temporarily able-bodied" persons.'[105] In order to reflect the fullness of the human embodied experience, the God who is

[103] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 212–13.

[104] See Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 67–99, for a discussion of modern conceptions of agency in relationship to a contingent, pain-experiencing body.

[105] Eiesland, *Disabled God*, 24.

fully human *must* suffer, as each of us does and will suffer. Yet an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy, which imagines the illusory reality of a body able to pick and choose suffering in any form, makes this necessity invisible. S*ome* suffering, as in the case of those who cause and suffer from the destructive, oppressive violations of sexual abuse, is evil and reflective of the fallenness of a corrupted creation. Yet in terms of how survivors come to an embodied redemption that empowers their agency, the choice is not between self-sacrifice and some other alternative, but between more or less redemptive forms of self-sacrifice.

Parker's conception of bodily autonomy assumes a body that claims its own redemption through choices made via alterations in consciousness, absent the recognition of the degree to which sacrifice and suffering shape the universal experience of human embodiment. This conception indelibly marks her dismissal of atonement theologies as offering a 'dangerously false comfort' rather than a real, embodied hope. It is also notable that both Parker and Brock describe their healing as coming from outside their Christian communities—Parker through individual and group therapy and Buddhist retreat, and Brock through a reconnection with family.[106] In other words, they describe their healing as occurring separately from a constitutive identity as members of the body of Christ. In their conception, where their physical bodies are seen as separable objects, able to be relocated and healed in other environments, the body of Christ is removed as a necessary element both physically and conceptually. Neither the church nor Jesus' physical body are seen as essential in their vision of embodied redemption.

Yet many Christian survivors of sexual abuse name their identification with Jesus through the shared experience of violation, shameful death, and the promise of resurrection as necessary

[106] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, Chapters Five and Six.

aspects of their own healing, inseparable from their identities as Christians.[107] For survivors who understand the cross and resurrection as part of their own life narrative, made known through Christian community, his story becomes their story. The body of Christ, both physically and ecclesiastically, becomes integrated with their bodies in multiple ways. In this embodied, integrative understanding, 'the stories of Christ in the Gospels are told as a succession of states of embodiment,'[108] encompassing his birth, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and continuing presence and transformative work through the Holy Spirit. The cross and resurrection understood in this way does not fit Parker's critique of a theology in which 'God's presence shows up in extremities and emergencies but isn't available all the rest of the time.'[109] Rather than a binary of view of God's absence or sole presence *in extremis*, an integrative view of the cross and resurrection accounts for God's presence with us in all circumstances, not only when we are able to act as powerful, decision-making agents on our own.

Those who have suffered traumatic violence need a theological framework that acknowledges the violations that have robbed them of the ability to take responsibility in the ways that Brock and Parker deem necessary. Such a theology must offer both divine and human support, acknowledging that salvation in the form of 'graced outside interventions'[110] may be especially necessary for those whose agency has been restricted by bodily violation. Since trauma

[107] See, for example, Beth R. Crisp, 'Beyond Crucifixion: Remaining Christian After Sexual Abuse,' *Theology and Sexuality* 15, no. 1 (2009): 65–76, and 'Jesus: A Critical Companion in the Journey to Moving on from Sexual Abuse', in *When Did We See You Naked?*, 249–59; Rocío Figueroa and David Tombs, 'Seeing His Innocence, I See My Innocence,' in *When Did We See You Naked?*, 287–312; Heath, *We Were the Least of These*, 121–32; Susan Shooter, *How Survivors of Abuse Relate to God: The Authentic Spirituality of the Annihilated Soul* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 169–72; and Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse*, 245–55.

[108] Sigurdson, *How to Speak of the Body*, 37.

[109] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 212.

[110] Linda Mercadante, 'Anguish: Unraveling Sin and Victimization', *Anglican Theological Review* 82, no. 2 (2000): 301.

alienates oneself from the embodied capacities necessary to act as a responsible agent, such resources as hope and self-worth must often be introduced from outside the self. Those in a victimised person's circle of care 'may see places of hope, but a victim often cannot or dare not.'[111] While others are needed to 'nurture a sense of agency in the harmed person…to do this prematurely, before the reality of victimization and its effects are understood, is to worsen the problem and impede the healing.'[112] Fostering the space for transformation and freedom from the embodied effects of sinful abuse requires patient care and self-sacrifice from both survivors and those who help them. Unfortunately, neither Parker nor Brock demonstrates an evolution in their theological thinking that moves beyond the binary categories noted in their previous works. They maintain a view of relationality and healing from within an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy, and therefore cannot offer a holistic theological vision of embodied redemption.

An integrative embodied theology in which the body of Christ constitutes both personal and communal identity is essential for Christians who support those who have experienced abuse as well. Believers who are not constricted by the embodied effects of trauma can act on the survivor's behalf, 'to hope for her, believe for her, connect with her, and to make her aware of that "standing in."'[113] In order for this support to be empowering rather than paternalistic, believers must also 'invite the victim to join her energies with the helper's so they can eventually stand together.'[114] This relational, constitutive identity as the body of Christ acknowledges the depths of interdependence required to foster transformational healing for survivors.

[111] Mercadante, 'Anguish', 301.
[112] Mercadante, 'Anguish', 301.
[113] Mercadante, *Anguish*, 301.
[114] Mercadante, *Anguish*, 301.

Based on how Brock and Parker demonstrate their understanding of embodiment in abuse and healing, they operate using a 'bodily ownership' conception of bodily autonomy. This assumption of a body free to choose its own responses, absent the realities of traumatic constrictions to these responses and necessarily dependent, constitutive relationships with others, influences their rejection of self-sacrifice and the complex realities of suffering in their view of atonement and alternative understanding of redemption. They assume of a body that can be removed both physically and conceptually from its surrounding environment and framework for experiencing embodiment. This assumption leads them to omit the significance of embodied experience in their descriptions of their own abuse and recovery. It also leads them to misrepresent and omit portions of what trauma literature demonstrates are necessary for remaking the self, when those works refer to the necessity of self-sacrifice and unequal power relationships.

I disagree with Brock and Parker's conclusion that atonement theology must be rejected because it inherently perpetuates abuse and self-sacrifice, with the alternative of 'presence' as a preferred theological understanding of redemption. I have demonstrated that Parker's descriptions of 'presence' in her own experience of sexual abuse actually demonstrates a different expression of self-sacrifice, one that is redemptive instead of life-destroying. The theological task, then, becomes distinguishing between helpful and harmful forms of self-sacrifice. The goal is to empower survivors toward achieving the level of personal agency needed to experience embodied redemption, and advocate for the healing and integration of others. I therefore conclude that atonement theology need not be rejected, and in fact a sacrificial

understanding of atonement must be preserved to offer a theological understanding of the cross and resurrection that offers promise of embodied redemption for survivors of sexual abuse.

Part II: *Spirit and Trauma* and *Resurrecting Wounds*: A Somatological Analysis of Shelly Rambo

In *Spirit and Trauma* and *Resurrecting Wounds*, Shelly Rambo constructs a feminist and trauma-informed theology that challenges Western Christian narratives of redemption linked to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.[115] Her goal is to take seriously the ongoing reality, or 'remaining,' of trauma, that continues to inhabit survivors' bodies as well as communities long after the events that initiated the disruption have passed. She offers poignant accounts of the ongoing aftereffects of loss experienced by a neighborhood in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, war veterans' failure to find a place to name and integrate their trauma in Christian spaces,[116] and the persistent realities of racism in American culture.[117] Throughout these works, the church's inadequate responses to trauma are connected with the dominant Christian understanding of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection 'as the climax of a grand redemptive narrative.'[118] She argues that the continual interruptions of trauma in the lives of individuals and communities challenge a theology which views resurrection as a triumph of life over death. Because death and life exist together in a complex relationship following trauma, Christian theology must reconceive redemption.

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[115] Shelly Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds: Living in the Afterlife of Trauma* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017); and *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010).

[116] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 1–3.

[117] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, Chapter Three.

[118] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 6.

In *Spirit and Trauma* Rambo develops a pneumatology of 'the middle spirit.' Drawing from Hans Urs von Balthasar, she argues that between the crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus does not conquer death per the 'harrowing of hell' narrative. Her reasoning is that if Christ is seen as victorious over death during the descent, 'Easter comes too early'[119] and 'removes the distinctive witness of Holy Saturday.'[120] Instead of a living Jesus who liberates souls during his descent, Jesus is simply dead, experiencing 'the utmost darkness, forsakenness, and alienation.'[121] She argues that this depiction fits well when read through a lens of trauma, in which fragments of the traumatic event are not integrated in the present. Addressing the bodily alienation, disruption, and inability to articulate one's experience using language following trauma,[122] she notes how 'life then becomes a perplexing encounter and continual engagement with death.'[123] Her theology engages with this middle space between crucifixion and resurrection, reflecting the lived realities of trauma survivors.

Against Balthasar, Rambo argues that the traditional Christian narrative of life, death, and resurrection ending with ultimate redemption elides the realities of traumatic violence. She concludes, 'The gloss of redemption is, perhaps, the greatest enemy to those who survive trauma; it provides a promise often unaccompanied by forms of life that can deliver on that promise. Life, for many, does not triumph over death. Instead, life persists in the midst of death and death in the midst of life.'[124] She agrees with Brock and Parker's conclusion in *Proverbs of*

[119] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 63.
[120] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 64.
[121] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 65.
[122] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 18.
[123] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 20.
[124] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 165.

Ashes that 'Jesus' death, read as the redemptive climax of Christianity, sacralises abuse.'[125] However, she suggests that their alternative view of redemption cannot account for the realities of trauma. Due to their 'search for pristine beginnings and the recovery of images that counter death,' Brock and Parker's theological conclusions 'can also perpetuate a reading of death and life that elides the territory of the middle.'[126] Rambo resists the temptation 'to offer a happy ending'[127] (i.e., an eschatological vision), and instead asks 'Christian theologians to stand in the aftermath of redemption, to witness the collapse of our most familiar frameworks of meaning.'[128] Her theology of 'redemption from the middle'[129] reimagines the act of witnessing as follows.

Rather than the Holy Spirit, Rambo suggests the disciples in the Gospel of John first receive a more ambiguous 'middle spirit' that Jesus hands over from his death breath on the cross.[130] She presents Jesus' post-crucifixion appearances as always marked by visual occlusions and elisions, much like the reality that faces those who survive trauma. As such, the disciples' witness mirrors the act of witnessing to the death of trauma that remains in life. Theology cannot responsibly move 'beyond' trauma: 'Dominant interpretations of salvation and redemption, filled with images of God's rescue and restoration, can easily join the chorus of voices that tell [trauma survivors] to get over it.'[131] The theological task becomes 'to track the movement of the Spirit's witness to…death's pull in life,'[132] serving as witness to painful memories. Life is then imagined in the space of remaining after death, always tenuously, in a way 'more sustaining and truthful than

[125] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 154–5.
[126] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 155.
[127] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 171.
[128] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 169.
[129] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 156.
[130] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 106–7.
[131] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 156.
[132] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 160.

theological interpretations of resurrection life. There is no redemptive gloss, no prescribed ideal of life to which persons can cling.'[133] To faithfully witness the fullness of what survivors have experienced, theology must be 'responsive to these life stories; these stories *inform* theological discourse and shape it rather than *conform* to a master story.'[134] On Rambo's view, the master story of redemption viewed from the cross and culminating in the eschatological hope of bodily resurrection must be recast in light of truthfully witnessing to trauma.

While *Spirit and Trauma* focuses on pneumatology, *Resurrecting Wounds* develops a Christology that centers Jesus' wounds as they appear to the disciples in the Gospel of John. By engaging with 'the imagery and storied dimension of these resurrection encounters,'[135] Rambo develops a theology intended to heal the wounds of trauma in this life, '[w]ithout an appeal to the seductive pull of promised endings.'[136] Her approach responds to feminist theologians who avoid attaching significance to the cross and its embodied aftermath, since the 'vision of sacred wounds raises the specter of atonement theologies.'[137] Yet theology must still address the realities of embodied suffering: 'trauma rolls back the curtain about our assumptions of autonomy…we are not immune from the processes of the world but, in fact, profoundly subject to them.'[138] She therefore explores how the imagery of Jesus' wounds in the Johannine narrative may not glorify suffering but instead challenge the disciples to reorient themselves to their own suffering.[139] Revealing the truth of scars per Thomas' encounter with Jesus should be read not as

[133] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 162.
[134] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 165. Emphasis in original.
[135] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 152.
[136] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 150.
[137] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 44.
[138] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 40.
[139] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 91–2.

a contrast 'between belief and doubt but, instead, between healing and suffering.'[140] She notes, 'While Jesus was known for his healing ministry, the wounds that he tended are rarely linked to the resurrection wounds that he bears on his body following the crucifixion.'[141] She stresses that Jesus maintaining his bodily wounds is central to engaging the wounds of the present. However, she rejects the necessity of a physically embodied resurrection understood as a historical event and connected to a narrative of salvation.

To explain her revisioning of redemption, Rambo notes links between Christianity and war. The American redemption narrative casts soldiers as saviours, placing them in the role of Christ. The soldier is expected to die on behalf of the nation for the sake of the civilian population. Through that sacrifice, the soldier 'becomes a savior. The recipient of this salvation must respond to this act of sacrifice with gratitude for the act performed on their behalf.... The willingness to die for the nation mirrors the voluntary nature of Christ's relinquishing of his will in order to carry out the will of God, the Father.[142] She argues that this interpretation means atonement theology as a whole must be jettisoned. Yet some notion of salvation must be retained within religious traditions; because 'the violence of fundamentalisms are proliferating, it is important not to give up the visions of salvation but to construct countervisions from within the very same traditions.' [143] Rambo seeks to provide a response to fundamentalism by articulating a vision in which Jesus' wounds are not 'marks of victory that ensure salvation,'[144] but whose imagery can be part of a story that contributes to healing present-day embodied wounds.

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[140] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 51. Rambo contrasts Thomas' demand to see Jesus' wounds with the wound of Saint Macrina to make her point. See *Resurrecting Wounds*, Chapter Two.

[141] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 54.

[142] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 112.

[143] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 140.

[144] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 113.

For Rambo, Christian theology that offers healing for survivors must abandon 'sacrificial logic,' in which 'transformation happens outside us, it is done *for us, in* [sic] *our behalf*.'[145] She reimagines Jesus' post-crucifixion appearances as showing 'a body that takes in histories of suffering and bears the marks of these histories.'[146] By showing the wounds that bear the memory of that suffering in the Upper Room, 'the disciples are invited to receive it, to bear it.'[147] These 'apparition texts…evoke response and signal responsibility'[148] for engaging the histories of violence against bodies. Healing comes through the 'communal dimensions of resurrection…. The meaning of faith is evidenced in the cultivation of practices of care and companionship'[149] by those who responsibly bear witness to wounds and work together for change.

A Somatological Analysis of Rambo

Rambo addresses the aftermath of trauma on the body that limit agency, naming the role of community in reconstruction of the self as a necessary for surviving in trauma's 'afterlife'. These moves helpfully address gaps in the theologies of Brock, Brown, and Parker. And her assessment of the 'soldier-saviour' connection to Christian theology demonstrates the dangers that can occur when Jesus' sacrifice is understood non-relationally, as a cosmic exchange between father and son to which humans are passive recipients. At the same time, she frames crucifixion, resurrection, and redemption in such a way that Jesus' physically resurrected body is not

[145] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 141. Emphasis in original.
[146] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 150.
[147] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 150.
[148] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 151.
[149] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 152.

essential to a Christian narrative of salvation. She understands Jesus' wounds as symbols that bear memories that challenge his disciples to action. However, by conceiving of his presence as an apparition,[150] his wounds are reduced to concepts, abstracted from his living, breathing body. Jesus' body becomes a storied object serving an instrumental purpose, not a resurrected person with whom the disciples share a continuing, living relationship.

Like the feminist theologians named above, Rambo does not connect the body of Christ, either in physical form in the resurrection or ecclesiologically, as material to Christian faith and hope. Reducing the wounds of Christ to images that serve a functional purpose separates them from the Christian hope of bodily redemption in the resurrection. As such, Rambo loses an opportunity to demonstrate how Christian faith affirms that wounds continue to exist in living bodies within our present life and beyond, offering both present and future hope to those with wounded bodies.

The church's self-definition as 'the "body of Christ"…shows clearly that God, the believer, the church and its teachings are not separated out from one another as autonomous and wholly independent objects.'[151] Yet Rambo's reconstruction of Christian doctrines of salvation and redemption performs just this type of non-relational, autonomous separation. By recasting Christian hope apart from the community's witness of resurrection's eternal promise, she disembodies her theology from the lived faith expressions of flesh-and-blood believers formed in religious communities. In Rambo's theology, the figure of Jesus becomes an apparition bearing memories that demands disciples bear witness and take responsibility, as though they already

[150] Rambo refers to Jesus' body as 'ghostly' (*Resurrecting Wounds*, 9), and his resurrection appearances as 'apparition texts' (151).

[151] Woodhead, 'Spiritualising the Sacred,' 195.

possess those abilities within themselves. His presence does not offer them anything that they require beyond themselves and are incapable of securing by other means. This view of embodied transformation occurring fully within human community, separated from the transcendent element of Jesus' physically resurrected body, reflects a 'bodily ownership' model of bodily autonomy in terms of the human-divine relationship. Rambo therefore fails to offer a sufficient theological vision of embodied redemption for survivors of sexual abuse within a Christian framework. Her theology fails to provide an eschatological vision of hope beyond human abilities. If there are no promised endings, what is the ultimate hope for those who die in bodies still paralyzed by the ongoing effects of trauma? If 'the meaning of faith'[152] is evidenced in practices, of what particulars does that faith exist? How is it Christian faith, as opposed to another religious or secular approach to healing?

Rambo stresses that imaginative witness is vital for envisioning life in the midst of trauma, but she detaches that witness from any specific form or hoped-for ending: 'Divine love is not something visible, whose form we must imitate; instead, it is a weary remainder seeking form, the shape of which must be continually imagined.'[153] This view raises serious problems for trauma survivors, whose sense of the future has become foreshortened and whose ability to imagine has been destroyed. In order to live well in the aftermath of trauma, survivors must re-form a strong personal narrative within a community that helps them co-create and sustain that narrative.[154] Rambo's disembodied concept of imagination, untethered to any particular

[152] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 152.
[153] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 170.
[154] Erin Dufault-Hunter, *The Transformative Power of Faith: A Narrative Approach to Conversion* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 67–100.

narrative, does not provide a sufficient basis for this task. If there is no imagined 'end' that is better or worse than any other imagined end, how is a destructive personal and collective vision distinguished from a life-giving one? And if 'divine love' is a formless concept requiring continual reimagining, how does the work of imagination not become an exhausting, perpetual, ever-fragmenting exercise, an end in itself rather than a basis for flourishing? How is a Christianly formed imagination distinguishable from one guided by the same logic that created the abuse in the first place?

In Rambo's theology, the so-called 'middle Spirit' received from Jesus' death breath empowers the disciples to live out 'new commandments to love and remain'[155] as witnesses in the midst of the afterlife of trauma. However, the Johannine text does not bear out her view of spirit. Before Jesus appears to the disciples in the upper room, they are still paralyzed by the embodied effects of trauma that result from witnessing Jesus' murder.[156] They are locked in a room in fear—both the upper room and inside the constrictions of their own bodies. They are still alienated from acting as free agents within their bodies because they have not yet received the Holy Spirit from the lungs of Jesus' living, breathing body. Only after the living Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit into them are they freed from traumatic constriction and empowered to live out his commandment.

Claiming that Jesus' commandment exists apart from the receipt of the Holy Spirit places the disciples in an impossible situation: it gives a command without offering the means to make living out that command possible. Such an assumption arises from a 'bodily ownership' model of

[155] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 132.
[156] O'Donnell, 'Trauma at the Foot of the Cross.'

autonomy, in which bodies are conceptualised as objects directed by a fully functioning, independently capable will, apart from the need of any self-giving, sacrificial intervention on their behalf. Theologically, it assumes human bodies not in need of this intervening action from God. Instead of the relational embodiment of God who empowers human agency to act toward God's love and justice, Jesus' resurrected body is reduced to an object, used to serve a function—to witness to the disciples' independently existing power and responsibility. God becomes disembodied. Relationality is reduced to autonomous human actors.

Black and Womanist theologies offer a contrasting view. For example, Willie Jennings notes that white Western culture is shaped by exchange networks of capitalism that affect our abilities to imagine social relationships. Those formed in white spaces are educated in practices of power rooted in 'desire deformed by colonialist urges to control bodies, aimed toward their objectification and exploitation.[157] Rambo objectifies Jesus' body in such a way when she dismisses his living presence as a breathing, relationally affecting person in the resurrection. By contrast, Christian imagination formed by concrete practices of communion with the living Christ offers a challenge to this destructive distortion, a power that 'finds its home in the divine ecstasy in which God relentlessly gives Godself to us, joyfully opening the divine life as our habitation…. This is power we enter through participation.'[158] A distinctive Christian formation that counters white colonialism invites us into God's 'reconciliation that we do not control…one that aims to re-create us, reforming us as those who enact gathering and who gesture communion with our very

[157] Willie James Jennings, *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020), 142.

[158] Jennings, *After Whiteness*, 142.

existence.'[159] Living this witness requires 'a willingness to yield one's life in mind and body…aiming at what we want to be and become.'[160] Jennings' view of Christian imagination has a concrete, specific end—being reformed into God's image through release of our own imagined control.

Jennings' view of Christian imagination contrasts sharply with Rambo, because of how she envisions bodily autonomy in response to trauma—a one-way relationship where the body asserts its agency through informing Christian tradition, rather than a mutually informing relationality where traumatised bodies are reshaped toward God's redemptive ends through concrete practices. Jennings' view of Christian imagination offers an alternative that provides a stronger basis for embodied flourishing, acknowledging the pain of malformation while offering the hope and promise of living well in trauma's aftermath. Christians who hold to Jennings' view are freed from the limited theological imagination of white colonialism that Rambo's theology reflects—one that perceives humanity independently of God's healing, recreating intervention. Rambo's theology aims to protect those experiencing trauma's ongoing effects from triumphalistic Christian narratives that negate their experiences. However, her representation of imagination without form or promised end also cuts off those suffering from the practices and narratives that can offer a hopeful, communally reshaped, embodied reality. She assumes that conformance to a religious tradition's 'master narrative' negates the realities of trauma by imposing theological narratives from those who have experienced some redemption themselves.[161] This assumption reflects the 'bodily ownership' view, in which hope and reshaping

[159] Jennings, *After Whiteness*, 142.
[160] Jennings, *After Whiteness*, 143.
[161] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 147.

intervention from outside the self is viewed only as threat. It is also an act of theological silencing against those whose testimonies of hope and renewal through Christian faith have something to say to traumatising realities.[162] Her view of the body sees intervention informed by concrete practices and beliefs as a threat. Such a view cannot make space for God's healing, transforming surrender when freed from white colonialist theological assumptions of the owned, controlled body.

Another response comes from black women, who during slavery suffered rape and the separation and sale of themselves and their own families and children. For them, the 'affirmation of Jesus as God meant that white people were not God.'[163] They knew Jesus 'in their experience as one who empowers the weak,'[164] an overwhelming, joyful transformation that transcends Rambo's notion of witness. Understanding the human-divine relationship in a way that honours what Jesus' abused body means for all who have been abused 'must protest any imperial word (anti-Logos) that dismisses his body and seeks the decreation of human bodies.'[165] Reducing Jesus' body to an apparition that can only confront and witness to humanity represents a false, distorted theological imagination, too limited in its ability to live into transformational power.

Survivors of sexual abuse who describe their experiences of healing through Christ 'understand from the inside…that the presence of God within surrender is transformative, loving

[162] Ronald T. Michener, 'Post-Kantian to Postmodern Considerations of (Theological) Hope,' in *Historical and Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Hope*, ed. Steven C. Van den Heuval, (Cham: Springer, 2020), 77–98; Bruce Wydick, Robert Dowd, and Travis J. Lybbert, 'Hope and Human Dignity: Exploring Religious Belief, Hope and Transition out of Poverty in Oaxaca, Mexico,' in *The Practice of Human Development and Dignity*, ed. Paolo G. Carozza and Clemens Sedmak, 139–62 (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 2020).

[163] Grant, *White Women's Christ*, 213.

[164] Grant, *White Women's Christ*, 214.

[165] M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2023), 54.

and equalizing.'[166] Such surrender cannot be known within a framework that limits Jesus' body to an object that commands human responsibility. A 'bodily ownership' model of bodily autonomy separates humanity from knowing the integrating healing that comes from a trusting openness to the God who transforms us from beyond ourselves. We cannot know and live in relationship with this God independently of the Holy Spirit who comes from the living Jesus. When those who are being reconciled to this God walk alongside survivors, they live Christian witness through sacrificial self-giving that opens space for healing and empowerment. When survivors reach a capacity to engage in mutual self-giving, new life opens to them.

Part III: Bodily Ownership and Its Limitations for Envisioning Redemption

The feminist theologians analyzed in this chapter rightly reject interpretations of atonement theology that encourage women, who have suffered abuse, to remain in situations of abuse, supported by the idea that they are commanded to suffer as Jesus suffered. However, their alternative views of redemption are rooted in a 'bodily ownership' conception of bodily autonomy and therefore limited in their ability to offer a vision of bodily redemption for survivors of sexual abuse. The question is not whether suffering and self-sacrifice can ever be redemptive, but rather which forms of suffering and self-sacrifice are redemptive. For survivors of sexual abuse, self-sacrifice that acknowledges (at least temporarily) dependent need toward the end of increased autonomy is necessary for the re-formation of self following traumatic violation.

[166] Shooter, *Survivors of Sexual Abuse*, 171.

In terms of soteriology, each author gives reasons why Jesus' crucified and resurrected body must be removed from a theological understanding of salvation and redemption. Each author then offers an alternative soteriological locus in response. The authors' unstated conceptions of bodily autonomy play a crucial role in their critiques and conclusions. Their language incorporates notions of relationality, cocreation, and interdependence. However, an underlying assumption of the body as property, in which human beings possess and hold overwhelming control of and responsibility for the body's relationships and actions, limits their ability to provide a redemptive vision for survivors of sexual abuse. Such a view cannot account for the degree to which survivors' sense of self and control has been shattered, and how selfhood must be reconstituted through reliance on others in relationships that may be unequal (at least temporarily) and/or require mutual sacrifice.

From a Christian theological perspective, the authors' alternative understandings of atonement and redemption do not recognise human dependence on God in Christ through the Holy Spirit in this reconstituting work. The removal of Jesus' physical body from soteriology creates a literally disembodied theological vision, in which human will is nearly solely responsible for redemption. When possession and control of the body through the will are vaunted as the ideal, all embodied relationality is marred. Womanist and African American critiques demonstrate how human self-surrender to God is necessary to correct distortions of white ideals that objectify the body. Jesus' crucified and resurrected, flesh-and-blood body, and human participation in this biblical narrative vision, is central to this theological correction. In terms of redemption for survivors of sexual abuse, an embodied narrative view of atonement in which

survivors participate in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection provides a stronger basis for recovery from the embodied effects of trauma.

Disembodied atonement models that understand Jesus' sacrifice as a cosmic exchange between the Father and the Son absent human participation are rightly rejected for their failure to address survivors' lived needs. Any understanding of atonement must connect with the lived realities of those who have experienced suffering. An understanding of bodily autonomy in which humans are created by God and empowered by Christ through the Holy Spirit to engage in mutual self-giving and co-creation is essential to this view. Dependency on the part of the survivor must be voluntary and temporary, subject to strict accountability for the more powerful party and aimed at increasing the survivor's sphere of autonomy.

Triumphalistic atonement theologies that rush to Jesus' victory over death without making space for the realities of traumatic loss can alienate rather than reconcile survivors. Responsible theology makes space to witness and grieve the fullness of what was lost. Jesus' intervening and empowering role in salvation and reconciliation must also be recognised for that to be possible. The act of witnessing to trauma accompanied by a demand to persist, as though the traumatised body will simply conform to a strong enough force of will, does not recognise the realities of embodied trauma—the 'unholy' spirit that remains. A concrete personal and communal narrative strengthened through embodied practices and encounter is necessary.

Within a Christian context, the particularity of the Gospels' narrative of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is key for transforming the embodied realities of survivors. When survivors and those who accompany them embody this narrative through receptive participation in the life of the God of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, God empowers them to act as

agents of healing for themselves and others through sacrificial self-giving: not in a life-destroying way, but in a mutually empowering way. This concrete enactment of the Christian narrative—finding our story in Jesus' story, his body connected to our bodies and affectively encountered—addresses Rambo's concern for eliding the realities of trauma that remains. But being opened to participation in God's life requires setting aside a 'bodily ownership' model of bodily autonomy.

A conception of bodily autonomy that acknowledges the degree to which our senses of self are formed by and through others—first and foremost through dependent reliance on the transforming work of the God of Jesus Christ—can offer a vision of bodily redemption for survivors of sexual abuse. On this model, Jesus' body cannot be reduced to an object that can only hold memories and command autonomous human action. The body of Christ—both his physically resurrected body and the ecclesial understanding of the collective body of believers—is necessary for this vision. That Jesus is resurrected in his physical body and known by his disciples offers hope that there is life in the aftermath of the death of trauma. That Jesus' body bears the marks of his violation demonstrates that traumatised bodies, while being made new and glorified, will be continuous with pre-resurrection bodies. Rather than a view of life that negates the realities of loss, new and old exist together toward the concrete promise of bodily resurrection. This resurrection hope does not elide the realities of embodied trauma but offers the promise of holistic redemption for those who have known traumatic violation. How a life-giving narrative of atonement fits with a vision of embodied redemption is the work of the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

A SOMATOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF KATHRYN TANNER'S ATONEMENT THEOLOGY

Chapter Two analyzed feminist theologians who reject atonement as a component of Christian salvation. These feminists base their critiques on the argument that self-sacrificial views of the cross have been used to limit women's bodily autonomy and impede their liberation. The chapter concluded that the alternative models of redemption proposed by Brock, Brown, Parker and Rambo were inadequate to address the embodied constrictions that sexual abuse survivors experience, due to an assumed 'ownership' view of bodily autonomy. A review of trauma literature showed how traumatic restrictions prevent survivors from acting as autonomous agents in the way assumed by these theologians. Their assumption of owned, controlled human bodies means their theologies do not acknowledge God's role in redeeming vulnerable, dependent bodies. The chapter concluded that a theological model that recognises the need for sacrificial self-giving that empowers the self and others, accounting for complexities of agency and responsibility in relationships, is necessary to offer a vision of embodied redemption.

This chapter employs the somatology developed in the previous two chapters. The goals are to critically evaluate the somatological yield of an existing feminist reconstruction of atonement that responds to the rejectionist views presented in Chapter Two, demonstrate its limitations, and point toward the need for a more holistic theological response. Kathryn Tanner's incarnational view of atonement is chosen because it aligns (to a degree) with the integration model of bodily autonomy presented in the previous chapters. I apply Tanner's Logos Christology to Brock, Brown, and Parker's critique of, and theological response to, the 'satisfaction tradition'

of atonement. My analysis demonstrates how an 'ownership' view of bodily autonomy informs Brock, Brown, and Parker's theological understanding of satisfaction theor(ies) and shows the resulting limitations of for envisioning a redeemed body. I then apply Tanner's incarnational approach to a substitutionary understanding of atonement, which Brock, Brown, and Parker include within the satisfaction tradition.

I propose two pertinent limitations of Tanner's theology for those suffering bodily violation, and demonstrate how both result from her subordination of the Holy Spirit's role in atonement. First, beginning from a Logos Christology means she struggles to connect the concrete bodily life and experiences of Jesus with the lived faith of survivors. Whereas Brock, Brown, and Parker hold a 'low' Christology, which does not account for the need for divine initiation or our dependent participation, Tanner's Christology 'from above' misses the connection point between lived faith and divine action. Second, the relationship between worship practices and the present work of the Holy Spirit remains vague in her theology. While Tanner discusses the necessity of practices for the worshipping community, her comments are perfunctory and remain at the theoretical level. How a sufferer of bodily violation becomes enabled to engage in the practices she names remains unexplored. This limitation sets up the work of Chapters Four and Five of my thesis: an evaluation of how embodied Pentecostal praxis informs doctrinal construction; and a demonstration of this construction applied to atonement.

This somatology also recognises that a Christian articulation of salvation cannot be limited to one group. There is not one gospel for sexual abuse survivors and a different gospel for others. Such an assumption fails to account for our relational connectedness and plays into the individualistic view of bodily autonomy this thesis challenges. I am here indebted to M. Shawn

Copeland's approach to theological anthropology, using black women's bodies as her starting point. She notes, 'To privilege suffering bodies in theological anthropology uncovers the suffering body at the heart of Christian belief.'[1] Her focus on the concrete experiences of black women has universal implications: 'a theological anthropology worthy of reclaiming black women's bodies is worthy of reclaiming all human bodies.'[2] Centering the traumatic experience of sexual bodily violation also offers a view for understanding how Jesus' body throughout his life, death on the cross, resurrection, and our participation through the ongoing experience of Pentecost offers redemption beyond any one demographic. By using the embodied realities of sexual abuse survivors as a lens, my aim is to present the limitations and potentials of atonement theologies as they affect *each and every* body.

Part I: The Effects of a 'Disembodied' Atonement Doctrine on Embodied Trauma

For those who have experienced traumatic restrictions resulting from sexual abuse, redemption of the body includes a repair of the relationship with one's own bodily being, which has become shattered. Remaking oneself is inseparable from relationships with others, since our bodies are constitutively relational. In other words, our individual bodily experiences—including our sense of self, capacity and responsibility for decision-making—are shaped by and dependent upon the hurting and healing actions of others. Therefore, how we conceive of the body in relationship has necessary consequences for how we understand what a reconciled body (a body 'at-one' with

[1] M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2023), xi.

[2] Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom*, xvi.

God, others, and self) is like. Yet, as the below discussion shows, classical theologies of atonement have detached the body from consideration. As a result, an understanding of atonement that encompasses relationally reconciled bodies becomes difficult.

The act of atonement itself—Jesus' intercession for human salvation through his life, crucifixion, resurrection, and the sending of the Spirit—involves Jesus' body. According to the Nicene Creed, Jesus' Incarnation (taking on human nature with a fully human body) was an event 'for us and our salvation,' and his crucifixion under Pontius Pilate was 'for our sake.'[3] No creed or council specifies one way in which the death (and life) of Jesus provide salvation. And the relationship is not self-evident; Christian communities are responsible for interpreting the event of the crucifixion and its present significance within their own contexts.[4] When distortions in that communication arise in ways that are not salvific, and may even cause further harm, faith communities hold the responsibility of articulating a more life-giving vision.[5] While the historical events of Jesus' life, death, and bodily resurrection do not change, the human languages, contexts, and communities that interpret those events do. From the perspective of survivors of sexual trauma, a somatology that provides a life-giving view of atonement accounts for the concrete, embodied effects of trauma. In other words, a trauma-informed somatology of atonement first identifies what becomes fractured within one's ability to live in right bodily relationship—with God, one's own body/self and relational connection with other bodies—due

[3] United Methodist Church, 'Glossary: Nicene Creed,' accessed February 21, 2023, online at https://www.umc.org/en/content/glossary-nicene-creed.

[4] Mark D. Baker and Joel B. Green, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 18. While this section of the book deals with Jesus' crucifixion, Baker and Green later articulate that the scope of atonement extends to encompass more than the event of the crucifixion.

[5] Mark D. Baker, 'Contextualizing the Scandal of the Cross,' in *Proclaiming the Scandal of the Cross: Contemporary Images of the Atonement*, ed. Mark D. Baker (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 13–36.

to the sinful violation of trauma. Second, this somatology articulates how the ability to live and act in right relationship with God, self, and others becomes restored.

Feminist critiques of atonement demonstrate the disastrous consequences of communicating the meaning of the cross in ways that negate women's humanity and that fail to denounce (and even justify the continuance of) abuse. For example, Rebecca Parker recounts the story of a Christian woman who allowed her husband to return to their family after serving jail time for abusing her. He then murdered her. According to Parker, the woman allowed her husband's return because of her church's theology of her Christian responsibility, drawn from an understanding of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross: '"Your life is only valuable if it's given away" and "This is your cross to bear."'[6] In somatological terms, Parker's example demonstrates how the improper narration of the meaning of Christ's suffering for our salvation can exacerbate the embodied constrictions of trauma rather than healing them, even to the point of failing to resist death. As a result, bodies already experiencing relational alienation are further closed off from redemptive participation in the body of Christ.

Narratives that shape how Christian faith is embodied are linked to the 'holy materialism'[7] of Christian faith—the rituals and practices of the church, and how they are experienced in the human body. Hilary Scarsella offers an example of how Christ's body received in the Eucharist can become a painful trauma trigger for survivors of sexual abuse. She quotes an interview with a survivor who describes her experience of taking communion:

[6] Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for What Saves Us* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001), 18.

[7] Linda Woodhead, 'Spiritualising the Sacred: A Critique of Feminist Theology,' *Modern Theology* 13, no. 2 (1997): 206.

> 'They say, "The body of Christ, for you" and then expect me to put this man's body into my mouth. The message is that somehow, my body is better off if it is filled up by his. Letting them put that bread in my mouth felt like practice for the next time the person abusing me put his penis in my mouth. Wanting to scream and run away, instead I would go numb, take the bread and the wine and then try as hard as I could to forget that it happened.'[8]

Rather than a life-giving practice, communion thus embodied becomes death dealing.

Given the potential for re-traumatization, such as in the example above, it is understandable why some feminists decouple salvation not only from Jesus' death on the cross, but from a physical, relational connection with his body. It is even understandable how some refuse to identify bodily resurrection as normative for a Christian understanding of redemption, for fear of imposing a narrative that negates survivors' lived experiences and offers a false, shallow hope.[9] However, trauma studies show that embodied, thriving life is possible in the aftermath of the death of trauma, without papering over the reality of what happened. That possibility requires survivors' empowerment to embody a new life narrative that accounts for their lived experience of traumatic death.[10]

Sexual violation presents an acute example of why theology needs to account for the body: 'Relational trauma…has a unique complexity because relationship is so foundational to our

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[8] Hilary Jerome Scarsella, 'Victimization via Ritualization: Christian Communion and Sexual Abuse,' in *Trauma and Lived Religion: Transcending the Ordinary*, ed. R. Ruard Ganzevoort and Srdjan Sremac (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 226–7.

[9] For example, Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 145–8.

[10] Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror; With a New Epilogue by the Author* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 175–95.

humanity…. It can undermine the very basis of our humanity, of our sense of meaning and belonging.'[11] For those who have experienced sexual bodily violation, intimate physical connection, both within one's own body and in relationship with others' bodies, particularly needs to be repaired. Sexual violation 'can literally force us to take a shape that is not our own,'[12] changing one's posture, movement, down to the way one breathes within her body. Even when an externally safe environment is established through moving away from an abusive home and partner, 'until [survivors] can actually experience a sense of safety, even the smallest environmental cue can trigger a sense of danger.'[13] The example above of taking communion, a religious ritual in which Jesus' body is understood to enter one's own body, can become a charged traumatic trigger for someone who has been violated. And the meaning of the ritual when connected with atonement—Jesus' body 'broken for us'—can have traumatising potential. Therefore, communicating the doctrine and ritual in a life-giving way is essential, so those who have experienced violation can participate in taking (and being) the 'body of Christ' in ways that empower rather than numb. Below I outline the connection between embodied trauma, a sense of safety, and the implications for envisioning a relationally redeemed ('at-oned') body.

An experiential sense of safety begins in the body, since 'traumatization is a fear-based physiological state that is embodied.'[14] Along with establishing physical safety and supporting survivors in connecting with a sense of self through therapy,[15] processing trauma history through

[11] Amber Gray, 'Body as Voice: Restorative Dance/Movement Psychotherapy with Survivors of Relational Trauma,' in *The Routledge International Handbook of Embodied Perspectives in Psychotherapy*, ed. Helen Payne et al. (London: Routledge, 2019), 150.

[12] Gray, 'Body as Voice,' 148.

[13] Gray, 'Body as Voice,' 154.

[14] Gray, 'Body as Voice,' 151.

[15] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 155–74.

meaning-making is a necessary part of finding life after traumatic violation. As a trauma narrative is woven into the context of a life story, along with a supportive connective community with whom survivors feel safe, the body begins to form new neural pathways that alter physiological responses to potential triggers.[16] The ability to narratively, and somatically, integrate the trauma story allows for the 'ability to maintain mindfully present states and a sense of future, vs. being eternally stuck in the imprints of the past.'[17] Integration includes all aspects of the self, including spirituality.[18] Therefore, the religious and spiritual narratives that shape and inform one's embodied experiences must be life-giving to form a durable basis for self-remaking. Strong community support is needed, including alternative relational models and practices to replace the destructive, dysfunctional ones survivors have become locked into.

A trauma-informed somatology of atonement, therefore, accounts for physiological, spiritual, and affective reception of doctrine. Both the cognitive articulation of atonement and associated embodied worship practices must become 'habitable spaces' for those with traumatised bodies. For Christian practice to be meaningfully integrated into one's life, it cannot be abstracted from doctrine but must instead serve 'to interpret life as though it implied a doctrine.'[19] An approach to atonement that serves the end of embodied redemption must be expressed in a tactile, concrete way, fostering a healthy space to 're-story' constrictive traumatic experiences.

[16] Gray, 'Body as Voice,' 154–5.
[17] Gray, 'Body as Voice,' 155.
[18] Gray, 'Body as Voice,' 154.
[19] Ola Sigurdson, *Heavenly Bodies: Incarnation, the Gaze, and Embodiment in Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 4.

The above discussion demonstrates the need for a trauma-informed approach to atonement, which shows how survivors can safely encounter and embody a Christian narrative of redemption in which the cross plays a role. For restored relationality to be transformative, survivors must become enabled to positively embrace the embodied changes involved in living out that narrative. If the violence of the cross is understood to attach salvation to death, triggering memories of one's own bodily violation, physiological responses may prevent survivors from engaging with Christian faith and practice at all. A life-giving view of atonement is not simply comprehensible, but also offer a habitable space for transformation, one that can open up embodied healing and redemption through repatterning of the self within a gospel-shaped narrative.

If atonement is understood as at-one-ment, a soteriology that repairs shattered relationality, that reparation of the self must include the physiological alienation that occurs in the body as the result of trauma. For survivors, bodies can be frightening, dangerous places—their own bodies, the bodies of others, and relationality between them. A theological vision that accounts for the relational alienation of bodies and intimate reconnection is needed if redemption is to include the body. The following section details the components necessary for a somatological evaluation of received views of atonement that both accounts for survivors' embodied realities and offers a holistic vision of redemption.

Developing a Trauma-Informed Somatology of Atonement

This thesis' somatology examines the relationship between Jesus' body and our human bodies in atonement, toward a view of bodily redemption. In other words, it makes clear the redeemed life that God initiates in Christ, the role of Jesus' body in that redeemed life, and how those with traumatised bodies are enabled to become participants in that redeemed life—how their bodies become redeemed. Those with traumatised bodies present an acute example of the human need for restoration that cannot originate from within, or be sustained by, oneself. When bodily violation occurs at the hands of a loved one, finding a person to trust as a guide in confronting embodied trauma is a particularly difficult, but also necessary, challenge.[20] Strong communal relationships (which can include faith communities) are needed for recovery.[21] Therefore, an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy, in which the 'self' exercises agency over its perceived bodily property as though independent of a constitutive social identity, cannot answer this need. To speak of bodily restoration requires a 'bodily integration' model, developed in Chapter Two of this thesis, which acknowledges the dependent and constitutive relationship between bodies in (re)forming oneself.

Theologically, a trauma-informed Christian somatology of atonement encompasses how God initiates restorative relationship, the role of Jesus' body in redemptive relationship, and our entrance into that restored life. A positive example to follow that survivors can observe, and then decide (or refuse) to imitate, does not account for the reality of traumatic embodied

[20] Bessel Van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (New York, NY: Viking, 2014), 212–13.

[21] Van der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, 212.

constrictions that limit one's abilities to form and maintain relationships.[22] Survivors need to learn and embody new patterns of life-giving, mutually sacrificial relationships in order to re-form the shattered self and experience flourishing.

Secular trauma research offers important insights for understanding the severing of relationality that occurs within sexually traumatised bodies. However, Christian theology moves beyond anthropocentric models of recovery to articulate God's transcendent initiative in redeeming all creation, including embodied trauma. Recovery from damaging, somatically embedded relational patterns is possible in the context of a community that both nurtures and is constitutive of changed practices of bodily being. Yet, 'The idea that Christian faith might change the way we think about, and even what we do with, our bodies meets with steep resistance.'[23] Feminist theologians' critiques of the abusive potential for Christian doctrine, practice, and ethics when they oppress women's bodies show valid reasons for this resistance. As Scarsella's example above demonstrates, a re-traumatising reception of Christ's body (in that case, through taking the Eucharist) leads to an embodied experience of violation and numbing rather than intimacy and repaired connection. The experience of physical embrace for survivors requires a transformation of how touch is given and received—distinguishing between intimate touch that is welcome and healing, rather than always fearing the threat of violation.

To participate in the work of restorative justice, one must be able to form and live out intimate connections without harm to oneself or others. For touch to be freely given and

[22] This view describes contemporary articulations of a 'moral example' model of atonement. See William G. Witt and Joel Scandrett, *Mapping Atonement: The Doctrine of Reconciliation in Christian History and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2022), 153–75.

[23] Beth Felker-Jones, *Marks of His Wounds: Gender Politics and Bodily Resurrection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3.

received in a healing way, an openness of bodily borders is required. Mutually redemptive bodily connection, in which one can know touch as healing, means that embodied fear-based reactions—the desire to scream and run, physical numbing—must be transformed. Positive touch requires vulnerability, trust, the acknowledgement of need. The ability to receive and experience physical touch as positive rather than further violating is only possible within a transformed, unafraid, lovingly relational body. Being able to offer such touch requires a trustworthy, non-coercive presence.

Sexual trauma is a type of bodily death—the death of embodied relationality, even within one's own body. Those who experience traumatic bodily violation serve as a lens to consider how flourishing life is killed, and how the possibility for life after bodily death becomes possible, from a Christian theological perspective. A self that can assert its will by either permitting or denying access to its individual bodily property—and choose whether to engage or remain distant from the bodies of others—is only a starting point. That is because relationality requires collective responsibility as well. Responsibility for establishing and maintaining relational structures in which connection and touch can be safely experienced pushes against the logic of a right to autonomy over one's own body. Redeeming oppressive relational connections requires the intervention of those who are capable of making such changes, while empowering those constrained by trauma toward developing the capacity to recognise death-dealing relational patterns, practicing new ways of relating, and living into healthy relationships. Conceiving of the individual body as an owned, controlled space that a person permits or denies access to prevents this type of relational responsibility.

Understanding atonement in light of sexual bodily violation requires a careful articulation of what we are saved *from* and *for*. The ultimate hope for bodies has been revealed in Jesus' resurrected body, given for us and our salvation, holding God's promise for our own bodies. [24] However, an overly triumphalistic vision of atonement leading to resurrection can easily skate over the painful realities of wounds that sexual trauma leaves in the body.[25] As such, Christians must be careful not to 'rush to Easter victory'[26] in their evaluation of atonement in the midst of trauma. Resurrection hope lives in tension with the reality of bodies that do not yet know that hope. The human embodied experience of receiving and living out Jesus' redeeming work, always in part and over time, is key. Those with differing embodied experiences hold different responsibilities and capacities for living that vision. How we understand what separates us from God's atoning work (i.e., sin), requires a relational understanding as well. Yet atonement theology as received in North American/European contexts has come to individualise the relationship between sin and atonement. I show how below.

Life-giving soteriology understands sin in a way that acknowledges different capacities and responsibilities in our reconciliation. In the North American Protestant context, sin has been primarily understood as an individual matter of moral or ethical wrong. [27] Put in somatological terms, if my body is my own, I am responsible for repenting of the sinful actions I have committed with it, entrusting this body which I have erred in making decisions about to God, and

[24] Felker-Jones, *Marks of His Wounds*, 4.

[25] Cheryl M. Peterson, 'Pneumatology in the Time of #MeToo: An Exploration of the Spirit's Role in Suffering,' in *Sisters, Mothers, Daughters: Pentecostal Perspectives on Violence Against Women*, eds. Kimberly Ervin Alexander et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 14–18.

[26] Peterson, 'Pneumatology in the Time,' 21.

[27] Joel B. Green and Mark Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 42–3.

responding to God's grace by changing my bodily ways of being. Feminist theologies which see sin in terms of passivity and oppression would frame this process of choosing differently. Redemption in that case comes through 'keeping faith with those who have…refused to be victims and have refused to cower under the threat of violence, suffering, and death.'[28] In either case, moving away from a life of 'sin', however conceived, involves becoming aware of one's sin and taking the responsibility to choose differently—to accept and/or refuse a requirement, originating either from God or from human concepts of justice.[29] The assumption of choice and decision in one's bodily being in both cases reflects an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy—an individual who chooses to change and then is capable of making those changes happen. The necessity of outside intervention for helping one become able to make such choices is unclear.

For Christian survivors, bodies are also understood and experienced as both the site and, too often, the source of sin. Particularly within North American Evangelicalism (though not exclusively), sexual sin is loosely associated with any sexual act that occurs outside the narrow framework of heterosexual Christian marriage.[30] This conception of sin becomes damaging for survivors when it does not account for the particularities of the sin of sexual violation—that responsibility for sin in that regard lies with the perpetrator, not the victim. In a non-relational view of sexual sin, any violation of (especially women's) sexual purity outside the context of marriage constitutes sin, not accounting for 'the context of power, consent, and choice regarding

[28] Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Ann Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse,* 27–8.

[29] Different Christian traditions understand human responsibility to God's initiative differently. For a discussion, see Anselm K. Min, 'Sin, Grace, and Human Responsibility: Reflections on Justification by Faith Alone in the Age of Globalization,' *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 59, no. 4 (2017): 572–94.

[30] Darby Kathleen Ray, *Deceiving the Devil: Atonement, Abuse, and Ransom* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1998), 66.

to one's bodily being in a sexual relationship.'[31] When sin is conceptualised as the act of sex itself outside a particular context, without accounting for the bodily violation of sexual relationality, 'evangelicals (like everyone else) confuse sex with sexual violence. When an evangelical woman is raped, she assumes she has "sinned" by having sex because she has never been told how rape is different from sex.'[32] When the remedy for sin is framed as personal repentance for one's own actions, there is no space for relational healing for victims in their bodily being. This conception also fails to hold the perpetrator accountable for repentance and redeemed relational responsibility. When a rapist can ask forgiveness from God without addressing the need for transformational change and justice, grace is cheapened.[33] The inability to trust and exist in intimate relationality with others, and the fear-based disconnection with one's own body that results, closes those who have experienced relational trauma out of this understanding of atonement. This way of viewing sin and repentance fails to offer redemption for those whose bodies have suffered the sin of others' violation against them.

The discussion above demonstrates the damage caused to survivors when atonement is viewed within the false binary of either an objective or subjective understanding: objective in the sense of God stepping in, in a non-relational way that does not result in transformed relationality; and subjective in only focusing on human response.[34] What is missing is a recognition of the incapacity to take responsibility for one's embodied actions, before God and others, that results

[31] Marie Fortune, *Sexual Violence: The Unmentionable Sin* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983), 71; quoted in Andy Smith, 'Born Again, Free from Sin? Sexual Violence in Evangelical Communities,' in *Violence Against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook*, eds. Carol J. Adams and Marie M. Fortune (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1995), 345.

[32] Smith, 'Born Again,' 345.

[33] Ray, *Deceiving the Devil*, 67–68.

[34] See Paul S. Fiddes, *Past Event and Present Salvation: The Christian Idea of Atonement* (London: Dartman Longman and Todd, 1989), 26–28, for a fuller explanation of objective and subjective views of atonement.

from traumatic violation. Beyond human decision, stressing God's initiative in atonement shows how God acts to restore the breach, as a 'remedy for human incapacity.'[35] At the same time, violation demonstrates the dangers of human relational heteronomy—entrusting oneself to human institutional powers without accounting for the oppressive potential of differing power relationships.[36] To speak of atonement for those whose bodies have been violated requires a holistic understanding of the relationship between sin and bodily autonomy. At-one-ment that answers this breach demonstrates how God takes responsibility where we cannot, 'entering into the depths of our darkness and transforming it from within.'[37] Rather than leaving us passive, God's transformational initiative also empowers us for relational connection.

An understanding of atonement that holds together these aspects of relationality can offer a vision of bodily redemption. Recent scholarship interprets the major understandings of atonement while accounting for the issues of violence and abuse.[38] However, while these authors draw connections between Jesus' Passion narratives and the experience of sexual abuse,[39] constructive work that applies those observations to atonement theology is yet to emerge. The

[35] Kathryn Tanner, 'Jesus Christ,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, ed. Colin E. Gunton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 261.

[36] Rebecca J.E. Levi, 'A Polyvocal Body: Mutually Corrective Discourses in Feminist and Jewish Bodily Ethics,' *Journal of Religious Ethics* 43, no. 2 (2015): 244–67.

[37] Frances Young, *God's Presence: A Contemporary Recapitulation of Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 246.

[38] For example, Baker and Green, *Recovering the Scandal*; Elaine A. Heath, *We Were the Least of These: Reading the Bible with Survivors of Sexual Abuse* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011); Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2019); Andrew Sung Park, *Triune Atonement: Christ's Healing for Sinners, Victims, and the Whole Creation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009); Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010); Ray, *Deceiving the Devil*; and Denny Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement*, 2nd ed (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011).

[39] For example, Heath, *We Were the Least of These*; Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs, and Rocío Figueroa, eds., *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse*, (London: SCM Press, 2021); Susan Shooter, *How Survivors of Abuse Relate to God: The Authentic Spirituality of the Annihilated Soul* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 169–72; David Tombs, *The Crucifixion of Jesus: Torture, Sexual Abuse, and the Scandal of the Cross* (Oxford: Routledge, 2023); and Michael Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse* (Victoria: Morning Star Publishing, 2014).

somatology I employ here aims, in part, to build on that work to develop such an atonement theology.

To achieve this theological task, I begin by asking, what are the consequences of an 'ownership' conception of bodily autonomy for envisioning bodily redemption in atonement for survivors of sexual abuse? What about the consequences of a 'bodily integration' model? Responses to these questions form my somatological analysis to Brock, Brown, and Parker's evaluation of the 'satisfaction tradition' of atonement and alternative view of redemption. I then demonstrate how a feminist response that takes into account embodied realities of abuse, from Kathryn Tanner, responds to the limitations of Brock, Brown, and Parker's atonement theology. At the same time, Tanner's view demonstrates the limitations of an atonement theology that subordinates the Holy Spirit's role. This latter consideration forms the basis for the feminist Pentecostal approach I develop in Chapter Five. While those who have suffered sexual bodily violation are my lens, my aim is to demonstrate how a pneumatological approach to atonement offers a fuller vision of relational bodily redemption for *each and every* body.

The Challenge of Articulating a Trauma-Informed Atonement Theology

Traumatic bodily constriction is a type of death, one that remains in the body in the midst of life.[40] At-one-ment from this perspective shows how Christ's body repairs the breach in the human/divine relationship in a way that leads from death to life. In terms of traumatic bodily constriction, movement from death to life means freedom to act in one's bodily self and with

[40] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*.

others in mutually life-giving ways: giving appropriately of oneself, being appropriately open to the gifts of others, while being protected from violent intrusion. Given concerns for overly linear, simplistic views of immediate victory over death, a responsible view of atonement accounts for the always partial nature of redemption in a world that remains subject to the effects of the Fall.

Two related factors contribute to the challenge of evaluating atonement from the perspective of the body. The first factor is the near absence of the body in contemporary North American Protestant theological discourses of atonement. For example, one prominent overview of atonement presents Jesus' death as saving 'primarily through five constellations of images, each of which is borrowed from the public life of the ancient Mediterranean world: the court of law (e.g., justification), the world of commerce (e.g., redemption), personal relationships (e.g., reconciliation), worship (e.g., sacrifice) and the battleground (e.g., triumph over evil).'[41] None of these 'constellations' accounts for the significance of human bodies in salvation. The second factor is the way the 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy overshadows contemporary understandings of atonement—both for feminist theologians who reject atonement as a theological category, and the theologians they critique, which I evaluate below.

By contrast, this somatology acknowledges the materiality of Jesus' body as necessary to intervene for, and transform, our own bodies toward redemption. Bodies entrusted with the responsibility of sharing the 'ministry of reconciliation' (2 Cor 5:18)—engaging in God's work of justice on behalf of the marginalised, in the face of conflict—must be freed from the embodied, relational constrictions that prevent trust and engagement. As Beth Felker-Jones observes, in a Christian understanding, a redeemed human body is known through Jesus' body: 'Christians only

[41] Baker and Green, *Recovering the Scandal*, 40–41.

come to understand what our bodies are for as God reworks us, psychosomatically…. As we become holy, body and soul, we learn the right shape for embodiment from Jesus Christ.'[42] This somatology challenges the 'ownership' understanding of bodily autonomy presented in the previous two chapters, which separates our bodies from Jesus' bodily intercession on our behalf. By demonstrating the need for the concrete intervention of Jesus' body to transform our present embodied realities, I depart from other feminist theologies of the body that assume a metaphorical understanding of God as embodied, without an ontological (historical, physically embodied) grounding.[43]

This somatology acknowledges the need for redemption that originates beyond human selves. It thereby corrects the overly optimistic view of human potential held by feminist theologians who assume a body capable of great individual agency. When redemption depends on an individual's (or human community's) ability to choose alternative ways of relating, the incapacity to make those changes, to envision and live out alternative embodied relationships, remains unaddressed. Many responses to the feminist arguments that reject atonement presented in Chapter Two frame the problem as a failure to offer a comprehensible account of the saving significance of the cross. By this logic, a reappraisal of the metaphors used to speak of atonement can address the failure to relate meaningfully to the realities of lived experience.[44] However, when the emphasis is placed on a solely cognitive response, affective and somatic

[42] Felker-Jones, *Marks of His Wounds*, 87.

[43] For example, Sally McFague, 'God and the World,' in *From Christ to the World: Introductory Readings in Christian Ethics*, eds. Wayne G. Boulton, Thomas D. Kennedy, and Allen Verhey (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 501–11.

[44] Mark Baker, 'Contextualising the Scandal of the Cross,' in *Proclaiming the Scandal of the Cross: Contemporary Images of the Atonement*, Mark Baker, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2006), 16. See also Baker and Green, *Recovering the Scandal*, the work that *Proclaiming* builds on.

barriers to integrating the message fall from view. Stopping at comprehensibility undervalues the degree to which narratives are embodied, and how a person's physical responses to sexual trauma hinder the ability to engage with and 'inhabit' alternative narratives. Conceptions of the body, sin, and redemption must be re-evaluated as well.

Studies on how trauma affects the body, and how those who have experienced trauma are able to live well in the aftermath, can help inform a holistic critique and rearticulation of atonement. A trauma-informed theology of atonement recognises the place of reconciliation in a larger story of embodied alienation and redemption. Acknowledging the dependence of traumatised bodies on communal relationships, narratives, and practices that originate outside the self and serve as the basis for reconnection is key to an atonement theology that speaks life to traumatised bodies. Theologically, acknowledging Jesus' body as a necessary element of salvation—which includes whole, embodied human selves—demonstrates how God's reconciling work through Jesus' body reconciles our material, relational bodies as well.

Somatically, the concrete particularity of Jesus' body serves as an ontological basis for human salvation, demonstrating our relational need for God's intervening action (analogous to the 'objective' aspect of atonement). At the same time, a trauma-informed view of atonement demonstrates how persons suffering embodied constraints resulting from violation become enabled to participate in God's reconciling work (the 'subjective' aspect). Feminists who maintain an understanding of atonement as a necessary component of Christian soteriology have addressed rejectionist views by re-appropriating classical understandings in ways that account for

feminist concerns.[45] At the same time, I argue that existing feminist responses fall short because they fail to connect the subjective and objective aspects of atonement from a somatological perspective. Further, I argue that the subordination (or absence) of the Holy Spirit's role in atonement is directly responsible for the failure to connect salvation with embodiment.

This section shows one such response from Kathryn Tanner. Tanner re-appropriates a historical understanding of atonement drawing from patristic sources (an incarnational/ recapitulation approach), read from a feminist-informed perspective. I show how Tanner's view of atonement attempts to address feminist concerns for the embodied realities of suffering by naming the importance of Jesus' lived, bodily reality as the Word made flesh. At the same time, because of her focus on God's initiating action and 'high' Christology, her approach fails to adequately address how those with traumatised bodies become enabled to engage with the practices she names, in order to become integrated into Christ's body. Chapter Five picks up this elision by re-centering the Spirit's agency alongside the Word's in atonement, as the agent who empowers life in traumatised bodies.

Part II: Embodiment, Agency, and Tanner's Feminist Articulation of Atonement

Contemporary feminist critiques of atonement evaluate theories of Jesus' saving work in terms of their effects on the lived realities of women. However, approaching atonement in terms of 'theories' belies modern assumptions. The early church did not express Jesus' role in human

[45] See, for example, Darby Kathleen Ray's constructive reappropriation of the ransom model in *Deceiving the Devil*.

salvation by developing any one sustained explanation that could be classified as neatly as a 'theory.'[46] The point was not to offer an intellectual explanation that could stand up to rational scrutiny. Instead, views of Jesus' saving work on the cross during the first centuries of Christianity drew from scripture to provide 'a wealth of imagery, symbol, myth, parable, typology, etc., which can become the vehicle of the Gospel's communication.'[47] Such a 'storied' approach to atonement speaks to the needs of those whose bodies hold the wounds of traumatic constriction. Once survivors have been supported enough to rightly remember the reality of traumatic memories, they can begin the process of placing their trauma story within a larger life narrative. A sustaining narrative, lived out and supported in community, can offer the promise of intimate, engaged relational connection without justifying or negating the reality of a traumatic history. A wealth of ways to understand and embody Jesus' saving work, shared through testimonies, worship, social action, etc., in Christian community, can help survivors find their story within the gospel story, with an honest hope of redemption. It is this storied, embodied approach to atonement, within an understanding of bodily autonomy that allows for mutual relational transformation, that this thesis aims to provide.

Jesus' body became separated from articulations of atonement in part due to developments in theological thinking that limited the Incarnation to Jesus' entry into humanity, 'therefore separated from the cross by the whole intervening time frame of Jesus' life.'[48] With the movement toward 'theories' of atonement in medieval theology came a separation between

[46] Young, *God's Presence*, 235–50.
[47] Young, *God's Presence*, 249.
[48] Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 259.

atonement and incarnation. The consequences of an 'excarnational'[49] understanding of atonement have given rise to the contemporary theological models that prompt feminist critiques. By returning Jesus' body to the drama of salvation, contemporary churches can understand, preach and live atonement in ways that redeem hurting bodies. Rather than an additional 'theory' set alongside others, this somatological approach, which unites incarnation and atonement, can undergird other theories to make sense of them from the perspective of the body. Kathryn Tanner offers a feminist-informed view of incarnational atonement that reconnects the body to salvation. While Tanner's reconnection between atonement and incarnation is a help, I engage with her critically. She begins from a Logos Christology, which my somatological analysis will show limits her ability to conceptualise humanity's participatory role in soteriology. The following discussion demonstrates the yield of Tanner's feminist-informed Christology that reconnects Jesus' body to atonement, yet subordinates the role of the Holy Spirit in soteriology. Tanner's reconnection of Jesus' body with the work of atonement forms a link that my Pentecostal feminist somatology expands—one which also accounts for human participation in Christ's atoning work through the Spirit.

On Tanner's re-appropriation of the church fathers' views, the incarnation refers not simply to the event of Jesus' entry into a human body, but is the 'underlying precondition for the whole of Jesus' life and death.'[50] The part Jesus' death on the cross plays in human salvation is

[49] I refer to Charles Taylor's description of 'excarnation,' in which Christianity moves away from embodied practice to abstract intellectual engagement. See Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007), 554–5.

[50] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 259. Tanner refers to Jesus' birth, rather than his conception, when discussing theologies that 'see the incarnation in a narrow temporally indexed way' (259). Regardless, her larger point about expanding the incarnation to include the entirety of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is the relevant point for my somatology.

therefore understood within a larger saving framework, whereby the sinful separation from God that humanity experiences is taken up by the Word made flesh, toward the end of healed, resurrected life. Key to Tanner's appropriation of incarnation is that the Word does not assume an already perfected humanity, in which case there would be nothing transformative in humanity becoming united with divinity.[51] The humanity taken on by the person Jesus, like our own humanity, suffers the effects of sin and death. But unlike other humans, by taking on human suffering, Jesus is able to integrate it in a way that heals and transforms it. Tanner articulates how Jesus' relationship with (and *as*) God effects our salvation in a way that addresses feminist concerns surrounding self-negating sacrifice, vicarious suffering, and the abdication of one's bodily autonomy. She cites 'the famous Cappadocian formula that what is not assumed is not healed'[52] to explain how suffering and death are transformed for humanity and all creation through Jesus' own suffering and dying.

Because of Jesus' uniqueness as the Word incarnate, he is able to transform the painful aspects of fallen humanity through 'taking up' all of human sin and suffering. Salvation is an ongoing process in and through the physical reality of the bodily Jesus, lived out through the course of his life. Tanner notes that God's work of redeeming creation precedes the birth of Jesus.[53] Through 'the Word, with the Spirit, sent by the Father',[54] a new reality is initiated whereby humans are assumed into the redemptive life of God: 'By assuming human nature in all

[51] Kathryn Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), 27–28; *Christ the Key*, 260.

[52] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity*, 24n49. Here Tanner refers to but does not directly cite Gregory of Nazianzus. See Gregory of Nazianzus, 'Letter 101 to Cledonius,' in *The Cambridge Edition of Early Christian Writings, Volume 3: Christ: Through the Nestorian Controversy*, ed. Mark DelCogliano, trans. Bradley K. Storin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 392.

[53] See note 50 above.

[54] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity*, 36.

its embodied connectedness and embeddedness in its physical surroundings, the Word in Christ joins the human as well as the natural world with God.'[55] As the Word incarnate, Jesus is capable of healing humanity from outside itself by assuming the fallen aspects of humanity and being transformed through a historical, embodied process. Tanner explains that Jesus' life forms.

> 'a genuine way or passage, from corruption to incorruption, from a life suffering from sin to one free from its effects. Each moment of Jesus' life as it happens is being brought into connection with the life-giving powers of the Word, and the reworking of each of these features takes time. Jesus is not saved from death, therefore, until he dies and not saved from the awful consequences of his rejection in a sinful world until he suffers them, at which time those aspects of Jesus' human life are taken up by the Word and subject to a process of reworking through the powers of the Word.'[56]

Per Tanner's view, salvation is not isolated to any one period of Jesus' life, death on the cross, or resurrection.

Tanner's Christology does not limit atonement to the cross. Instead, as Jesus lives through human experiences that include suffering and death, he purifies, heals, and elevates them,[57] toward the end of restored relational connection with self, God, and others. Jesus' change and growth is affirmed in the New Testament; he possesses a 'historical humanity, one that alters and grows,'[58] as, for example, in Luke 2:40 and 2:52. In other words, Jesus can only heal our humanity because, as God made human in the incarnate Word, he is able to assume and transform all that

[55] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity*, 36.
[56] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 261.
[57] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 28.
[58] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 261.

is not God. He is afflicted, killed, healed, and returned to life within an embodied, historical, temporal framework, elevated beyond our capabilities through God's transcendent working. When understood as the transformation of sin and death in all its forms toward life, Jesus' saving work connected to the whole of his existence is 'much clearer away from the cross than on it—for example, in Jesus' healing ministry to the sick and the outcast, the advent of the new community of God, and Jesus' resurrected life.'[59] God's salvation for us is worked out, physically and cosmically, through all of Jesus' embodied experiences.

Tanner's articulation of incarnational atonement addresses feminist concerns about divinely mandated self-negation, as well as endurance of abuse disguised as ethically required obedience to the demands of a patriarchal figure. If God assumes humanity in Jesus in order to transform and heal its fallen aspects throughout the course of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, a 'legal' model in which Jesus dies in order to fulfill a contractual obligation on our behalf does not make sense. She explains, 'God's saving act does not follow Jesus' obedience the way a reward follows the doing of good works. Nor does God's saving act follow Jesus' self-sacrificial death in the way release from debtors' prison follows the payment of a debt…. Instead, God is taking saving action from the very first by way of the fact that here these human acts and passions are the Word's own.'[60] Jesus' death is 'for us,' but not in the sense of serving as a legal substitute who obeys an order or a surrogate who receives punishment that is due us.

Per Tanner, the way that Jesus acts on our behalf and for our benefit effects concrete changes toward healing and restoration through his own embodied transformation of sin and

[59] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 262.
[60] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 256–7.

death toward life. Through Jesus comes a new form of life, 'in which we are made to participate through the Holy Spirit. By embracing and integrating the lives of everyone else within itself, the life of Jesus generates histories with a form like itself.[61] In other words, the shape of human life changes as it comes into contact and becomes integrated with Jesus' life through the Spirit, expanding our capacity to live in the way of Christ, in a manner we cannot create on our own.

Tanner posits that because Jesus exists as a unique relationship between human and divine, the exercise of his will also cannot be compared with other humans'. Jesus' human life as he assumes and heals all aspects of fallen creation is inseparable from 'the Word's primary agency throughout.'[62] Within 'a happy exchange of divine and human powers,'[63] Jesus receives the healing and purifying gifts of the Word: 'the Word forms the character of Jesus' acts; the way that Jesus lives takes on the shape of the second Person of the Trinity.'[64] Jesus is therefore able to assume a new way of life through the lived history of his body, the incarnate Son being shaped by the Word. A key point in Jesus' life is the affective dimension of his experience in the Garden of Gethsemane. There, Jesus expresses a fear of death that is 'accompanied by the tears and tribulation that are the human lot under conditions of sin, and then overcome through conformity with the will of the Father, a conformity that is naturally Jesus' own in virtue of his being the Son of God, the one whose very will is the will of the Father.'[65] As a 'community of action,'[66] the Triune God does not possess separate wills that require agreement to work

[61] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 54.
[62] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 26.
[63] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 30.
[64] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 31.
[65] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 32.
[66] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 40.

together, as in human relationships, but rather a single unified will.[67] Therefore, the Son cannot be said to possess an independent will that is subjugated to the Father's.

Jesus' cry at Gethsemane is therefore not a subjugation of his will, but rather the assumption of the Son's own will as the Word draws him into conformity with the Father.[68] The complexity of the relationship between Jesus' human and divine existence means that his exercise of his human will is not identical to other humans'. So, the scenario that feminist theologians fear in regard to connecting Jesus' suffering with salvation, in which a sexual abuse victim surrenders her bodily autonomy to the will of a violent abuser, does not represent what is happening when Jesus speaks in Gethsemane.

Incarnation as Response to Feminist Critiques of Sacrifice in Atonement

Feminists have demonstrated that, when misunderstood, sacrificial theologies of the cross can be deadly.[69] At the same time, a redemptive view of the cross must answer survivors' need for restored relationality. A brief account of sacrifice on the 'bodily ownership' view, in terms of its consequences for sexual abuse survivors, demonstrates how Tanner's incarnational view of atonement is a helpful corrective. According to a feminist response that holds to the bodily ownership view, 'the call for Christians to emulate Jesus' self-sacrifice for the sake of the underserving' stands at odds 'with what victims of sexual violence have deemed essential for

[67] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 40–1.
[68] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 32.
[69] For example, the woman described in the introduction to this chapter who believed she needed to sacrifice her well-being to allow her abusive husband to return to their family. As a result, he murdered her.

their survival and wellbeing (autonomy over their bodies).'[70] A theological obligation of self-sacrifice therefore cannot 'make space for survivors of sexual violence to refuse others a calamitous claim to their bodies.'[71] Since Jesus' violent, sacrificial death is understood as a model for discipleship, it is expected that survivors must endure the aftermath of sexual violence rather than prioritise their own bodily autonomy.[72] No justice is sought against perpetrators, and violence continues.

Scarsella and Krehbiel's concern for bodily autonomy, outlined above, rightly points out that self-negating sacrifice has been used by those in church authority as a divine mandate. This view of sacrifice upholds human passivity in the face of abuse and oppression, specifically against women who have been sexually abused. Feminists frame the necessary response in terms of survivors claiming autonomy over their bodies. Jesus is understood to have relinquished his claim to autonomy over his own body as a passive victim. Discipleship is then viewed as the ethical mandate to follow his example. Within the above argument is an implicit understanding of bodily autonomy as a right to self-governance over an individual's bodily property, exercised through the conscious action of a self that stands 'over' the body. The body so understood functions as an object that responds to the decisions of the self that operates over it.

The 'bodily ownership' approach expressed above assumes an understanding of bodily agency that centres human action and control in atonement theology. The proper response to passive self-offering is seen as the rejection of self-sacrifice, instead taking responsibility and

[70] Hilary Jerome Scarsella and Stephanie Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence: Christian Theological Legacies and Responsibilities,' *Religion Compass* 13, no. 9 (September 2019): 2.

[71] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 2.

[72] Scarsella and Krehbiel, 'Sexual Violence,' 6.

exercising control over one's body. Viewing the body this way means exercising one's will over one's bodily property, upheld through the logic of private property rights. This response to correcting abusive theology, rooted in a 'conflict of rights' understanding of bodily autonomy,[73] necessarily sees any penetration of bodily boundaries as a negotiation of property rights. From this perspective, I have my body and you have yours. Self-sacrifice is then understood as a zero-sum giving up for others.

The above 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy names the need for protection against violation, a lived reality for sexual abuse survivors. However, it lacks a response that provides a redemptive (re)connection of mutual relationality. Part of the issue is that contemporary atonement models assume an understanding of sacrifice that would have been alien to New Testament writers and communities. To us, sacrifice 'is a sorrowful act in which what is sacrificed is not offered to anyone but is considered simply a necessary cost to oneself of doing what is right.'[74] Our contemporary ethic of self-giving functions within 'the zero-sum logic of altruism, whereby a benefit for one party comes at the expense of another's sacrifice or deprivation, and wherein concern for others is authenticated precisely by insisting that there is no benefit to the self.'[75] When bodies are seen as separate containers, where whatever is poured out of one is wholly lost to it, to be wholly received into a separate bodily vessel, sacrifice can only mean self-negation.

[73] See Chapter Two of this thesis, for a fuller explanation of the 'conflict of rights' view of bodily autonomy.
[74] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 266.
[75] Ryan Schellenberg, *Abject Joy: Paul, Prison, and the Art of Making Do* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 154.

However, within its historical context in the Greco-Roman culture of New Testament communities, sacrifice had a variety of meanings. Tanner assesses these meanings and finds that none involved the self-renouncing or legal/contractual obligations assumed by atonement models that centralise Jesus' death as a model of self-renouncing sacrifice.[76] Instead, sacrifice dealt with 'the establishment of communion and exclusion in social terms, and about how community is to be organised.'[77] If Jesus' death is understood to be a sacrifice, then, the question becomes, 'What forms of exclusion, community, and social organization are implied by it?'[78] The point is not a moral or ethical cost to oneself, but how social bonds are restored as a result. My own trauma-informed view of atonement toward the end of mutual restored relationality reflects this latter understanding of sacrifice.

Here my own somatological analysis joins with Tanner's observations about sacrifice and mutuality. On a 'bodily ownership' view, the violated body can *only* perceive other bodies as threats to be defended against. Findings from trauma literature show how this view does not make space for vulnerable relationality. To make an accurate judgment of how and when bodily boundaries might safely be crossed, survivors must become 'both appropriately trusting and self-protective'[79] in their relationships. They must first be enabled—empowered—to know what appropriate bodily boundary choices look like. Empowerment as 'the convergence of mutual support with individual autonomy'[80] makes possible survivors' ability to choose and judge healing

[76] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 262–5.
[77] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 265.
[78] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 265.
[79] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 142.
[80] E. Stark and A. Flitcraft, 'Personal Power and Institutional Victimization: Treating the Dual Trauma of Woman Battering,' in *Post-Traumatic Therapy and Victims of Violence*, ed. F. Ochberg (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1988), 141; quoted in Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 112.

relationships, recognising mutual need and responsibility. Theologically, a view of bodily autonomy that accounts for control over one's bodily property alone cannot offer a vision of bodily redemption.

Tanner's incarnational view of Jesus' sacrifice both answers feminist concerns about self-negation and offers a redemptive view of bodily relationality. Here her observations about Jesus' sacrifice meet my own concerns about bodily autonomy, atonement and redemption. Because Jesus as the Word incarnate has a unique relationship with God as the Word made flesh, he also possesses a unique ability (and responsibility) in his saving work for humanity. Specifically, Jesus as God in human bodily form is suited to act in ways that expand and strengthen survivors' bodily autonomy and relationality, toward the end of bodily redemption. An incarnational view of Jesus' sacrifice informed by Tanner shows how a relational understanding of autonomy offers a fuller account of God's intimate relationality with humanity through Christ, which is missed when bodily autonomy is conceived only within a conflict-of-rights framework.

Incarnational atonement conceived as restorative union with the divine through incorporation explains how Jesus' life, death on the cross, and resurrection can serve as a sacrifice in a way that addresses feminist and womanist concerns about self-negation. In the cultic sacrifices of Israel, for example, the importance is 'not the fact that one has given up something, since the people offering the sacrifice are often the ones who go on to eat it.'[81] Sacrifice in this sense is not self-negating but participatory and nourishing to the giver as well.

[81] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 266.

Tanner's view of Jesus' death, understood as expiation for the erasure of sin, functions within a 'broader communion-rite frame.'[82] If Jesus' body serves as the means to provide a meal, as in the death of sacrificial animals, then his death shares the same purpose: 'the animal needs to be killed in order to be eaten.'[83] In the expiation rites the New Testament authors would have been familiar with, restoration of relationship comes not through the animal's death but from the blood that pours out as a result: 'Blood purifies and reconnects across separation because of its life-giving powers.'[84] Jesus' death from this perspective is connected with his life, connected to 'the images of communion sacrifice that occur before his death…and after—when Jesus eats with his disciples before his ascension and at a prophesied eschatological banquet (Mark 14:25).'[85] This reading is also consistent with a Reformation understanding of the Eucharist as the 'provision of meal…subsequent to the sacrifice of the cross that makes it possible.'[86] The role of Jesus' death on the cross, then, is not in itself the source of salvation. Rather, the restoration of life and relationship that his death makes possible is the salvation humans participate in.

Due to Jesus' unique embodiment as the Word made flesh, he heals us from beyond ourselves in a way that we cannot heal ourselves. Because of his identification with God, the gift he gives us through his bodily sacrifice on the cross 'does not come at his own expense, but is part of the process of perfecting his own humanity to glory; our humanity is only perfected to the extent his is before us.'[87] We cannot imitate Jesus' death in same the way that he died, because the purpose of his death is the overcoming of death toward restoration of life. He makes possible

[82] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 267.
[83] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 267.
[84] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 267
[85] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 267.
[86] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 267.
[87] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity*, 93–4.

participation in that life. Understanding his death as a sacrifice we are meant to repeat negates its life-giving purpose and misunderstands our participation in him toward that life.

Tanner's incarnational atonement model and reevaluation of the relationship between Jesus' death and sacrifice that brings life shows how the violent aspects of the cross do not glorify suffering, as feminists and womanists fear. Honest evaluations of the historical, political reasons for Jesus' execution, which feminists highlight, 'make all the more evident the sinful, conflictual, and death-dealing world that the incarnation of the Word works to heal.'[88] Likewise, Jesus' role in addressing sin on the cross is not connected with a model of humble subjugation to follow, as in feminist criticisms of women forced to forgive their abusers. Instead, 'Jesus had to be humiliated on the cross for the sake of salvation the way one has to be sick to go to the doctor, not the way one has to swallow one's pride and make amends in order to be forgiven.'[89] The negation of life revealed in his humiliation, subjugation, and murder belong to the sinful distortions of life that Jesus came to heal and transform. Life-negating lowliness is therefore not a pattern for discipleship.

A historical view of sacrifice as a nourishing meal that those involved participate in also undercuts modern ideas of sacrifice as zero-sum giving that only takes away from the giver. Sacrifice on this incarnational view is therefore relationally participatory rather than strictly self-emptying, in ways that harmonise with a 'bodily integration' view of autonomy. Harmful messages that women have received about being 'poured out, spilled out, and used up for Jesus'[90] represent distortions of what God's self-giving through Christ means. In fact, humans are

[88] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 262.
[89] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 257–8.
[90] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 27.

incapable of giving *anything* to God, at least that God would need in the way we do. God's sacrifice in Christ received as a meal makes this clear, precisely because of our limited, needy bodies: 'Human beings are mortal animals dependent on a constant supply of nourishment for life and well-being.'[91] Jewish meals as sacrifices of thanksgiving to God recognised that God's role in sacrifice necessarily differs from ours. They understood that 'what constitutes Yahweh's "divinity" is precisely being nondependent on bodily goods for being or well-being.'[92] Based on this view of sacrifice, we can only come to God in need, and offer thanksgiving for God's gifts. God joyfully participates in thanksgiving meals, but not out of bodily need as humans do.

Tanner's incarnational view of atonement recognises the entirety of Jesus' taking on of flesh for us as God's gift, which we receive with gratitude. In Jesus' glorified humanity, after he has become perfected for us, God's 'gifts are poured out to us through the workings of the Holy Spirit.'[93] Reception of God's gifts made possible through Christ's humanity, poured out through the Spirit, empowers humanity to join in God's work of restoration. Our lives are changed more into God's joyful intentions for us as we draw into closer union with Christ, receive God's gifts, are strengthened, and share those gifts outward.[94] We become oriented toward Christ through 'extrospective movements of faith, praise, prayer and worship, empowered by the Spirit…. Christ becomes the axis or center of our existence and in this way our lives are united with his.'[95] Our faithful response is not to drain ourselves or become punching bags, but to joyfully share the gifts that God enables in us:

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[91] John Dunnill, 'Communicative Bodies and Economies of Grace: The Role of Sacrifice in the Christian Understanding of the Body,' *Journal of Religion* 83 no.1 (2003): 87.

[92] Dunnill, 'Communicative Bodies,' 88.

[93] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 53.

[94] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 37.

[95] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 60.

> '…humans make a proper sacrifice in life-enhancing use, for the good of human life, of what God gives them in sacrifice—the life-enhancing powers of the Word. The direction of these living human sacrifices becomes in this way the same as God's: toward the satisfaction of human needs, the reversal of the effects of sin on human life. Service to the neighbor becomes the reality designated by "sacrifices to God."'[96]

Sacrifice so conceived comes from bodies that have been freed and empowered by Christ's self-giving, shared through the Spirit, so we can share with others the newness of life we have received.

Narrating these alternative, positive relational patterns within the Gospel story, as we live them out, reworks our neural patterning and storying of relationship. Finding 'intelligibility' through connecting narrative and embodiment is like the 'recounting of the compulsive repetition of traumatic events in a person's life—though in the theological case what is recounted is good after good.'[97] Over time, as humans remain 'open or plastic to God's influence…the creature's capacities are stretched by what it receives.'[98] When human bodies are enabled to participate in Christ's intercession through Spirit-empowered worship, our capacity to live in flourishing relationality is expanded. This movement from the traumatised body to the body experiencing redemption is key to naming the limitation of Tanner's atonement theology, as the following section illustrates.

A Somatological Analysis of Tanner's Incarnational Atonement Model

[96] Tanner, *Christ the Key*, 272.
[97] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 38.
[98] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 42–3.

Tanner does not explicitly name a concern for bodily redemption in her incarnational model. However, by re-establishing the significance of Jesus' physical body in soteriology, her atonement theology demonstrates the divine initiative in providing bodily redemption. Considering Jesus' bodily agency in terms of a bodily integration model—in which a right to bodily autonomy is inseparable from one's embodied capacities and responsibilities, and how Jesus' bodily capacity and responsibility makes redemption possible—is key to my analysis of Tanner.

Tanner's incarnational atonement model emphasises how Jesus heals and elevates all aspects of fallen humanity as he lives and suffers through them, transforming them in and through his body. In terms of bodily redemption for survivors of sexual abuse, atonement on an incarnational understanding demonstrates the significance of Jesus' body within a soteriological framework. By assuming all of fallen humanity into his own body, where it is transformed through God's agency, Jesus serves as our healing agent—our saviour. Jesus' cry in Gethsemane, yielding to the Father's will, is not about him refusing to claim autonomy over his body, set as an ethical requirement. Instead, his sacrifice, given his unique embodied capacities and responsibilities, expands the agency of survivors of sexual abuse to act in responsible, relational ways. Jesus' sacrificial life and death do not fit within an ethics/obedience framework on Tanner's incarnational understanding. His power is unique and cannot be equated with solely human relationships, which are subject to corruptibility. That is why his apparent relinquishment of his will to the Father cannot be an ethical model. Therefore, the sacrifice of Jesus' body in the act of atonement does not function in the way that feminists who conceive of sacrifice solely as self-negation assume. Instead, Jesus' use and sharing of his body provides a rich participatory

potential for survivors to integrate into their own life narratives, serving as a strong basis for healing embodied traumatic damage and expanding survivors' exercise of bodily agency toward appropriately self-constructive and self-giving ends. The argument that Jesus' bodily sacrifice displays a failure to claim his bodily autonomy, as an ethical self-negating requirement for discipleship, is therefore inconsistent with Tanner's incarnational atonement model.

An incarnational conception of atonement is also consistent with a 'bodily integration' model of bodily autonomy. As Jesus offers his body to us, and our bodies are integrated into his through the Spirit, we are enabled and empowered in our own movement toward life. The way his body transforms ours is therefore not an ethical requirement of being 'used up' toward death. Jesus' bodily sacrifice from this viewpoint is eschatologically transformational, healing suffering human bodies, toward the end our own fully healed, relational, resurrected bodies. The process of embodied salvation understood this way fits not a legal or ethical understanding of atonement but a medical one. Healing after an injury and re-entering the work of daily life is not an intellectual or cognitive process where one becomes aware that one has been making poor choices and then changes one's mind, deciding to make proper ones. Instead, healing involves reparation to one's physical, embodied functioning over time. Unfortunately, this point—how Jesus' atoning work through his body empowers the healing/redemption of relational human bodies—reveals the limitations of Tanner's approach. The following discussion of physical healing in regard to trauma, and how this applies to human participation in atonement, makes this limitation clear.

The wounds of psychological trauma affect relational connection and daily functioning similarly to physical trauma. For example, integrating the pain of a loved one's death into a life

narrative following traumatic loss can be compared to 'a seriously infected wound. For the wound to heal, it is necessary to open and clean it, despite the significant, but temporary, increase in pain.'[99] One cannot simply choose to act in a healed manner after trauma, whether from a physical or psychological wound, until the infection has been cleaned. And the cleaning of the wound requires the intervention of a skilled medical practitioner, as well as a sacrificial undertaking of additional pain (albeit temporary), trusting in and surrendering to the healer's skill, on the part of the one being healed. Healing occurs when one who has been incapable of acting in a state of wellness gains the embodied capacity to act, to make different choices. The focus of change is a physical, material transformation that makes alternative choices of all sorts, including ethical and moral ones, possible. In other words, ethical and moral choices cannot be separated from one's ability (or inability) to make those choices. Tanner's incarnational atonement view leaves unaddressed the problem raised by feminist theologians who reject atonement: how do those with traumatised bodies become enabled to move from a state of embodied constriction to one that can engage in healthy relationality with God, self, and others? How does the shift toward becoming responsible agents in regard to bodily trauma become possible? Tanner hints at a response (Spirit-empowered practices of worship)[100] but leaves a gap in answering the question.

From the perspective of survivors, for a relationship to be healing, it cannot only be *perceived* as good by those involved. Harmful relationships exist, and as the previous chapter has shown, survivors are particularly susceptible to seeking them out as they relive and recreate their

[99] Jason M. Lang, 'Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Childhood Traumatic Grief,' in *Encyclopedia of Psychological Trauma,* 2008, Wiley, accessed March 11, 2023, ProQuest Ebook Central.

[100] Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity*, 60.

trauma.[101] And all human relationships are fallible, only healthy by degrees, in differing contexts, etc. Those we are in relationship with must actually *be good for us* in a tangible way. For survivors, this requires a partnership that fosters safety in one's own body. As survivors begin to trust others with their bodies, that sense of safety with the other must be warranted for healing to take place. A community that supports survivors, who can provide a healthy outside perspective, is necessary. A fully healing relationship is one free from manipulation. Since only God in Christ transcends human corruptibility, Jesus is the one who is ultimately trustworthy. However, it is only through the lived trustworthiness of those who form his body that those with bodies closed from trusting can begin to trust him.

Tanner mentions the Spirit's role in human participation in Christ's work only briefly. Her perfunctory remarks reflect her interest in challenging modern Christologies that shift the significance of Christ's work within the realm of human comprehension of it.[102] By beginning her atonement theology from a Logos Christology, she demonstrates how Christ as the Word made flesh acts in a material way for human salvation, regardless of human comprehension of that work. From a somatological perspective, her atonement theology thereby challenges the 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy. She does this by demonstrating that divine intercession for human salvation has a material reality beyond humans intellectually appropriating it, independent of humans' responsibility as individual decision-making agents to give it meaning. Instead, the meaning of human existence as redeemed beings becomes increasingly tangible as

[101] See Chapter Two.
[102] Tanner, 'Jesus Christ,' 245–72.

humans are integrated into the reality of what Christ has done, through practices of worship and connection that enable deepening comprehension.

Tanner's contemporary appropriation of a Logos Christology has the advantage of breaking through feminist assumptions of an owned, controlled body. As such, it more closely reflects a 'bodily integration' model, by demonstrating human dependence on divine agency beyond the self for redemption. At the same time, Tanner's 'high' Christology fails to give appropriate weight to the real issue of human failure to connect with the worship practices she names as necessary. From a trauma-informed perspective, she leaves a key barrier to union with Christ unaddressed: how do those who live in terror of what others might bring into their bodies become enabled to receiving Christ's gifts through the practices of the church?

The below section demonstrates how Tanner's appropriation of an incarnational Logos Christology answers Brock, Brown and Parker's critiques of the 'Satisfaction tradition' of atonement. Answering the limitations in her response, named above, then become the concern of Chapters Four and Five.

Part III: Somatological Atonement Applied to Brock, Brown, and Parker's Interpretation of the 'Satisfaction Tradition'

This section shows how the body's need for redemption brings a visceral element to atonement theories by developing a somatological analysis of Brock, Brown, and Parker's critique of the 'satisfaction' tradition. The analysis aims to demonstrate how a 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy determines the shape of their theological critique and response. I apply Tanner's

incarnational view to a substitutionary understanding of atonement, which more closely presents an 'integration' conception of bodily autonomy. Contrasting Tanner with Brock, Brown and Parker demonstrates a limited positive response to the problem of an 'ownership' view of bodily autonomy in feminist theologies of atonement. However, Tanner's view leaves an unanswered question: how does the traumatised body move from a space of constricted fear to the freedom to act as a responsible agent? To address this question, I raise some points that form the basis for the constructive work of Chapters Four and Five.

Feminist Atonement Critiques in Context

Feminist critiques of atonement arose from a context that understands Christ's atoning work in terms of overarching theories. Theories overlap, contemporary scholarship recognises each as partial, and a variety of alternative approaches to atonement have since developed (especially as scholars have critiqued earlier feminist approaches for their literalism).[103] Within North American and British contexts, Gustaf Aulén's typology has proven influential for feminist categorizations and evaluations of historical atonement theories.[104] In particular, Brown and Parker's analysis of the 'classical' atonement tradition uses Aulén's categories of Christus Victor, the satisfaction/Anselmian tradition, and the moral exemplar tradition (though they do not cite Aulén

[103] Flora Keshgegian, 'The Scandal of the Cross: Revisiting Anselm and His Feminist Critics,' *Anglican Theological Review* 82, no. 3 (2000): 475–92; Mark D. Baker and Joel B. Green, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 115–18.

[104] Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement,* trans. A.G. Hebert (London: SPCK, 1970).

as the source of this categorization).[105] And Brock's focus on a penal substitutionary understanding of atonement in her broad rejection of 'atonement Christologies'[106] also reflects an understanding arising from Aulén's typology. However, more recent scholarship also points out that Aulén's division of atonement models is itself flawed, revisiting and modifying his assumptions.[107] From a somatological perspective, a primary weakness in Aulén's categorization is his failure to highlight the importance of the Incarnation to the early patristic understanding of atonement. He instead collapses a variety of models under the heading of Christus Victor.[108] As the previous section demonstrated, connecting atonement to Jesus' embodied life and ministry, as well as the bodily nature of his resurrection, are key to a somatological understanding of atonement. At the same time, maintaining a variety of models and images remains vital, so that Jesus' work can be understood in a variety of contexts.

Following Aulén's typology, Brock, Brown, and Parker condense a number of approaches to atonement, including variations of satisfaction and substitution, under the category 'the satisfaction tradition,'[109] or, 'Jesus pays the price'.[110] They present Calvin's theology of substitutionary atonement as a consistent development that follows Anselm's satisfaction model, and equate both with later articulations of penal substitution. They summarise the logic of this view as God's need to restore 'his' honour, to fulfill God's justice, as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience. As a solution, 'he sends his only son Jesus into the world to pay the price we owe,

[105] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 4–13.

[106] Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York, NY: Crossroads Publishing, 1988), 55.

[107] Bruce McCormack, 'Atonement,' in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*, eds. Ian A McFarland et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 43–44.

[108] McCormack, 'Atonement,' 43–44.

[109] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 7.

[110] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 29.

to bear the punishment that all of humanity deserves.'[111] On this understanding, Jesus fulfills God the Father's need for justice by suffering and dying obediently, thereby setting right the human-divine relationship. His action then becomes a model for disciples. We are called 'to suffer in the place of others, as Jesus suffered for us all.'[112] Since women have been cast into 'the suffering-servant role,'[113] they bear the brunt of punishment for disobedience, which they are expected to then obediently endure.

In conceiving the satisfaction tradition this way, Brock, Brown and Parker name the consequence of seeing God as the 'fatherly torturer.'[114] This view of God justifies and even demands abuse against women and children, who 'are instructed to understand their submission to pain as a form of love.'[115] They conclude that valourising obedience, even to a God believed to be good, leads only to death and irresponsibility. We can have no certainty, they say, either from the Bible or tradition, that God can be fully trusted in this way: 'There is no simple revelation of God's will. We have to accept responsibility for our interpretations…. Obedience is…an evasion of our responsibility. Religion must engage us in the exercise of our responsibilities, not teach us to deny the power that is ours.'[116] Instead we must envision 'a God who delights in revolutionary disobedience and spirited protest.'[117] Discipleship means recognising the Jesus who was 'a prophet who confronted injustices and risked opposition rather than conform to an empire that enforced its oppressive will through violence'.[118] Christians must therefore resist submission to

[111] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 29.
[112] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 8.
[113] Brown and Parker, 'For God So Loved the World?', 3.
[114] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 30.
[115] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 31.
[116] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 31.
[117] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 31.
[118] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 31.

oppressive power and authority, as the satisfaction tradition is understood to demand. Responsible Christian action on their view means confronting injustice through protest that demands disobedience to hierarchical powers, like Jesus did.

Satisfaction and the 'Bodily Ownership' Model

For those who have experienced traumatic bodily violation, self-protection is a necessary first step in the process of re-forming the self. Naming the violence done to survivors, proclaiming it as harmful and not an expression of the will or intention of a loving God, is right and necessary for a theology capable of redeeming violated bodies. Elements of an 'ownership' conception of bodily autonomy challenge theologies that fail to account for hierarchical power differences. These unequal power relationships can lead to the justification and perpetuation of abuse, particularly in terms of unjust gender relations.[119] When human-divine reconciliation is communicated in such a way that obedience to God is equated with subjugation, Brock, Brown and Parker are correct in challenging that interpretation. At the same time, other aspects of the 'bodily ownership' view they present interfere with the complicated nature of relational agency needed to reform the traumatised self, as the below discussion demonstrates.

Brock, Brown, and Parker's assessment of, and response to, the 'satisfaction' tradition demonstrates the theological outworking of an ownership conception of bodily autonomy. From this view of bodily agency, 'never is anyone besides the self posited as having primary control over the body,' over and against 'a presumption of heteronomy in which God has primary control

[119] Levi, 'Polyvocal Body,' 246–7.

of the body.'[120] Instances where the self does not exercise control—in which autonomy may be compromised, including in relationship to God—are not considered acceptable in a theology rooted in a bodily ownership view. Obedience is uniformly equated with life-negating submission to necessarily oppressive authorities. The solution is to refuse to obey, to take responsibility, and to exercise one's power through resistance and protest.

These theological conclusions are consistent with an individual, autonomous conception of the body, in which 'agency means the self-ownership of the individual to whom external power always signifies a potential threat.'[121] Bodily agency is exercised through resistance to power, assuming that 'power…is external to and repressive of the agent, that it "subjects" him or her.' In response, 'the agent as "active subject" has both the desire to oppose power and the responsibility to become more powerful so that disempowerment—suffering—can be overcome.'[122] For those who have suffered sexual abuse, the bodily ownership view affirms that violent power resulting in violation is never acceptable. An ownership conception of bodily autonomy affirms that the right to safety and freedom from abuse is necessary.

Brock, Brown, and Parker's theological response to the satisfaction tradition challenges oppressive insistence on obedience to outside authority. Their assertion of the power and responsibility of individuals can serve a protective function for those whose bodies know the pain caused by submitting to abuse. Yet three pertinent limitations of their 'bodily ownership' view hinder their potential to offer a redemptive vision for those suffering under the sin of sexual

[120] Levi, 'Polyvocal Body,' 246.

[121] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 75.

[122] Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 71.

bodily violation. The first two are general issues with an ownership conception of bodily autonomy in relation to any external power; the third and central limitation is explicitly Christological. First, a theological view that elevates resistance and disobedience in envisioning redemption does not account for survivors' need to trust and depend on others, particularly when that trust and dependence requires a change of habits and circumstances. Second, a theology rooted in refusing to obey and asserting one's power through resistance struggles to integrate outside critique and correction when that exercise of power itself becomes oppressive, leading to the same abuses it aims to oppose.

The central theological limitation of Brock, Brown, and Parker's response is that it does not name how Jesus' body relates to our bodies, beyond serving as an example to follow. For instance, Brock and Parker recount a service where communion is offered to survivors: 'bread and wine were offered to any who wished, as a sign that there is nourishment for the suffering, comfort for the grieving.'[123] However, the liturgy used to present the bread and wine intentionally detaches their reception from Jesus' bodily experiences of suffering.[124] The liturgy offers no explanation of how Jesus' body is connected to nourishment or comfort. 'Nourishment' and 'comfort' remain detached from the particular body that offers them in traditional eucharistic liturgy, drawn from biblical texts.[125]

However, the way in which those with traumatised bodies become empowered to follow Jesus' example remains unclear. And why they should follow Jesus' example in particular, as opposed to anyone else who challenges oppressive structures, is also unclear. In fact, any

[123] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 215.
[124] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 215.
[125] Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26.

instances where outside intervention that challenges an individual's existing self-conception and actions may be desirable and needed is unclear. In Brock, Brown and Parker's view, those who have been abused are free to receive nourishment and comfort from food and drink (from any apparent source), responsible for recognising the actions Jesus takes as positive and desirable, and acting similarly. The relationship between nourishment and Jesus' body remains vague and at a distance—he has his body, and we have ours. But there is no relational, physical connection between the two—no recognised space of encounter that touches us to foster transformation. The conception of bodily autonomy presented in their Eucharistic theology, which necessarily connects with their view of Jesus' body, is the owned, controlled, responsible body. Yet this understanding of the body does not reflect the constraints trauma creates in the body that affect agency, decision-making, and relationality, as the below discussion shows.

Even for those with bodies not experiencing traumatic constrictions, 'because the human body has a changing life largely inaccessible to itself…we should not assume that every act is the act of a competent agent with a clear intention.'[126] Trauma reprograms neural wiring so that its sufferers choose actions that recreate the trauma rather than subverting it. A theological imperative to assert agency through confrontation, resistance, and protest offers no redemption for bodies that have been wired to act only in protest and resistance against *any* bodily contact. Redemption of the traumatised body means the ability to judge and allow physical touch and emotional connection, while coming to recognise and resist harmful encounters. The strength to resist invasion is necessary, but so is the openness to receive good touch. Brock, Brown, and

[126] Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 72. See also the discussion of 'interoception' in Chapter Two of this thesis.

Parker's alternative to the satisfaction tradition offers nothing transformational in their view of redemption that would move a body in trauma to one who can connect with others without fear, and choose more redemptive paths.

Another limitation of Brock, Brown, and Parker's view of redemption is that it does not allow space for critical correction. If the central responsibility is to confront and resist, what grounds are there for collective cooperation toward liberative ends if others' views of liberation do not already match one's own? No basis is established for setting aside one's own beliefs when others name them as unjust. A community is required to determine which structures need to be resisted and which are needed to promote liberative justice, particularly on behalf of those who are not (or not yet) in a position to powerfully assert themselves. The need for communal correction is particularly important for white feminist theologies.

Womanists and other theologians of colour note how a feminism derived from middle-class white assumptions can itself contribute to oppression. For example, bell hooks asserts that 'a feminism that focuses on woman as an autonomous human being worthy of personal freedom' cannot 'rid society of sexism and male domination.'[127] The danger womanists name is that 'a feminism controlled by white upper- and middle-class women that champions bodily autonomy is unlikely to ask *whose* bodily autonomy it is talking about. Failing to interrogate this issue means that a universalised appeal to women's bodily autonomy is often used to justify racist and colonialist attitudes and actions.'[128] A theology of redemption rooted in the

[127] bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), 24; quoted in Levi, 'Polyvocal Body,' 248.

[128] Levi, 'Polyvocal Body,' 248. Emphasis in original. While Rita Nakashima Brock is not white, the presentation of atonement critiqued in *Proverbs of Ashes* is developed in Rebecca Ann Parker's (a middle-class white woman's) section of the book. In addition, the text more broadly reflects a view of bodily autonomy rooted in white

responsibility to resist and confront needs to make space for a humble analysis of one's own ability to contribute to oppressive structures.

Human relationality involves complex webs of capability and responsibility. Even those who have been oppressed, who may have power and authority in other areas, may need to listen to and obey the voices of others who are also oppressed in other ways, in order to mutually contribute to the work of justice. Otherwise, asserting resistance may serve to contribute to oppressive structures feminists aim to dismantle. Therefore, a liberative theology cannot discard the need for obedience to outside perspectives. The shape that obedience takes requires careful communal discernment. Resistance and obedience must be balanced in order to confront one's own limitations and work responsibly and communally for justice.

In conclusion, Brock, Brown, and Parker's assessment of the satisfaction tradition reflects the weaknesses of the 'bodily ownership' view of autonomy. Placing responsibility on the body to resist and refuse to obey unjust structures must be balanced with acceptance and challenging one's own notions of injustice. For bodies that only know fearful resistance, space must be made to allow for intimate relational connection. And skewed notions of justice may mar one's own sense of what needs to be resisted. Listening and obeying challenging voices cannot be dismissed, but requires careful communal discernment that acknowledges the constitutive relationality that shapes our bodily responses.

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middle-class assumptions that womanists critique. Namely, the body that possesses awareness of, and responsibility for, asserting its own resistance. Therefore, I argue that the critique of middle-class white assumptions that shape the understanding of bodily autonomy they present applies here.

Satisfaction and the 'Bodily Integration' Model

My engagement with Tanner's incarnational understanding of atonement, reflecting the 'bodily integration' conception of autonomy, changes the way the satisfaction tradition may be understood and embodied by survivors. A 'bodily integration' view considers how Jesus acts as the one who stands in for human bodies that are *not yet* capable of acting in ways that reflect the fullness of bodily redemption. The issue at stake from this perspective is not either willing submission to, or refusal of, a demand for obedience. Rather, by taking the place of humanity, Jesus exercises a bodily capacity that other humans—who do not possess divinity by nature—do not have. An alternative embodied view of Jesus' work requires a nuanced understanding of the role of suffering in Jesus' death, and how his suffering body relates to our bodies. Understood thusly, Jesus suffers not to fulfill a need for punishment on God's behalf, but to exercise a capacity and responsibility that other human bodies do not possess. His death is therefore for us *on our bodily behalf*, in terms of how he expands—not dissolves—our own bodily capacities and responsibilities, rather than fulfilling God's need to punish.

Brock, Brown, and Parker's assessment of the 'satisfaction tradition' problematically conflates several views of atonement that operate with different understandings of the role of Jesus' death in the restoration of the human-divine relationship.[129] Relevant to this somatological analysis, Tanner's incarnational view of atonement—in which Jesus 'stands in' on our behalf, taking up all in creation that needs to be reconciled—does not involve punishment. When atonement and redemption are understood in the context of constitutively relational bodies, the

[129] Keshgegian, 'Scandal of the Cross'; Baker and Green, *Recovering the Scandal*, 115–18.

logic of Tanner's non-punitive view makes sense of a substitutionary presentation as follows. Even within purely human relationships, persons with greater capabilities often have the responsibility to stand in as substitutes for others in ways that contribute to others' growth and lead to their empowerment. (We will set aside the obvious example of parenthood, to avoid the problem of paternalism/maternalism.) In fact, Rebecca Ann Parker shares such an example, though she does not name it as such. She recounts how a World War II veteran is nursed back to life from a near catatonic state by his sister.[130] Because of her 'ownership' understanding of bodily autonomy, Parker fails to see and name the substitutionary nature of the man's return to health, from an atonement perspective.

Parker credits the man's recovery to his sister's presence—her willingness to wait and listen to him, until 'he became present to himself, able to recount his own memories.'[131] Parker's interpretation of his recovery reflects an understanding of bodies that retain separation: the sister's presence stands outside of him, allowing his own self-recovery. Neglected in this account is the brother's physical inability to act, and the sister's embodied intercessions on his behalf. Upon his return from war, the man 'stared back, mutely.... He sat in the rocker in the parlor. He wouldn't speak, he wouldn't sleep, and he would barely eat.'[132] His sister must have had to stand in as his substitute in material ways: going to the grocery store to purchase food for him when he was mentally and physically unable, feeding him, doing all that was necessary to materially provide for him when he was unable to provide for himself. The sister's physical intercessions when her brother was incapacitated were just as crucial and necessary as her listening presence.

[130] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 98–100.
[131] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 100.
[132] Brock and Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes*, 99.

In the end, because she 'stood in his place' where and when he could not, physically nourishing and providing for him, he was empowered to act again.

On one level, Jesus can be understood to stand in for us in a similar way that empowers our agency: 'As the one crucified and descended into hell, Christ has entered into the space in which women, among others, have not acted and have been unable to act…. He has replaced us in relation to our inaction so that that which is impossible—the actualization of our agency—has now been made possible.'[133] When viewed in light of the Incarnation and the significance of Jesus' human body, the way he stands in for us in relationship to the embodied wounds of trauma is even more visceral. A trauma-informed reading of the crucifixion and resurrection reveals how.

While Jesus has suffered on the cross, the resurrection demonstrates that he does not hold on to psychological trauma. Trauma is not identical to suffering: 'Suffering is what, in time, can be integrated into one's understanding of the world. Trauma is what is not integrated in time; it is the difference between a closed and an open wound.'[134] Survivors experiencing the bodily aftermath of trauma cannot incorporate it into a life narrative. It gets 'stuck,' because the memory of trauma cannot be accessed like non-traumatic memories. A difficult aspect of post-traumatic remaking is trauma's inaccessibility as suffering; it must become accessible to become part of one's life narrative.[135] Pain that exceeds suffering (trauma) becomes 'uninhabitable' space in the body. This is why those holding trauma cannot exercise bodily autonomy in relationship to

[133] Cynthia L. Rigby, 'Taking Our Place: Substitution, Human Agency, and Feminine Sin,' *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 4, no. 3 (2004): 232.

[134] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 7.

[135] Van der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, 176–7.

it—it is a bodily space that has become inaccessible. That is also why bodily integration must be relational: the ability to safely access trauma and move trauma into (very painful) suffering requires help from outside the self. A somatological view of atonement considers the difficulty of integrating traumatic memory, because of the connection between reconciliation and resurrection. The Christian eschatological hope of bodily resurrection promises a redemption of memory beyond mere recollection: 'memory needs to be transformed since simple vivid reliving of all past experience would undesirably recreate all the suffering and distress of earthly life.'[136] To the extent that we are able to live redeemed lives in light of transformed traumatic memories, we can be said to be living in a foretaste of embodied kingdom life. This is what Jesus enables as our substitute and saviour.

My somatological analysis draws from Tanner to tie together the relationship between Jesus' bodily autonomy, capacity, and responsibility. In short, because of Jesus' divine nature, he possesses an ability that ordinary humans do not, displayed most intensely on the cross and in the resurrection. Jesus' unique existence as fully human and divine means he therefore also possesses a responsibility that other humans cannot. That is also why he does not experience the aftermath of trauma—because of his unique capacity to integrate suffering. When Jesus says in the garden, 'Not my will but yours be done,' he is recognising his assumption of more suffering than any mere human will can bear. Because Jesus is fully relational with the Father—one with God, as the Word made flesh—he is able to release all within his own will onto the divine will.

[136] Nancey Murphy, *Bodies and Souls, Or Spirited Bodies?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 140.

Crucifixion as punishment was designed to 'overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life,'[137]—Judith Herman's definition of psychological trauma (not to mention its overwhelming physical bodily traumas).[138] By bearing the weight of death in his body on our behalf, Jesus is able to empty what is overwhelming to us onto the divine nature, where God through the Spirit transforms death to life. Jesus as our substitute bears the earthly, human-administered punishment of crucifixion not to satisfy the Father's wrath, but to open the way to our healing, as the one:

> 'who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness. And being found in appearance as a human, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross' (Phil 2:6–8).

Jesus' humility and self-emptying release what is too much for any human will to bear onto God. His obedience is to God's will for us to live a new resurrection life through him, in part now, with the promise of future fullness, freeing us for new life. That is how, as our substitute, he has a unique responsibility in terms of our salvation. That is the new life he opens for us to enter into.

Tanner's incarnational atonement model corrects feminists claims that Christ's atoning work means satisfying a divine demand for violence against the Son. Yet she falls short in making the connection between Jesus' atoning work and human participation in it. Specifically, when people are prevented from engaging in the activities of worship she names the Spirit working through, her Logos Christology cannot cross the somatic barrier. In other words, she fails to

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[137] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 33.

[138] David Tombs, *The Crucifixion of Jesus: Torture, Sexual Abuse, and the Scandal of the Cross* (London: Routledge, 2023), 44–53.

connect Jesus' atoning work and our participation through the Spirit, when that participation is stunted (as happens in traumatic constriction). My somatological approach seeks to address Tanner's limitations, culminating in Chapter Five's constructive work.

Part IV: Overcoming the 'High/Low' Christological Binary in Atonement Theologies

This chapter has demonstrated the consequences of an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy on feminist atonement theology. Such a view results in a '"functionalist" Christology', in which Jesus serves as a moral exemplar who inspires ethical actions.[139] From a somatological perspective, the Christology of Brock, Brown, Parker and Rambo does not account for Jesus' living presence and ongoing relationship with believers through the Spirit. Instead, they view Jesus' body as a lifeless object, useful to the extent that it serves an appropriate function of motivating ethical responses. Such a Christology is particularly damaging for sexual abuse survivors, whose own bodies have been treated in the same way—as objects for another's extrinsic purposes. The fact that these theologians' objectification of Jesus' body serves more noble purposes does not extricate their Christology from the framework bodily autonomy that permits a view of bodies—in this case, Jesus' body—that serve a purpose apart from a relational connection that touches and transforms the other. A Christology where Jesus' body functions in this way cannot offer a view of bodily redemption that escapes an objectifying view of bodily autonomy. By contrast, a

[139] Oliver Crisp, 'Incarnation,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, eds. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 164–5.

Christology that makes space for bodies to be redeemed through transformational relationship with Jesus provides a more life-giving response.

For those with traumatised bodies, at-one-ment means the re-integration of the relationally alienated self into God's intended wholeness, which empowers flourishing.[140] Different expressions of atonement demonstrate different aspects of that re-integration. These expressions become life-giving when they speak to embodied human realities. Tanner's incarnational understanding of atonement shows how God's initiative through Jesus as the incarnate Word serves as the necessary basis for our movement from embodied death to life. Beginning from an incarnational view brings the body back into the story of salvation, serving as an undergirding that changes our approach to all 'theories.' Tanner's reconstructed connection between incarnation and atonement is more consistent with the earliest Christian community's understanding of Jesus' life and work than the later approaches that the feminist theologians named in Chapter Two critique. She shows how Jesus in his embodied being holds a unique responsibility and capacity to integrate traumatic death toward the end of life. However, while the emphasis in this model is placed on the relationality of the Father and the Son, the role of the third person of the Trinity is unclear. It is this pneumatological limitation, and its connection to feeling, fearing, and hoping human persons, that I seek to correct.

[140] Young, *God's Presence*, 243.

Limitations of Tanner's Logos Christology and the Potential for a Pneumatological Correction

Tanner falls short in connecting the Logos to the lived realities of those experiencing traumatic bodily constriction. While her connection of incarnation and atonement makes an important move in taking the body seriously in soteriology, she runs up against a limitation: 'an incarnational Christology that treats the question of God's relationship to the human risks becoming abstract if it does not also take up the question of the person's relationship to God.'[141] Tanner focuses on God's action in atonement, as the Word made flesh. She is not particular about how the practices of worship, etc., work from the human side: how we come to participate in God's work across embodied barriers. For survivors who have been closed off from safe, intimate touch, the trustworthiness of the one who touches us (in example, through communion) has to precede abstract notions of God. Often God has been rejected. How can Jesus be encountered as the trustworthy God, in the Spirit, to engage in the practices Tanner names as essential?

Relevant to my thesis, the example I give of the woman who is unable to take the Eucharist because of her sexual abuse serves as an example of how the relational entanglements of others' sin continue to alienate us from participating in the life of God through worship practices. In that way, sexual violation serves as a concrete alienation between us and Christ. Tanner's purpose in reappropriating Logos Christology is to get outside the (post) modern frame, identifying turns in Christology that made it difficult to comprehend how Jesus' actions, including but not limited to the cross, are saving/healing. My somatology approaches at-one-ment toward

[141] Sigurdson, *Heavenly Bodies*, 9–10.

the end of bodily redemption. Tanner is useful for placing Christology in a historical context, which is helpful for situating my somatology. Her starting historically, 'from above,' is one way to get outside that frame and address feminist concerns. I am interested in how we come to the place of experiencing the union with Christ that his atoning work makes possible. Regarding Christian praxis, I ask, how does someone who has been alienated from being able to access joyful practices of worship in their body come to that place of being open, giving over to God? How does worship—encounter with Christ through the Spirit in Christian community—become accessible for survivors? The remainder of this thesis picks up on this elision, naming how Pentecostal theology has the potential to envision holistic redemption for bodies, and constructing an approach to atonement that achieves this end.

Tanner's limitation is that she does not address how those with traumatised bodies are moved to be able to participate in redemption. For those who have been abused, what makes this man Jesus the one who can safely meet us—for example, in the Eucharist? A transformative narrative allows survivors to safely connect with Christ's body—both in his suffering and redemption. Through this connection, they find their story in his story, in order to safely engage in concrete, intimate practices that are essential in coming to know bodily redemption. Because of the constitutively relational nature of bodies, Tanner's Christology 'from above' can make sense to those who possess sufficient capacities and responsibilities of care, and are already part of the worshipping community. Her approach demonstrates how faith in Jesus empowers them to 'stand in' for and alongside survivors. But I also want to get at other side: how survivors can be moved to that place of receiving the strength to stand, in Christ. This is where the promise of

Pentecostal theology enters in. Practices of healing, including healing from both visible and invisible wounds, are experienced as atoning practices, as the following chapters show.

Understanding Jesus' body as the one who stands in for traumatised bodies, taking in and transforming traumatic death to life, offers an alternative view of substitutionary atonement. My somatological analysis aims to demonstrate how an incarnational understanding is consistent with a 'bodily integration' model of bodily autonomy. Through integration with Christ's body, made possible through his reconciling work, received through the Spirit and shared through material encounter, constricted bodies can become freed to act as agents. Rather than an additional approach to atonement alongside all others, my somatology explores how an incarnational view intersects with a Spirit-Christological understanding of atonement, one which makes clear how humans participate in God's atoning work.

Jesus' divinity is not dependent on our perception of it. However, God reveals himself in Christ, with the desire that we will come to know and participate in Him. Making the salvation that is available through his body accessible to suffering bodies, through relational practices that reveal Christ and engender trust and connection, must connect the human to the Logos, in order to name how we connect with redemption. This observation does not make Jesus' divinity dependent on our perception of it. Instead, it notes the centrality of how salvation through his body becomes accessible to suffering bodies. That is the constructive work that guides the remainder of this thesis.

CHAPTER 4

PENTECOSTAL AND ACADEMIC THEOLOGY: CORPORAL KNOWLEDGE AND CORPORAL IGNORANCE OF REDEMPTION

Chapter Three provided a somatological evaluation of Kathryn Tanner's incarnational view of atonement as a response to Brock, Brown, and Parker's rejectionist view. It concluded that Tanner provides a helpful historical context for understanding how and why atonement in Western theology became detached from bodily experiences of healing. However, because Tanner begins with a Christology 'from above', she struggles to explain how those with traumatised bodies would be moved into a space of relational trust in order to freely receive the gifts God offers through the Holy Spirit, which are needed to act with expanded relational agency. This chapter addresses that elision by introducing Pentecostal and charismatic theological conceptions of the body that harmonise the relationship between human bodies and the Holy Spirit.

This chapter presents a Pentecostal somatology (contextual theology of the body) that seeks to offer a vision of atonement that speaks to bodily redemption for survivors of sexual abuse. I argue that Pentecostal theology is uniquely suited to provide view of atonement that speaks to the redemption of traumatised bodies because of how bodies are experienced and theologised within Pentecostalism. That is because Pentecostals hold a conception of the body that challenges the 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy that this thesis has critiqued. Pentecostals' conception of the body—and bodily autonomy—has arisen as a direct result of the Pentecostal movement's somatological history and praxis. At the same time, an overly

heteronomous view of the body in relation to the Holy Spirit, particularly in the area of sexuality and bodily 'purity', has led to theological articulations that struggle to offer a vision of redeemed, embodied sexual relationality. I use Jennifer Glancy's framework of 'corporal knowledge' and 'corporal ignorance' to make this link. While Glancy does not work from a Pentecostal perspective, her framework helps explicate the relevance of bodily ways of knowing for theologies of atonement.

Glancy demonstrates how the collective societal experience of bodies shapes what a community 'knows' in their bodies—their 'corporal knowledge.' The previous chapters of this thesis have shown how feminist theological rejections of atonement are intertwined with an 'ownership' conception of bodily autonomy. As such, they fail to account for the aspects of trauma recovery that require dependent formation (co-creation) with and through others. More recently, trauma theologians such as Shelly Rambo have acknowledged the need for mutual human dependence and formation in the aftermath of trauma. However, Rambo's implicit acceptance of a 'bodily ownership' view of autonomy in regard to the human/divine relationship is evident in her rejection of human dependence on God as the source of healing and transformation. From a trauma-informed perspective, I argue that Rambo's attempt to construct a Christian theological vision apart from a narrative framework rooted in the embodied spiritual practices of the church represents a 'bodily ownership' view of autonomy. Further, I argue that her rejection of the theological language of salvation and redemption are intertwined with this view, and limit her ability to offer a vision of flourishing life in the aftermath of traumatic violation.

Pentecostal experience, on the other hand, prioritises a phenomenological sensitivity in which the individual body interacts within a nexus of relationships, both human and spiritual. Pentecostals acknowledge the dependence of human bodies on outside interventions, both human and divine, for redemption and healing. Pentecostal embodied praxis/theology is therefore well suited to offer an understanding of atonement in line with recent findings from trauma theory regarding what is needed for living well in the aftermath of violation. At the same time, Pentecostals' understanding of the relationship between spirituality and sexuality within a context of 'purity' and protection from pollution creates barriers to presenting a vision of healed, integrated sexuality. Recent Pentecostal feminist scholarship addresses this limitation. The history of Pentecostal engagement with academic theology demonstrates a movement toward integrating embodied praxis with theological construction. The complex and difficult interactions between Pentecostal faith and academic theology reveal clashes between these communities' corporal knowledges. The classical pentecostal movement developed outside the sociocultural context of white Western academic communities, and therefore academic conceptions (and experiences) of the body. However, a harmonising of the two via the mediating presence of feminist Pentecostal theology presents a way forward for an embodied view of redemption following sexual violation.

Chapter Four presents the above argument as follows. First, I introduce Glancy's concept of 'corporal knowledge'. I then demonstrate how 'corporal knowledge' applies to first Pentecostal, and then academic theological, conceptions of bodily autonomy, specifically as they inform understandings of embodied redemption. Part II introduces the related concept of 'corporal ignorance' to demonstrate how bodily narratives of communities act to exclude

particular embodied discourses. The chapter first shows how the corporal ignorance of the theological academy has excluded Pentecostal embodied narratives. Then it shows how Pentecostal corporal ignorance has excluded the narratives of those with sexually traumatised bodies in its theologising of atonement.

Part III brings these insights into conversation with Shelly Rambo's trauma theology. I point out the areas where Rambo assumes the 'bodily ownership' conception of bodily autonomy perpetuated in the theological academy, how her assumptions about the body affect her views of atonement and redemption, and how a Pentecostal feminist view answers her critiques of theologies of redemption. I conclude that a Pentecostal feminist view prioritises the Holy Spirit's role in embodied redemption from trauma, theologically articulating the process by which trauma becomes redemptively available as suffering, and therefore becomes able to be integrated into a personal and collective bodily narrative. A Pentecostal feminist corporal knowledge of trauma recovery therefore addresses the limitations of Rambo's 'middle spirit' theology. Summative observations are drawn here which lead into the work of the final chapter: the application of a working Pentecostal feminist somatology of atonement.

Part I: Pentecostal and Academic Corporal Knowledge of Bodily Autonomy

Jennifer Glancy develops the concept of 'corporal knowledge' to explore how people's ways of being in the world are learned and communicated in and through bodies, and how differences in social location (among other factors) affect what, and how, different bodies 'know.'[1] Corporal

[1] Jennifer Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge: Early Christian Bodies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

knowledge assumes that 'bodies structure social exchange and create worlds of meaning,'[2] and that 'we know the world as mediated through our own corporal narratives'[3]—both our individual and collective bodily narratives. Put another way, bodies tell stories. The communities we are part of shape the way we live in our bodies, the stories we tell and interpret about our own bodies and the bodies of others, and frame the way we negotiate embodied relationships within and outside our groups. Factors such as race, gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic class affect how our corporal knowledge is 'located': 'To know one's place in a system is also to have some implicit understanding of other people's places in that system.'[4] In other words, our bodily interactions with others are constitutively, relationally 'known' in our bodies. This relational corporal knowledge has implications for how different groups interact in systems. Relevant to this thesis, I suggest that the corporal knowledge possessed by pentecostal bodies[5] stands at odds in significant ways with the corporal knowledge that has been historically cultivated and perpetuated by academic theological institutions. Further, these differences reveal the limitations of academic theological discourse in accounting for transformative, affective, embodied worship practices in theological reflection and construction.

This section has three goals. First, to identify a vital element of Pentecostal bodily praxis and theology (which are inseparable): transformative encounter with Christ through the Holy Spirit. This element is relevant to the question, how can bodies that have suffered sexual bodily

[2] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 4.
[3] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 7.
[4] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 52.
[5] I use the phrase 'pentecostal bodies' to refer to members of the global Pentecostal and charismatic movements whose embodied knowledge is shaped by the spiritual practices and beliefs of these communities. See Michael Wilkinson, 'Worship: Embodying the Encounter with God,' in *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology,* ed. Wolfgang Vondey (Oxford: Routledge, 2020), 117–27.

violation experience redemption? I conclude that Pentecostal experiences and reflections on healing through the atonement—which reflect a 'bodily integration' understanding of bodily autonomy—are central to addressing this question. Second, I show how the corporal knowledge of academic theological institutions promote and perpetuate a 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy, using Glancy's 'slaveholding habitus' in conversation with Willie James Jennings' observations about white self-sufficiency as a frame. This somatological analysis leads to Part II, where Glancy's 'corporal ignorance' demonstrates the limitations of both academic theological discourses and non-feminist-informed Pentecostal discourses, in regard to bodily redemption for sexual abuse survivors.

A Somatological Approach to Pentecostal Theology

To speak of Pentecostal theology and embodied knowledge requires a definition of Pentecostalism. For the purposes of this study, I use the broad term 'pentecostal' to refer to the global movement of Pentecostal and charismatic churches that began in the early twentieth century. These include 'classical' Pentecostal denominations with origins in the Azusa Street revival movement of 1906, other global revival movements that began around that time,[6] as well as the so-called 'charismatic' movements in 1960s North America, and independent churches in areas such as Africa, Latin America, and Asia.[7]

[6] Contemporary scholars have challenged the assumption that Pentecostalism originated exclusively with the Azusa Street Revival. For a discussion see Adam Stewart, 'From Monogenesis to Polygenesis in Pentecostal Origins: A Survey of the Evidence from the Azusa Street, Hebden and Mukti Missions,' *PentecoStudies* 13, no. 2 (2014): 151–72.

[7] See Amos Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 4–7.

At its most basic level, Pentecostal theology refers to theology arising from the experiences and sensitivities of the global Pentecostal tradition. Yet a broader conception of Pentecost as a symbol and event with central relevance for the *whole church* offers a richer theological vision. A discussion of the difficulties of defining Pentecostalism as a tradition is beyond the scope of this thesis.[8] This chapter emphasises how knowledge 'lives' in the body and informs theological construction and reflection. My assertion is that the broad global Pentecostal/charismatic movement shares commonalities in 'corporal knowledge,' a way of knowing the world and narrating one's place (and others') within it, through the body. Further, Christianity's central shift from the 'West'—both geographically and in terms of its inherited theological assumptions— offers needed perspectives that correct the limitations of received academic theology in terms of embodied knowledge and practice. Corporal knowledge arising from the global pentecostal movement challenges assumptions that eliminate certain embodied discourses from theological reflection and construction. Pentecostal contributions hold the potential to create a richer doctrinal vision beyond churches labelled 'Pentecostal' or 'charismatic.' In fact, I argue that pentecostal embodied theological praxis is uniquely suited to correct the somatic limitations of Western academic theologies, including feminist theologies. Somatic narratives arising from the academy have by their nature excluded key pentecostal characteristics from academic theological engagement. As such, a definition of Pentecostal theology that encompasses the broader Christian tradition is most appropriate.

[8] For a discussion of the difficulties of defining Pentecostalism as a religious tradition, see Simon Chan, 'Tradition: Retrieving and Updating Pentecostal Core Beliefs,' in *The Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, ed. Wolfgang Vondey (Oxford: Routledge, 2020), 95–105.

All Christians recognise the day of Pentecost as a key event in the history and development of the church. Yet outside pentecostal circles, the event's significance for the development of doctrine has been largely overlooked. To address this limitation, I use Wolfgang Vondey's approach to Pentecostalism as a basis for ecumenical engagement. Vondey identifies the crux of pentecostalism *theologically* in a way that encompasses the broader Christian tradition. Per Vondey's definition, the movement 'can be identified by the day of Pentecost as the concern for an immediate encounter with God through the Spirit of Christ manifested in discernible signs and wonders as evidence of God's transforming and redeeming presence directing all life towards the kingdom of God.'[9] This definition of Pentecostal theology serves the goals of this chapter (and this thesis) because it identifies the core of theologising with an event that is universally shared across Christian traditions. This approach thereby offers ecumenical potential. It also concerns itself with concrete embodied experiences and practices rooted in Christian narrative and tradition (the history and practices of the day of Pentecost), and oriented toward the goal of redemption.

A caution of the following somatological analysis of pentecostal corporal knowledge is that the global pentecostal movement is not monolithic. Independent congregations in South Africa, and mainline denominations influenced by the charismatic movement in the United States and Britain, vary widely in terms of social class, race, cultural contexts, etc. At the same time, the defining elements of the pentecostal movement reveal a shared 'corporal knowledge' that unites

[9] Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (London: T&T Clark, 2017), 4. See also the historical introduction of this ecumenical assessment in Wolfgang Vondey, 'Introduction,' in *Pentecostalism and Christian Unity, Volume Two: Continuing and Building Relationships*, ed. Wolfgang Vondey (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013), 1–31.

these diverse expressions, influencing lived faith and theological reflection. Pentecostalism's emphasis on transformative personal and collective encounter with Christ through the Holy Spirit guides a particular understanding of the human/divine relationship. This emphasis informs how believers engage with biblical texts in ways that invite the integration of one's own life narrative into the gospel narrative. And communal, affectively embodied worship practices resulting from, and encouraging, these encounters produce a particular 'way of knowing' within the bodies of diverse communities of believers. This pattern of 'corporal knowledge,' in turn, influences how doctrinal theology is received, narrated, embodied, constructed, and lived outward. Recent Pentecostal scholarship articulates a particular way of doing theology that is inseparable from embodied redemptive praxis, which both informs and is informed by doctrinally expressed convictions. In other words, characteristics of Pentecostal 'corporal knowledge' are recognised as intrinsic to academic theological knowledge production.

The relationship between Pentecostal corporal knowledge and theological construction and reflection fills in existing gaps in the scholarship, offering a redemptive vision for survivors of sexual bodily violation. That is because Pentecostal corporal knowledge challenges the 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy that previous chapters have demonstrated creates a barrier to critical and constructive engagement with atonement theology. Pentecostal corporal knowledge from this perspective can be seen as the redemptive, embodied practices of Pentecost. This way of theologising is consonant with recent findings that demonstrate the need for narrating and embodying life-giving practices and relationships in the aftermath of traumatic violation. Following this section, the next section contrasts Pentecostal corporal knowledge with academic institutional corporal knowledge. Pentecostal scholars have struggled to theologise in ways

consistent with their theological practices and convictions in academic literature and settings. I suggest this is because the discourses of (predominantly white, Western) academic theology are rooted in a corporal knowledge that assumes a 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy. A Pentecostal way of theologising is therefore a needed corrective.

Pentecostal Corporal Knowledge of Embodied Spiritual Encounter

Researchers and theologians of global Pentecostalism emphasise 'a spirituality characterised by relational encounter with the living Christ through his Holy Spirit'[10] as a defining feature of the movement.[11] Rather than a one-off experience, ongoing embodied encounters with the Holy Spirit form the basis for communal worship praxis, effecting transformational changes and a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in the lives of worshippers.[12] A spirituality of encounter and transformation also shapes theological reflection and construction, yet Pentecostal theology cannot be reduced to spiritual experience alone.[13] Rather, doctrinal reflection and embodied experience are co-informing.[14] They are always 'organically connected to the body thus affirming

[10] Amos Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 14.

[11] See also Mark J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit: The Charismatic Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2006), 16; Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (New York: Continuum, 2008); and Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 'Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals,' October 5, 2006, http://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/spirit-and-power/.

[12] Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*, 25; Andrea Hollingsworth, 'Spirit and Voice: Toward a Feminist Pentecostal Pneumatology,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 29, no. 2 (2007): 202.

[13] Terry L. Cross, 'The Rich Feast of Theology: Can Pentecostals Bring the Main Course or Only the Relish?', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8, no. 16 (2000): 35.

[14] Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), 2–3.

a narrative approach that starts from below.'[15] From a Pentecostal perspective, 'theological explanations can become a critical reflection upon our doxology with our acts of worship always informing and transforming our official dogma, and in turn our dogma informing our doxology.... Worship is our primary way of doing theology.'[16] Theological convictions are concretely expressed through embodied acts of worship, and experiences of the Spirit in worship shape reception and expression of lived theology: 'the worship service forms the wellspring of spiritual practices among Pentecostals from which doctrinal reflection can emerge.'[17] Pentecostal 'corporal knowledge' thus represents a way of approaching theology that does not fit within the parameters of theological engagement as simple cognitive assent to, and defense of, doctrinal propositions. Pentecostal theological convictions live and are affirmed in bodies—bodies that 'know' and give shape to otherwise abstract theological concepts (such as redemption).

Pentecostal corporal knowledge shapes theological reflection in ways that recenter the body in theological discourse. Trauma research shows the need for embodied practices to aid in opening the 'places' in the body that have become restricted.[18] Yet North American culture, including religious culture, is remarkably disembodied: 'The notion that you can do things to change the harmony inside yourself is just not something that we teach in...our churches, in our religious practices. But if you look at religions around the world, they always start with dancing, moving, singing, physical experiences. The more "respectable" people become, the more stiff

[15] Kenneth Archer, 'A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner,' *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (2007): 306.

[16] Archer, 'Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology,' 309.

[17] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 31.

[18] Van der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, especially Chapter Sixteen.

they become somehow.'[19] By contrast, Pentecostals' 'disreputable' affective worship practices have the potential to connect with remnants of trauma in the body.

Affective spiritual experiences can potentially transform even long-standing embodied effects of trauma.[20] However, the danger is that an experience can also bring traumatic memory to the surface in ways that result in untransformed repetition, causing re-traumatization rather than positive change. The case study from the previous chapter, in which a survivor of sexual abuse experienced bodily numbing in response to receiving the Eucharist, is one such example.[21] To be safe and healing for those with traumatised bodies, affective spiritual practice must be integrated into oneself in a positively transforming way. Experiences are always embodied in context. In order to heal instead of hurt, experiences must become part of one's corporal knowledge in a way that can touch and transform one's own traumatic bodily narrative. In theological terms, spiritual practice must be redemptive.

The body erects barriers around traumatic memory to protect itself from the pain of acknowledgment.[22] Integrating the traumatic event into a life narrative requires those barriers to be *redemptively disrupted*. Meaning, what the body takes for granted must be challenged to be changed: 'we become aware of our corporal knowledge at moments when the smooth operation of that knowledge are disrupted.'[23] When memories of trauma are hidden from consciousness, a shift in oneself must occur—a disruption—for that embodied knowledge to come to the fore. Yet

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[19] Bessel Van der Kolk, 'Trauma and Resilience Land in Our Bodies,' by Krista Tippett, *On Being*, July 25, 2016, https://onbeing.org/programs/trauma-resilience-land-bodies-bessel-van-der-kolk-2/.

[20] Van der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, 131.

[21] See Chapter Three of this thesis, 'The Effects of a "Disembodied" Atonement Doctrine on Embodied Trauma.'

[22] Van der Kolk, *Body Keeps the Score*, Chapter Twelve.

[23] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 77.

for that disruption to result in transformation rather than re-traumatization, the self must invite that challenge; one must have the internal capacity to deal with it. Feminist trauma theologian Serene Jones describes her own experiences with physical/spiritual disruptions capable of transforming trauma as 'liturgies of flesh'.[24] These embodied practices begin with a 'physical action…a *disruptive* encounter with an 'other' that is both welcomed and disturbing.'[25] This physical encounter creates a new reality—a disruption from beyond the self that redeems rather than causing re-traumatization. It is

> 'an outside intervention that mirrors a traumatic and overwhelming event but enacts it differently because now it is wanted and safe…. From a place beyond, grace comes toward us, disturbs us, traverses our boundaries, and dwells disruptively within us as it gives testimony to the previously unspoken sins/traumas that occupy us.'[26]

Grace experienced as disruptive, transforming embrace 'strengthens the capacity to act at the very same time it invites you to fuller love of neighbor and ever-deepening love of the God who both frees and holds.'[27] Integrating embodied traumatic memories into one's life story is a necessary part of post-traumatic remaking of the self that empowers one to act in just ways on behalf of others. Jones shows that accessing memories of trauma in order to transform them requires a disruptive intervention that is both safe and wanted, opening the constricted spaces in the body so they can again become habitable, able to become part of one's 'body story.' For Jones, practices from outside the Christian tradition, such as acupuncture, act as positive

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[24] Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2019), 158.

[25] Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 159. Emphasis in original.

[26] Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 159.

[27] Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 161.

disruptions of one's bodily boundaries.[28] Here Jones follows other feminist theologians who begin from concepts and spiritual practices detached from the Christian tradition and then find points of connection within Christian concepts for these superseding practices.[29] Jones succeeds in demonstrating the importance of practices that involve the passage of one's bodily boundaries in redemptive ways. Yet she does not identify practices from within the Christian tradition that perform the same function of disrupting bodily boundaries—such as taking the Eucharist—within her theologising. In terms of a doctrinal understanding of atonement, Jones' vision of redemptive disruption maintains a separation between Christ's body specifically, received in Eucharist, and women with sexually abused bodies. Bodily redemption on her view is disconnected from integration into Christ's body particularly; the 'owned' body keeps its distance, still apart from relational intimacy with Christ.

By contrast, a Pentecostal embodied narrative framework of encountering Christ through the Holy Spirit, toward an eschatological vision of redeemed bodies within a redeemed creation, has the potential to offer a healing space for disruption from within the Christian tradition. Pentecostal corporal knowledge understood as redemptive disruption reflects a way of doing theology that is consonant with trauma findings: 'The concern for redemptive practices identifies the heart of Pentecostal contributions to contemporary soteriology.'[30] The charismatic practices that form the basis of Pentecostal worship foster an intentional, expectant space for personal and relational embodied transformation. For example, responding to an altar call involves an

[28] Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 158–60.

[29] Linda Woodhead, 'Spiritualising the Sacred: A Critique of Feminist Theology,' *Modern Theology* 13, no. 2 (1997).

[30] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 51.

'expectation of a divine, often supernatural, interruption of [worshippers'] circumstances and in that sense of an initiation or repetition or revival (sometimes all three) of Pentecost in their own lives.'[31] The most physically relational aspect of pentecostal worship practice is laying hands on those who come to the altar. Relationality in the Holy Spirit is concretised in this intensely intimate practice of mutually giving and receiving touch: 'baptism in the Spirit itself is the affective moment concentrated in the giving and receiving of the Spirit at the laying on of hands.'[32] Of course, willingly receiving this type of 'redemptive disruption' is the centrality of the alienation of physical relationality for survivors. The difficulties of addressing this gap are detailed in a later section of this chapter.

As shown above, Pentecostal theology by its nature incorporates embodied praxis into theological construction. Those who experience the Spirit are shaped by these encounters. They narrate experiences of healing, physical and otherwise, in terms an 'ordinary theology' that connects healing to the atonement.[33] This type of 'corporeal theology' connects theological concepts to embodied experience. As a result, verbal articulation of theological concepts like atonement is less important than sharing the testimonial import of the Spirit's transformation of one's life.

Pentecostal theology's particular focus on the redemptive disruption of the Holy Spirit, who enters human beings as the one capable of transforming our lives, reflects a 'bodily integration' understanding of bodily autonomy. Bodies 'known' in this way are relationality

[31] Wolfgang Vondey, 'Embodied Gospel: The Materiality of Pentecostal Theology,' in *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion, Volume 8: Pentecostals and the Body*, ed. Michael Wilkinson and Peter Althouse (Boston: Brill, 2017), 105.

[32] Vondey, 'Embodied Gospel,' 109.

[33] Mark Cartledge, *Testimony in the Spirit: Rescripting Ordinary Pentecostal Theology* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 105–29.

dependent on the 'infilling' of the Spirit, who transforms one's way of being, including one's way of being in the body. And the Spirit is shared through physical contact with the worshiping community. Sharing of testimonies forms a core of pentecostal worship practice because 'narrative is central to pentecostal spirituality…. In testimony, then, pentecostals enact an identity by writing themselves into the larger story of God's redemption.'[34] The Pentecostal practice of sharing and responding to testimonies offers an example of redemptive bodily 're-storying', which the above section of this chapter notes as necessary for remaking the self following trauma. For survivors of sexual abuse, the barrier of how those who have been traumatised can redemptively enter into these transformative practices, reshaping their theology at the same time, remains s central concern for this thesis.

Corporal Knowledge of the Theological Academy

The previous section has demonstrated how Pentecostal theological praxis reflects a 'bodily integration' model of autonomy, and the consequences for how its theology is embodied. By contrast, the theological academy holds a 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy. The following section identifies the consequences of the academy's view of the body, how it is transmitted through theological education, and the consequences for construction and reception of academic theology. The contrast between academic and pentecostal corporal knowledge demonstrates the need for the latter as a corrective to the former's limited views.

[34] James K.A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 50, 51.

I use Glancy's description of 'slaveholder habitus' in conversation with Willie James Jennings' analysis of the theological academy's ingrained ideals of the white, self-sufficient male to consider academic theological corporal knowledge. This somatological analysis shows how the corporal knowledge of the theological academy reveals a 'bodily ownership' understanding of bodily autonomy. A 'bodily ownership' view produces as a natural consequence discourses that exclude embodied aspects of faith that rely on redemptive divine intervention from beyond the self. The academy therefore struggles to integrate the practice of worship and bodily experiences of redemption into theological reflection and knowledge production. In the next section I connect the theological academy's corporal knowledge with findings from trauma research, demonstrating how a disconnect between affective, embodied narrative 're-storying' reliant on divine intervention might actually impede a redemptive vision for survivors of sexual abuse.

Glancy uses the term 'slaveholder habitus' to refer to the ways of corporeal knowing that 'slaveholding culture' imprinted on early Christian bodies, incorporating present-day examples of bodies experiencing poverty, as well as analysing texts from freed American slaves.[35] She draws from Pierre Bourdieu's definition of 'habitus' as practice-based embodied knowledge to develop her own appropriation of the concept. She brings Bourdieu into conversation with feminist theorists to address social change and the durable, yet changeable, nature of how one inhabits a body.[36] The embodied knowledge of slaveholding not only shaped social interactions between those with enslaved bodies and those who possessed the authority of ownership. It also indelibly

[35] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 48–80.
[36] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 50–3.

marked the corporal knowledge of early non-slave owning Christians to accept a 'habitus' that allowed slave ownership to continue.

Societal corporal knowledge shaped the acceptance of how enslaved and freed bodies were to be treated—particularly free and enslaved women's bodies. Enslaved women's bodies were 'perceived as sexually available,' while elite freedwomen possessed 'sexually sacrosanct' bodies.[37] In terms of conceptions of bodily autonomy, the latter could be understood to resonate more with a contemporary feminist 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy, feeling a greater sense of bodily control and ownership than their enslaved counterparts.[38] I read the remainder of the authors in this section with Glancy's framework of corporal knowledge in mind. While each addresses embodiment and knowledge in one form or another, my presentation of their work within this particular frame of embodied knowing represents my own somatological evaluation.

Willie James Jennings notes that Western (particularly American) academic theological education reflects a distorted Christian imagination.[39] The goal of theological education is formation, but the way students are formed has become distorted. The distortion arises from the Western theological academy's roots in the image of the 'white self-sufficient man, his self-sufficiency defined by possession, control, and mastery.'[40] Somatologically, I am interested in how the ideals of possession, control, and mastery form academic theological 'corporal knowledge'. If

[37] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 62.

[38] Of course, projecting contemporary understandings of feminism and autonomy to the ancient world would be anachronistic. However, the following section makes connections between a bodily sense of social hierarchy and one's articulation of theology.

[39] For a fuller explanation, see Jennings' *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

[40] Willie James Jennings, *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020), 6. Jennings notes his argument's indebtedness to the theological work of the women of the Mud Flower Collective, including womanist, mujerista, and white feminist theologians. See 159n1.

Jennings is correct, the bodily discourses of those who have established the theological academy, and thereby set the standards of what constitutes academic education—who have historically belonged to the racial and social elite—have distorted Christians' ability to 'see' and integrate other corporal knowledges. And this distortion has consequences for how the Christian academy is (un)able to imagine redemption from sexual bodily violation (and, by extension, bodily redemption more broadly).

Demographic shifts have forced a recognition of the academic crisis: 'all those formerly designated as minority bodies in white majority spaces—are becoming the majority body in the theological academy.'[41] However, the change in racial and cultural backgrounds of students and faculty has not resulted in the incorporation of differing corporal knowledges into pedagogic approaches. White self-sufficient masculinity instead shapes other ways of knowing into itself: 'it is a way of organising life with ideas and forming a persona that distorts identity and strangles the possibilities of dense life together…. that forms cognitive and affective structures able to seduce people into its habituation and its meaning making.'[42] The entire framework for theological education understands knowledge as the possession of intellectual information that is meted out in fragments, as commodities.[43] The bodies that possess knowledge remain separate, giving and receiving in transactional ways.

Those who enter the academy with differing corporal knowledges face a dilemma. In order to gain the credibility and respectability required to challenge the embodied ideals of white self-sufficient mastery, their critique must use academic approaches that are formed from and

[41] Jennings, *After Whiteness*, 6.
[42] Jennings, *After Whiteness*, 9.
[43] Jennings, *After Whiteness*, 17, 41–44.

inscribe those ideals. Audre Lorde cites the difficulty of challenging the academy's ideals using the academy's methods, particularly for women academics of colour. She concludes, 'The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.'[44] In terms of academic corporal knowledge, the corrective to colonising ideals requires the integration of other bodily knowledges. These excluded bodily knowledges make space for mutual relation rather than self-possession, are open to integrating intimate otherness without attempting to master the other, and trust the other enough to release bodily control.

The above section has introduced the idea that Pentecostal theology presents such an alternative corporal knowledge, through its theology of transformative encounter with the divine Other, known intimately as Christ, through the Holy Spirit. The following section demonstrates how academic corporal knowledge creates a corresponding 'corporal ignorance' that has placed Pentecostal embodied ways of knowing outside its domain. As a result, Pentecostal scholars have been forced to accommodate their corporeal theology into the academy's contradictory framework in order to be recognised as a 'theological tradition'. The result has been the near impossibility to articulate the aspects of Pentecostal theology that both mark it *as* a tradition, and could at the same time challenge the academy's normative assumptions of white self-sufficiency. By making this clash of corporal knowledges explicit, I hope to demonstrate how integrating Pentecostal corporal knowledge in academic theology can offer a fuller vision of embodied redemption for survivors of sexual abuse.

[44] Audre Lorde, 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House,' in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984), 106–9.

Part II: Pentecostal and Academic Corporal Ignorance of Bodily Autonomy

The corollary to corporal knowledge is corporal ignorance. Just as bodies form social memories that shape personal and collective narratives, 'The authorization of a particular pattern of embodied memory serves to marginalise or exclude other patterns of embodied memory.'[45] For example, if a community has formed a collective social memory around experiences of victory, 'individuals are likely to find it difficult to make sense of experiences of physical weakness or vulnerability in terms of the community's controlling narrative…'[46] As bodies are habituated to certain ways of knowing, those habituations inscribe patterns of corporeal ignorance to other embodied knowledges. Such elisions in bodily knowing result in 'culpable ignorance,'[47] which hold responsibility for the communal narratives they exclude.

This section demonstrates first how the theological academy's controlling narrative of bodily self-possession, mastery, and control excludes Pentecostal embodied knowledge of transformative divine encounter. Rejections of Pentecostal theological approaches that challenge the 'slaveholding habitus' of the white self-sufficient male further inscribe a corporal knowledge that fails to integrate experiences of bodily redemption through divine encounter. As such, academic theological knowledge production is impeded from presenting a vision of bodily redemption through transformative, yielding encounter with the Holy Spirit. And when Pentecostals attempt to conform their theological methods to those of the academy in order to

[45] Jennifer Glancy, 'Corporal Ignorance: The Refusal of Embodied Memory,' in *The Bible and Feminism: Remapping the Field*, ed. Yvonne Sherwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 394.

[46] Glancy, 'Corporal Ignorance,' 394.

[47] Glancy, 'Corporal Ignorance,' 391.

gain credibility within that framework, they sacrifice the very elements of their own corporal knowledge that can correct this omission.

The second part shows the limitations of Pentecostals' own controlling narrative of sexual holiness in regards to envisioning bodily redemption—for all, using sexual abuse survivors as a lens. By overfocusing on heteronomy in the human/divine relationship, Pentecostals can act from a place of passivity when theologising about human sexuality, with disastrous consequences for those who have experienced sexual bodily violation. I then incorporate recent feminist Pentecostal scholarship regarding purity culture and its effects on sexual abuse survivors. Their reconstructed understandings of how forgiveness is conceived in Pentecostal spaces offer a corrective for envisioning redemption.

Academic Corporal Ignorance and the Marginalization of Pentecostal Bodies

Historically Pentecostalism has not been understood as a theological tradition. Scholarship on Pentecostalism has presented it as 'a primitivistic and popularistic revivalist movement' with 'a robust spirituality,' not capable of 'the intellectual ability and academic sophistication required to produce an acceptable enduring theology.'[48] The Pentecostal movement has been marked by the paradox of anti-intellectualism on the one hand, and an explosion of academic Pentecostal scholarship on the other.[49] The first generation of Pentecostal scholars to pursue academic degrees in theology did not emerge until the 1960s and 1970s, over a half century after the birth

[48] Archer, 'Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology,' 301–2.
[49] Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostalism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 133–53.

of the movement.[50] When they did, they were faced with theological frameworks dictated by the assumptions of the Western academy. As the above section has demonstrated, these frameworks assume a corporal knowledge that operates in opposition to Pentecostal ways of embodied knowing.

There may be many reasons for the exclusion of Pentecostal bodily narratives in theological reflection and construction. My somatology focuses on how the differences in the understanding of bodily autonomy between the theological academy and pentecostals have contributed to this exclusion. I argue that the theological academy has understood the body as private property, for which the body's owner is responsible for making decisions and changes from within (either within the individual person's body or the body of the human community). From an academic 'bodily ownership' perspective, offering emotional worship to a transcendent Other who is experienced as the one who redeems from beyond the self—a key aspect of pentecostal spirituality and theology—makes no sense. 'Worship' would be understood as a separate category that the academic—read as the possessor, master, and controller of knowledge—struggles to incorporate (or rejects) in theological construction. Of course, the rift between embodied worship and theology is not only a problem that excludes Pentecostal discourse. Disembodying worship from theologising has had demonstrated social and cultural effects on, for example, African American Christianity more broadly.[51] However, the emphasis Pentecostals in particular place on divine transformative encounter in theological reflection and

[50] Wolfgang Vondey and Martin William Mittelstadt, 'Introduction,' in *The Theology of Amos Yong and the New Face of Pentecostal Scholarship*, ed. Wolfgang Vondey and Martin William Mittelstadt (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 4–5.

[51] See Lisa Allen, *A Womanist Theology of Worship: Liturgy, Justice, and Communal Righteousness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2021).

construction highlights the issue of detaching worship from academic theology and offers a corrective that speaks to the Christian tradition ecumenically.

A corporal ignorance that excludes embodied knowledge of divine encounter and transformation—integrated into one's 'body story', narrated in testimony, and resulting in greater capacity for intimate human relationship—is a culpable ignorance. In terms of sexual abuse survivors, a theology rooted in self-sufficient mastery excludes the narratives of those who testify to divine healing and transformation. Survivors who have experienced healing and restoration through divine intimate encounter 'understand from the inside that the pain of surrender of self is not fatal, and that the presence of God within surrender is transformative, loving and equalising.'[52] Those who have experienced sexual bodily violation, and then the 'first fruits' of bodily redemption through loving encounter with Christ, hold a particular corporal knowledge. It is this shaping narrative and experiential transformation that can answer a call for 'communities of justice and equality and "kenotic" surrender that are completely open to God,'[53] as the one who humanity depends on for transformational change. This trust and surrender cannot be sustained by a 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy. Such a model insists that healing arises from within the human community, with God as an observer or witness rather than the source and means of healing. That framework excludes testimonies of healing encounter through the infilling, transformative presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit, silencing the embodied knowledge of redemption they bring to the theological task.

[52] Susan Shooter, *How Survivors of Abuse Relate to God: The Authentic Spirituality of the Annihilated Soul* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 171.

[53] Shooter, *How Survivors of Abuse*, 172.

A further culpability of academic corporal ignorance of Pentecostalism concerns *whose* bodies have been excluded in its development and expression. Corporal knowledge informs our frameworks for naming reality and the nature of our embodied practices.[54] The bodies of the socially elite hold a protected status; they are accustomed to a 'somatic self-determination'[55] that informs their systems of meaning-making. Within the theological academy, the ingrained corporal knowledge of white self-sufficient mastery forces a framework that centres human embodied control. Pentecostal corporal knowledge, by contrast, arose from those whose bodies are differently socially located. As such, they possess a different understanding of embodiment, and therefore a different way for framing theological reality.

Contemporary research stresses Pentecostalism's roots in African American spirituality, which itself retains elements of African religious traditions.[56] The somatological roots of Pentecostalism from within African spirituality inform the later development of Pentecostalism as a theological tradition. The particular African American embodied historical experience means that Pentecostal worship (and therefore theology) originated outside 'the pragmatism, utilitarianism, and individualism' that characterise 'the demands and expectations of the cultural and private values of the modern person.'[57] Within the North American experience of chattel

[54] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 53.

[55] Ryan Schellenberg, *Abject Joy: Paul, Prison, and the Art of Making Do* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021), 174. Schellenberg uses the phrase to refer to the Roman system of slavery and the embodied knowledge of elites in the first century, but I find the phrase is an apt self-description of contemporary academic elites as well.

[56] Estrelda Y. Alexander, *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2011), Chapter Two.

[57] Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 118.

slavery, because black bodies were not considered persons, the (white, ruling) society excluded them from such a self-conception.

Somatologically, African Americans' bodily experiences of slavery meant that they did not hold a white Western conception of the body as one's own private property: 'African men, women and children were ruled by their captors, and even owned as property, subject to be sold at the owner's will.'[58] Even after the abolition of slavery, black people were still subjected to violence by whites, and 'Black women were still treated as property'[59] by white women in domestic work. The category of 'whiteness' itself can be understood as a form of property. Being white 'conferred tangible and economically valuable benefits and was jealously guarded as a valuable possession…. Whiteness—the right to white identity as embraced by the law—is property if by property one means all of a person's legal rights.'[60] Kelly Brown Douglas teases out the theological implications of white property rights for black bodies.

Whiteness and property share the same fundamental 'right to exclude' others.[61] As 'cherished property,' white exclusion underlies the assumed right to claim land, occupy and possess space.[62] The now 'white space…travels with white people,'[63] and the space occupied by white people is above all protected from intrusion. Theologically, whiteness attaches to the religious narrative of American Anglo-Saxon exceptionalism, particularly Protestant

[58] Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 196.

[59] Grant, *White Women's Christ*, 198.

[60] Cheryl I. Harris, 'Whiteness as Property,' *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993): 1726.

[61] Kelly Brown Douglas, *Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 41.

[62] For a full description of Douglas' concept of 'whiteness as cherished property,' see *Stand Your Ground*, 40–4.

[63] Douglas, *Stand Your Ground*, 42.

evangelicalism. In terms of claiming white space into that narrative, whiteness becomes 'sacred property…the key to salvation.'[64] Nonwhiteness, on the other hand, becomes opposed to God: 'anything that cannot pass the test of whiteness cannot get to God. In this regard, nonwhiteness…is an offense against God.'[65] Somatologically, whiteness is a defining characteristic of white bodies, which know themselves as cherished property protected from any unwanted intrusion. And that corporal knowledge of the freedom to exclude any intrusion extends to all areas of life.[66]

Relevant to this discussion, academic corporal knowledge as knowledge of white self-sufficiency by its nature excludes theological narratives that would challenge its assumptions of bodily self-possession, mastery and control. White self-sufficient mastery sets the standard for what counts as academic knowledge. As a result, theological narratives that contradict the right to exclude unwanted interference of its bodily borders would not be recognised as legitimate. Theologically, academic corporal knowledge rooted in white self-sufficient mastery cannot imagine itself as being in need of bodily redemption, beyond a redemption it guides and controls from within itself. An outside agent could, at best, offer a mirror to help a person see which parts of the self need greater awareness in order to become actualised. With that (indirect, distanced) assistance, the self can then decide to make its own changes. Taken to its ultimate end, the concept of bodily resurrection—a body redeemed beyond all human power by a transcendent entity—becomes literally unimaginable. Resurrection becomes a metaphor enclosed within the

[64] Douglas, *Stand Your Ground*, 42.
[65] Douglas, *Stand Your Ground*, 42.
[66] For a discussion of the somatic implications of living in a 'violable' vs. 'inviolable' body in 1st century Christian understanding, see Schellenberg, *Abject Joy*, Chapter Two.

bounds of present human life. Placing hope in a concrete divine promise beyond the bounds of individual bodily control then appears fanciful, even irresponsible.

By contrast, those who had experienced chattel slavery themselves, as well as their descendants, would have had a tangible, experiential understanding of what it meant to have a body that knew and could be 'bought back' from slavery. In this regard, the subjects of the North American slave trade shared a corporeal and theological kinship with members of the earliest church:

> '[I]n the first century many Christians were literally, and not metaphorically, "bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:20), namely, on the slave market. Occasionally it was possible for a slave to accrue enough money to buy him or herself out of slavery. Redemption, then, is about being freed from bondage, oppression, or mastery.'[67]

The North Atlantic slave trade and Roman slavery were not identical. In the antebellum 'slaveocracy,' enslaved women particularly were at the disposal (including sexual availability) of their white masters, with no legal means for manumission.[68] Yet both share an understanding of redemption that would have been experienced in a concrete, embodied way. In terms of corporal knowledge, a body that 'knew' ownership by another human being—or who grew up in a cultural context that held that history—would have a particular understanding of bodily autonomy. And not one the presumed an individually owned, controlled, separate body.

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[67] Timothy J. Gorringe, 'Atonement,' in *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Theology*, 2nd ed, ed. William T. Cavanaugh and Peter Manley Scott (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2019), 405.

[68] Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk*, 20th Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: 2013), Chapter Two; Grant, *White Women's Christ*, 196; Mitzi J. Smith, '"He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word": A Womanist Perspective of Crucifixion, Sexual Violence, and Sacralised Silence,' in *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse*, ed. Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs, and Rocío Figueroa (London, SCM Press, 2021), 59.

The New Testament records Jesus' stated purpose as being 'a ransom for many.'[69] For those who experienced life in bodies that had been bought and sold to others, being ransomed would have had a concrete, physical dimension. Theological discussions concerned with technical details, such as who would receive the debt paid, would be mostly irrelevant to one's phenomenological experience of living in a body that had been ransomed from slavery.[70] A ransom view of atonement that focuses on the sphere of commercial exchange misses this corporeal component as well.[71] An embodied understanding of redemption as being purchased out of slavery is much different than abstract exchange models of contemporary atonement theology. The relational understanding of a body that depended on others for freedom cannot be represented by a conception of a body operated and controlled by an individual will.

White western theoretical views of atonement as redemption, seen as a cosmic exchange between Son and Father abstracted from the lived, bodily experience of bondage, would have been alien to the African American experience of slavery. The corporal knowledge of the theological academy creates a corporal ignorance in regard to those whose bodies do not understand themselves as possessing (or assuming that they ought to possess) ultimate personal mastery. Both the perspective of 'traditional' models of atonement and feminist revisions that place the redemptive emphasis within the human community reflect a corporal knowledge of human personal bodily control. Atonement as embodied redemption, with the empowering,

[69] Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45.

[70] See, for example, Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement*, trans. A.G. Hebert (London: SPCK, 1970), 43–4.

[71] See Mark D. Baker and Joel B. Green, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 36.

hopeful promise of ultimate bodily freedom, contradicts the academy's theological narratives of human embodied mastery and control.

By contrast, embodied Pentecostal worship practices demonstrate how the body is understood and experienced outside a white Western framework of self-possession and control. The history of Pentecostal practice as developed from African spirituality reflects this embodied knowledge: 'The Spirit *possessed the physical being of the slaves*, and *as a consequence* they shouted [and] spoke of great visions of God, heaven, or freedom…'[72] The surrender to bodily possession by the Spirit, who entered the body from outside the self, was not experienced as a violation of one's bodily autonomy. Instead, 'the presence of God's Spirit was perceived as a liberating occurrence of freedom…nurturing a vision of ultimate freedom in the future.'[73] Slaves' worship services were marked by unconstrained physical responses, in contrast to the forced labor of their 'work' time: 'African American worship provided a refuge from the harsh realities of everyday life and offered a sense of empowerment and freedom. Here, the slaves were free to engage God in the fullness of their being and affections.'[74] Freedom came paradoxically from surrender to the liberating Spirit, who entered and freed one's physical body.

Within the United States, black spirituality combined with 'interracial and complex religious impulses of European, Hispanic, and other cultures,' so that 'a Pentecostal liturgy did

[72] George C.L. Cummings, 'The Slave Narratives as a Source of Black Theological Discourse: The Spirit and Eschatology,' in *Cut Loose Your Stammering Tongue: Black Theology in the Slave Narrative* (33–46), ed. D.N. Hopkins and George C.L. Cummings, 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2003), 34; quoted in Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 121. Emphasis mine.

[73] Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 121.

[74] Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 122.

not develop within the medieval European context.'[75] An embodied liturgy expressed in testimony, song, movement, and ecstatic surrender informs a theology that contradicts assumptions of bodies as protected property subject to individual willed control. Instead, bodies are released into freedom and movement in the Spirit, toward the end of transformed life.[76] Past scholarship on the Azusa Street Revival downplayed or even eliminated the history of African leadership and spirituality in the development of Pentecostalism in the North American context. Yet it was specifically integrated racial participation in embodied practices that reflected African spirituality, under African American leadership (therefore seen as 'primitive' by white religious authorities), that fueled early dismissal of the Pentecostal movement. [77]

The early movement was also interracial, drawing whites into worship and community alongside blacks. While Pentecostalism draws those from all social and economic backgrounds, historical studies of the movement emphasised the draw for those from poorer backgrounds, under the rubric of 'deprivation theory.'[78] Poor and working class whites sell their bodies for labour; they also suffer the somatic consequences of poverty rather than working for more 'respectable' professions. As a result, they too experience their bodies within a dependent framework of relationships, rather than the self-sufficient presumption of whites living experiencing the world in middle- and upper-class bodies.[79] In this regard, the propertied aspects

[75] Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 119–20. While Vondey's emphasis in this section is on the significance of African origins for liturgical development, I am interested in the bodily experiences of African American Christians, particularly the collective historical experience of slavery and its implications for bodily autonomy in theology.

[76] Joel D. Daniels, 'From Normative to Nothing: A Pentecostal Theological Conception of the Body,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 43, no. 2 [2021]: 243–4.

[77] Alexander, *Black Fire*, Introduction.

[78] Vondey, *Pentecostalism: A Guide*, 90. For a discussion on the problems with deprivation theory, see ibid, Chapter Five.

[79] Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge*, 51.

of 'whiteness' that insulate middle- and upper-class whites are tempered for poor and working-class whites.

Whites in such a position would be expected to use what little racial 'bodily property rights' they possessed, by means of enforcing black/white racial hierarchies. However, by worshipping alongside black Christians and accepting black leadership, whites who joined the early Pentecostal movement challenged racial assumptions in ways that brought them public shame and ridicule.[80] The reaction of non-Pentecostal African American churches to the early movement is also notable. Following the Azusa Street Revival, middle-class Black Christian denominations intentionally distanced themselves from Black Pentecostal churches' emotive displays of worship.[81] Somatologically, these churches sought respectability by adopting the 'corporal knowledge' of White Christianity, which restrains itself from emotional displays of worship. By disrupting the expectations of white bodily mastery, self-possession, and control, those of different racial backgrounds who worshipped together in the early Pentecostal movement challenged a 'bodily ownership' conception of autonomy. They demonstrated a relational bodily autonomy of mutual dependence across racial lines, in bodies given over to 'non-white' ecstatic bodily behaviours. As such, they garnered ridicule and dismissal from mainstream culture and institutions. The corporal knowledge expressed in pentecostal worship practices empowered these disruptive actions because it is rooted in a particular experiential embodied knowledge of encounter.

[80] See 'Weird Babel of Tongues,' *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1906.
[81] Alexander, *Black Fire*, 41–2.

Pentecostals experience ongoing transformative encounters with the Holy Spirit, who creates tangible, concrete changes to the self. Spiritual encounter is framed within a particular reading of the gospel narrative, centering on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. By its nature, the communal narrative of embodying Pentecost involves releasing individual bodily control, sharing bodily intimacy with Christ through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit empowers believers by entering and 'inhabiting' human beings as the Divine Other. Corporal knowledge of the reception of Spirit and Her gifts, manifested bodily in worship practices, offered to others through what is received, and shared outwardly through mission and ministry, all align with a view of bodily autonomy that relies on Divine outpouring. The 'Spirit of Jesus' (Acts 16:7) transforms human beings toward the particular redemptive ends of God narrated in the gospel story as embodied through testimonies,[82] sung, celebrated and encouraged toward further transformative encounter in emotive worship.

A bodily way of knowing redemption through yielding one's own agency in love and trust to the Holy Spirit cannot be supported by a 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy, in which the individual is responsible for maintaining control of her bodily property and resisting outside agential influence. As such, pentecostals' corporal knowledge of transformation and integration into Christ challenges the white Western assumptions of academic theology. Pentecostal corporal knowledge through intimate encounter has therefore been dismissed by the larger academy as emotional manipulation.[83] The academy's skepticism of the pentecostal movement's ability to

[82] Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*, 50–1.

[83] For example, Martyn Percy, 'Sweet Rapture: Subliminal Eroticism in Contemporary Charismatic Worship,' *Theology & Spirituality* 3, no. 6 (1997): 71–106.

participate in academic theological knowledge production is linked to a corporal knowledge in which possession, mastery, and control are assumed to be inherent to knowing.

Pentecostals and charismatics 'know' bodily redemption through these transforming encounters with the Holy Spirit. But it is exactly this disconnect from corporal knowledge of surrender that explains the body's absence in academic theological understandings of atonement. M. Shawn Copeland notes, 'Since the radical and expedient subjugation of a people to demonised difference in the fifteenth century, all human bodies have been caught up in a near totalising web of body commerce, body exchange, body value.'[84] The theological academy's idealization of possessing, mastering, owned and owning bodies reflect this 'ownership' understanding of human beings—even being 'self-possessed' reflects a notion of bodily possession. In the case of the academy, the owner becomes one's own will. By contrast, Pentecostals' corporal knowledge of dependency on God's Spirit for empowerment challenges these ideologies of oppression and domination. Emotive embodied displays of worship originating from African spiritual contexts challenge the (white) cultural assumptions of owned, controlled bodies oriented toward possession. Pentecostals surrender their bodily mastery, possession and control to Christ's Spirit in worship. Through these actions, they demonstrate an understanding of relational bodily autonomy, acknowledging their dependence on God's intervention for their existence and thriving. Because God as creator transcends any human structures of commercial exchange—particularly relationships based on market-oriented

[84] M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2023), xi.

exchange, most striking in slavery—relational bodily dependence on God marks an integration into the divine life, which transcends these notions.

Yet Pentecostal corporal knowledge still suffers from a 'slaveholder habitus' on the opposite side of the autonomy/heteronomy spectrum. If the body is understood as *dominated by* the Spirit in response to submission, a harmful binary is maintained. The logic of possession, mastery and control remains; yet now the master is God through the Spirit, with the human self as subjugated to the divine. Such an understanding cannot integrate positive aspects of the self in relation with the Spirit. The following section details how pentecostal corporal ignorance associated with the cross and sexual violation reflects such a misunderstanding.

Pentecostal Corporal Ignorance and the Marginalization of Sexually Violated Bodies

On the one hand, Pentecostal theology's corporal knowledge of surrender and ecstatic release of control offers a needed challenge to academic theology's focus on autonomous control in the form of white self-sufficient mastery. On the other, those same elements hold their own distortions, which have created barriers for those who have experienced sexual violence. The recognition that outside influences affect human bodies, including the potentials both for damage and positive transformation, undergirds Pentecostal theologising about the body.[85] The previous chapter of this thesis demonstrates how the 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy envisions *all* exterior sources of intervention and restoration as potential threats to bodily

[85] Michael Wilkinson, 'Pentecostalism, the Body, and Embodiment,' in *Pentecostals and the Body: Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion vol. 8*, ed. Michael Wilkinson and Peter Althouse (Leiden: Brill Academic: 2017), 17–35.

agency. While Pentecostal spiritual intimacy makes space for the positive intercession of the Holy Spirit, it also acknowledges other intervening forces that *are* threatening and violating. Yet a focus on sexual purity set in opposition to spiritual/bodily pollution makes it difficult, if not impossible, to envision a healing, integrated view of sexual intimacy following bodily violation.

Pentecostal theology holds its own distortions in regard to corporeal possession, mastery, and control. I suggest that a 'slaveholder habitus' also informs Pentecostal theology. But rather than being expressed in terms of human autonomy, an overemphasis on heteronomy in the human/divine relationship, to the extent that the Holy Spirit dominates and negates human embodiment, is a danger. A view of bodily autonomy that overemphasises the 'uncleanness' of human embodiment per se, and human passivity in the process of being made new through the Holy Spirit, can fail to honour human creatureliness in the process of redemption. Pentecostals can envision heteronomous submission to divine (and human) authority in ways that negate the biblical image of humans as 'co-workers in God's service' (1 Cor 3:9, NIV). The ethical tension between autonomy and heteronomy in the human/divine relationship demonstrates the need for a critically appropriated feminist corrective.[86] This need is particularly applicable to sexual embodiment, when sexuality is viewed as possessing an inherent danger of 'impurity' and 'uncleanliness'. Human responsibility understood in this way means protecting the body free from impurity (read as improper sexual acts).

Within Pentecostalism, the infilling and inhabitation of the Holy Spirit is understood to 'inspire "cleaner sexuality" in the human body,' while 'negative sexual acts such as gay/lesbian

[86] Levi, 'Polyvocal Body.'

relationships open the body for the intrusion of evil and demonic spirits.'[87] Pentecostals interpret biblical language referring to the body as a 'temple' and a 'vessel' within this framework of sexual purity. Holiness requires a pure body in order to be occupied by the Holy Spirit.[88] The language of 'vessel' is read to mean 'the body is a "container" into which God pours his Spirit.'[89] In terms of sexuality, the body is perceived as a contaminated object that must be made and kept pure in order for the Holy Spirit to manifest within it, and to protect the body from demonic invasion.

From this viewpoint, the logic of bodily possession, mastery, and control is merely flipped. Mastery belongs to God through the Holy Spirit, and human sexuality is in need of divine possession and control. Absent from this conception of the body is a relational dimension to human sexual intimacy. In fact, because of the communal understanding of bodily holiness in worship, Pentecostals actively work to legally restrict and regulate sexual actions.[90] An activity-based rather than relationship-based view of human sexuality offers no space for a healed vision of sexual bodily redemption for survivors of sexual abuse. 'Sin' is associated with violation of (particularly women's) sexual purity, and must be repented of. Rape and sex are considered the same, in terms of resolution: one must repent of the sin in order to be purified. There is no space to acknowledge the phenomenological damage of rape to the human person, accountability for the perpetrator, or to envision what a healthy, mutually redemptive and holy sexual relationship

[87] J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, 'Foreword: Of the Human Body and Spirit/Spirits in the Study of Pentecostal Religion,' in *Genders, Sexualities, and Spiritualities in African Pentecostalism: 'Your Body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit*,' ed. Chammah J. Kaunda (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), ix.

[88] Asamoah-Gyadu, 'Foreword,' x.

[89] Asamoah-Gyadu, 'Foreword,' x.

[90] Michael Wilkinson, 'Worship: Embodying the Encounter with God,' in *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, 124–5.

would be like.[91] In terms of atonement as restored relationality between God, self, and other, Pentecostals' legalistic view of sexuality cannot offer a redemptive vision of healed sexuality for survivors of sexual abuse.

Pentecostals' reading of the event of Pentecost can view the human response as overly passive. If bodies are understood per se as polluted 'flesh', in opposition to the 'Spirit,' embodiment itself becomes a sinful barrier to godliness to be surrendered and overcome. Rather than mutual agents with the Spirit in God's transforming work, participants in Pentecost 'appear in their human nature as static receptacles who either accept or reject the divine gift but who (on either side) are not engaged in an existential human struggle with receiving and understanding the outpouring of the Spirit.[92] From a somatological perspective, bodies seen only as sinful 'flesh' are incapable of participating as agents led by the Spirit in redemption. Such a conception of the divine/human relationship upholds a logic of subjugation, rather than divinely guided liberation. This view of passive, polluted 'flesh' in a binary relationship with spiritual purity has concrete effects on envisioning redeemed sexuality following bodily violation, as follows.

A pentecostal concern for the holiness of the body is manifested, in part, as a constricted understanding of the sexual body due to concerns regarding the 'openness' of the body to destructive forces (in this case, in regard to sexual holiness). Viewing the practice of human sexuality as alignment to legalistic standards of purity, rather than fulfilling a divine invitation to

[91] Andy Smith, 'Born Again, Free From Sin? Sexual Violence in Evangelical Communities,' in *Violence Against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook*, ed. Carol J. Adams and Marie M. Fortune (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1995), 345.

[92] Wolfgang Vondey, *The Scandal of Pentecost: A Theology of the Public Church* (London: Bloomsbury, 2024), 11.

mutual relational intimacy, fails to make space for bodies that have been wounded sexually to know relational sexual redemption.

However, Pentecostalism's controlling narrative of sexual holiness has specific implications for how Christ's atoning work is understood. Namely, constructing a binary between Christ's holiness and human sexuality creates a culpable corporal ignorance around what happened to Jesus' body in the event of the crucifixion, and what he redeems through his body. Excluding human sexuality from Jesus' experience of humanity means that Jesus' experiences of stripping, mocking, and sexual humiliation cannot be recognised as experiences of sexual abuse.[93] This elision of bodily sexual abuse, and its subsequent redemption through Christ's resurrection, excludes survivors' narratives that relate Jesus' experiences of violation to their own sexual violation. Somatologically, narratives of sexual are not free to be integrated into the body toward a redemptive, transformed end. A corporal ignorance of Jesus as a fully human being, inclusive of his sexuality, erases his experiences of sexual violation and bodily redemption from being part of a theological narrative. This elision erases survivors' narratives of their own sexual abuse by relating to Jesus as a fellow victim of that specific form of abuse, and integrating their own being—including their sexual relationality—into redemption through his body.

Jesus' body was violated physically, including sexually.[94] Not only that, his genealogy listed in Matthew includes women who experienced sexual use and abuse, a striking inclusion.[95] In turn, his body was redeemed in all ways—including bodily redemption from the sexual abuse he

[93] Glancy, 'Corporal Ignorance,' 400; Reaves, Tombs and Figueroa, *When Did We See You Naked?*; Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse*.

[94] Glancy, 'Corporal Ignorance,' 400; Reaves, Tombs and Figueroa, *When Did We See You Naked?*; Trainor, *The Body of Jesus and Sexual Abuse*.

[95] Pamela F. Engelbert, 'How Jesus Communicates #Metoo: A Perspective on Intergenerational Trauma and Healing in the Atonement,' *Spiritus* 6, no. 2 (2021): 241–61.

experienced during his crucifixion. Jesus heals and elevates all of human experience through taking it into himself in death, and in the Spirit's power in his resurrection. Yet a false binary between holiness and sexuality has created a culpable silencing and ignorance around the sexual abuse he experienced. Naming what Jesus experienced explicitly *as* sexual abuse is an act of prophetic witness. It allows space for understanding Jesus' full humanity to include his sexuality, and for sanctification and holiness to include sexual relationality. Naming the reality of Jesus' sexual abuse speaks life to the sexually violated body, holding the promise of bodily redemption that does not carve sexuality out of its centre. When Christians envision sexuality within a framework of correct ('legal') behavior, rather than its purpose of intimate relational connection with the other, freed from all that traumatises, the ability to envisioned healed, integrated, mutually joyful relational sexuality is quashed.

Feminists working outside pentecostal Christianity have been grappling with the distortions in theologising sexual purity for decades. Now scholars are raising their voices from within the tradition. Until recently, feminist Pentecostal theologians had primarily limited doctrinal construction work to the area of pneumatology. However, the current generation has adopted a 'third article theology' that encompasses broader doctrinal areas. Their work remains faithful to pentecostal convictions while centering questions and concerns raised by feminist theologians working from other Christian traditions.[96] Pentecostal feminists have begun to name the dangers of how sexual purity is conceptualised within Pentecostal and charismatic theology,

[96] Lisa P. Stephenson, 'Feminist Theologies: Deconstructing the Patriarchal Gender Paradigm,' in Vondey, *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, 392–3.

and how limited views of sexuality within theology fail to address sexual violence.[97] The following section demonstrates how Pentecostal feminist theology answers the limitations in corporal knowledge and corporal ignorance detailed above. Namely, how their work incorporates the corporal knowledge of Pentecostal embodied narratives of redemption into academic knowledge production, while challenging the corporal ignorance around pentecostal conceptions of sexual purity.

To accomplish the above, I bring feminist Pentecostal scholarship into conversation with Shelly Rambo's critiques of atonement and redemption. I show how the 'corporal knowledge' that informs Rambo's critiques assumes the 'bodily ownership' model of autonomy reflective of the theological academy. As such, her theology excludes embodied narratives of redemption. I then show how a trauma-informed feminist Pentecostal view presents a 'bodily integration' understanding of bodily autonomy, in terms of human relationality with the Holy Spirit. The application of a feminist perspective from within the pentecostal tradition simultaneously challenges the corporal ignorance of Jesus' sexual relationality, and how he both experienced and redeems sexual violation. Chapter Five then constructs a theology of atonement that uses Pentecostal feminist insights, centering the Spirit at Pentecost in atonement toward the end of healed, redeemed sexuality.

[97] See Kimberly Ervin Alexander, et al., eds., *Sisters, Mothers, Daughters: Pentecostal Perspectives on Violence Against Women* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

Part III: Corporal Knowledge (and Ignorance) of Bodily Redemption: A Pentecostal Feminist Response to Shelly Rambo

Pentecostal feminists draw from the work of scholars who critique and construct theology from the perspective of women's and marginalised people's experiences of oppression.[98] However, their work differs by centering the significance of affective, relational experiences of encounter with the Holy Spirit/Spirit of Christ in their theologising. Somatologically, a feminist approach arising from Pentecostal and charismatic traditions acknowledges a *redemptive relational autonomy* in the human/divine relationship, which feminists who assume an 'ownership' understanding of bodily autonomy do not share. To demonstrate the consequences of an 'ownership' view for envisioning bodily redemption for survivors of sexual abuse, I bring Shelly Rambo's pneumatology into conversation with Pentecostal feminist scholarship. Rambo's rejection of Christian conceptions of salvation and redemption is intertwined with a corporal knowledge of self-sufficient bodily ownership, in regard to the human/divine relationship. As a result, she connects atonement and redemption—central aspects of Christian faith and practice—with a failure to exercise human responsibility. By contrast, Pentecostal feminist scholars envision a relational autonomy with the Holy Spirit that challenges Rambo's rejections of atonement and redemption. Their work forms a basis for the constructive theological task of Chapter Five: a trauma-informed feminist theology of atonement that offers a vision of bodily redemption for survivors of sexually abused bodies (and, by extension, all bodies).

[98] Stephenson, *Feminist Theologies*, 390–96.

Rambo's Rejection of Narratives of Redemption and Atonement

In Chapter Two of this thesis I introduced Shelly Rambo's trauma-informed theology from the perspective of feminist conceptions of bodily autonomy. The chapter demonstrated that Rambo's theology is informed by an 'ownership' conception of bodily autonomy and the resulting limitations of that view for presenting a vision of redemption.[99] The purpose of this section is to detail the disconnect between Rambo's understanding of atonement from a relational view of bodily autonomy in order to demonstrate the benefits of a Pentecostal feminist response. To do so, I begin with a somatological analysis of her understanding of Jesus' body in the biblical narrative of his resurrection as presented in the Gospel of John.

Below I offer a somatic analysis of Rambo's presentation of Jesus' wounds as a ghostly confrontation forcing human responsibility, alongside a close reading of her analysis of the John 21 text. I conclude that her approach to salvation and redemption reveals a 'corporal knowledge' reflective of the academy's (white) self-sufficient narrative of possession, control and mastery in regard to the human/divine relationship. It is therefore limited in its ability to offer a vision for flourishing life in the aftermath of traumatic violation, and even insists that a redemptive vision is irresponsible and should be corrected. By contrast, Pentecostal feminist scholars' conception of the body, representative of a 'bodily integration' view, offers a more holistic theological vision of embodied redemption.

On Rambo's view, Christians are obliged to recognise that the 'language of salvation' exists as 'an extended metaphor,' even though 'it has come to seem like literal theological

[99] See Chapter Two, Part II of this thesis.

truth.'[100] In other words, she detaches theological terms relating to salvation, such as atonement and redemption, from their connection with the embodied, concrete reality of believers. Her own theology arises from the question, 'What would it mean for Christian theologians to stand in the aftermath of redemption, to witness the collapse of our most familiar frameworks of meaning?'[101] Tracking undertow and sensing life become her means to theologically frame what 'life' can mean in the aftermath of the death of trauma.[102]

Rambo acknowledges that trauma resulting from violence reveals the limitations of individual autonomy and highlights our interdependence and interrelationality with other people.[103] But humanity on Rambo's view possesses all that is materially needed within itself, not relying on the otherness of God for its redemption. In fact, she goes so far as to suggest that humanity takes responsibility for offering presence, witness, and redemption to one another, in the absence of God, as experienced by the disciples on Holy Saturday. In the space between Holy Saturday and Jesus' resurrection appearances, Rambo reads a command to 'remain' on the part of the disciples, continuing Jesus' work in his absence. She constructs a narrative of the 'middle Spirit' drawing from the Gospel of John. In Rambo's telling, the spirit that empowers the disciples to remain is received not in Jesus' resurrection, but in the reception of his spirit 'handed over' with his dying breath on the cross. The responsibility for living Jesus' way, then, follows on the disciples' human power with one another.

[100] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 168.
[101] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 169.
[102] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 160–3.
[103] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds: Living in the Afterlife of Trauma* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018), 39–40.

According to Rambo, early Christian communities identified the Holy Spirit with their spiritual experiences out of a need to secure their newly developing identity. Rather than 'the' Holy Spirit, she instead envisions another 'ungraspable' spirit at work in the disciples.[104] To take into account the 'remaining' of trauma in the body, Rambo locates the theological centre of her pneumatology at Holy Saturday. Rambo's rationale for separating the Spirit's work from Jesus' resurrection is rooted in her critique of American redemptive narratives, which can elide the realities of ongoing trauma.[105] She sees Brock and Parker's rejection of atonement as a positive move because it detaches Jesus' suffering from a theology of redemption. However, redemption centred in resurrection rather than the cross still sees death and life in opposition, against the ongoing reality of trauma. [106] For her, Holy Saturday better reflects the death of trauma that continues in life. She finds that 'there was something about the Holy Saturday presence, absence, and witness that intimates a theology of redemption but doesn't necessarily redeem…. instead, that we redeem each other through our witness.'[107] Rather than the Holy Spirit, she suggests, 'perhaps this advocate Spirit is the human spirit who remains to witness the death of God. When God is absent, there needs to be a witness…which is not the presence of God.'[108] In Holy Saturday, she stresses 'the weakness of God and the weakness of Spirit,' but does not want to 'entangle the weakness of the Spirit too tightly with atonement theologies.'[109] Instead, on

[104] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 90.
[105] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 145–8.
[106] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 154–5.
[107] Chelle Stearns and Shelly Rambo, 'The Spirit's Witness: An Interview with Shelly Rambo,' *The Other Journal* 25 (2016): https://theotherjournal.com/2015/08/the-spirits-witness-an-interview-with-shelly-rambo/.
[108] Stearns and Rambo, 'Spirit's Witness.'
[109] Stearns and Rambo, 'Spirit's Witness.'

Rambo's view, humanity takes responsibility for its own redemption, with the Spirit acting as an observing presence to the healing that arises from within.

Rambo's pneumatology sees not 'a general call to "accept the gift of *the* Holy Spirit"'; instead, this other, memory-bearing spirit 'comes through the shape that you provide for it. Your body, your breath.'[110] Rather than comfort, healing, transformation, and new life, the 'ungraspable quality'[111] of this indeterminate spirit confronts the recipients, haunting and confronting them to take responsibility for their own actions as a human community. Such a vision does not offer safety in the body, opening intimate connection. It cannot promise a vision of intimate relationality through the Holy Spirit's transforming presence for those who have experienced violation and need that healing from the divine. Human bodies remain in control of their own redemption, rather than relying on the Spirit's leading and guidance toward a reshaped human self in Christ's image.

From the breath Jesus releases on the cross, she writes, 'the breath of those who remain is altered. The breath powers them, directs them. It powers them to give form to the chaos, to transform it.'[112] The form of life that follows the disciples' witnessing the trauma of Jesus' death is not a redemptive narrative of new life. Rather, with no certainty for what might come ahead, they are able to remain. This is the space from which those who survive trauma are able to live out 'the imperative to love, the call for something to be done.'[113] Instead of seeing Jesus' role as offering atonement, redemption comes from within the sphere of human responsibility.

[110] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 90.
[111] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 90.
[112] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 122.
[113] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 170.

Returning to my own concern—how do those who bear the marks of embodied trauma live into the Christian promise of bodily redemption—Rambo would answer, they do not.

Rambo also reconstructs the significance of Jesus' resurrection appearances in a way that detaches salvation from his material body. On her view, understanding the wounds Jesus presents to the disciples (John 20:20, 27) within a narrative of salvation fortifies privilege on the part of believers; attaching salvation to Jesus' body in this way makes for an exclusivist soteriology. Instead, she sees the presentation of the wounds as a way to implicate the disciples by exposing their own wounds. [114] This apparition that exposes wounds leaves the disciples with a question and a responsibility: will they leave the room and do the necessary work? Their encounter with the wounded Jesus enables their commissioning through modeling a different way.[115] Salvation, then, is not attached to Jesus' physical body. It instead relies on the disciples and their ability to make their own choices. In her view, healing does not come from Jesus' breath, enabling disciples to act through the physical transformation of their bodies. Instead, Jesus shows them something that forces them to go into themselves to remember and act differently. Jesus himself does not hold healing that is shared; he merely makes a way for them to see and live into their own healing.

[114] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 91.
[115] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 93–4.

Rambo's view is helpful in that she names the importance of trauma survivors' individual narratives for shaping the communal narrative. Pertinent to this thesis, this important aspect of her work addresses the 'corporal ignorance' of Christian communities that leads to a failure to integrate narratives of sexual abuse into their theologising.[116] At the same time, Rambo understands this narrative shaping as moving in one direction: from the individual, to change the larger tradition.[117] This understanding of the role of embodied narratives reflects a 'bodily ownership' view of bodily autonomy. Perceived this way, survivors can only shape, not be shaped by, an overarching narrative. Traumatised bodies understood thusly are not mutually relational with the Christian tradition; any moulding of the individual that originates outside the self is viewed as an invasion. Such an immanent theology reflects a corporal knowledge of human self-sufficiency separate from God's intervening otherness.

I also argue that Rambo's reading of the disciples' ability and responsibility to 'remain' after Jesus' death also does not match the narrative presented in the Johannine text. The disciples are unable to remain in any active way until they encounter the Lord again. Their empowerment arises from their concrete, embodied encounter with him. When Mary encounters him outside the tomb, Rambo notes uncertain elements in how Mary sees.[118] However, Mary does not waver on the object of her witness when she follows Jesus' command to

[116] Glancy, *Corporal Ignorance*, 400.
[117] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 165.
[118] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 83–91.

go and tell. She does not witness to witnessing (quote); she proclaims, 'I have seen the Lord!' (Jn 20:18).

Following Mary's proclamation, the other disciples still do not possess the capacity to either confront their own trauma or act for others. Instead they remain locked in a room, in fear of the Jewish leaders (20:19). Rambo fails to account for how the disciples themselves have been traumatised and incapacitated by witnessing Jesus' murder.[119] Their inability to act is representative of those living with the constrictions of embodied trauma. The point at which they gain the ability to act—in Rambo's terms, to remain—only follows Jesus' appearance to them, breathing his Spirit into them (20:19–29). From him they receive the gift of the Spirit in their bodies, not as a passive act of surrender, but as an act of empowering trust. Because they are unable to live Jesus' call while still paralyzed by trauma—literally unable to leave a locked room—they depend on the gift of the Spirit he bestows into their bodies. In both the narratives of the tomb and the locked room, the disciples are presented as overcome and unable to act, until Christ appears and intervenes. And their response in both narratives is to proclaim that he is the one who has appeared to them. Their empowerment comes from their encounter with Jesus in his resurrected body, who, through the gift of the Spirit he breathes into them, are strengthened to proclaim and share.

Rambo cuts off her theology of Holy Saturday from the narrative of the Johannine Pentecost. She disembodies her theology from the Gospel's narrative of what makes the disciples' social engagement—their capacity to remain in his love—possible: their encounter with

[119] David M. Carr, *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* (New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 2014), 156–75; Karen O'Donnell, 'Surviving Trauma at the Foot of the Cross,' in *When Did We See You Naked*, 260–77.

the risen Jesus who gives his Spirit. These theological choices demonstrate an 'ownership' model of bodily autonomy in relationship to Christ. The disciples do not depend on the risen Jesus—either through touch or the breath he imparts—in any material way. Indeed, Rambo's conception of healing in the aftermath of trauma contrasts with a 'posture of dependence on a "higher power," arising instead from 'collective power.'[120] Such an understanding of power in the human/divine relationship reflects a view of bodies that possess and exert power independently of God's initiative. Her theology thereby inscribes self-sufficient bodily mastery, possession and control into divine sphere, cut off from God's interceding grace.

The corporal knowledge of the current theological academy, in which human bodies exercise self-possession, mastery, and control in relationship to God, is evident in Rambo's trauma theology. By placing her entire understanding of redemption within the distorted framework of American narratives of victory and triumphalism, she rejects any understanding of redemption that originates in the divine source and upon which humans depend. However, this move actually serves to buttress white self-sufficient mastery. Like Brock, Brown, and Parker, Rambo's view of the divine/human relationship represents a 'bodily ownership' view of autonomy. Her assumptions about how bodies become empowered reflects the prevailing corporal knowledge of the theological academy, which depends on the possessing, mastering, controlling agency of human bodies. As such, she cannot conceive of a view of bodies that depend on divine intervention for their redemption. Her view of how human communities redeem themselves thereby upholds white narratives of possession, mastery, and control.

[120] Rambo, *Resurrecting Wounds*, 129.

The limitations of Rambo's 'corporal knowledge' are perhaps most strikingly visible in her interaction with Jennings' work, *After Whiteness*. Jennings concludes that shifting the theological academy from a mindset of possession, mastery and control requires humble surrender to Christ. Through 'divine ecstasy,' Jennings challenges theological educators to be re-formed through God's power, 'into a reconciliation that we do not control…one that aims to re-create us' into God's way of gathering, against white visions of power and control.[121] But Rambo's engagement with Jennings maintains somatic distance between the disciples and Christ that clings to human control. She identifies with Jennings to the extent that 'memory work, if oriented *around* the body of Jesus, can yield new opportunities for communing.[122] But her theological imagination remains in the locked room of John 20. When Jesus appears there, according to Rambo, 'his body insists that they do the difficult memory work.'[123] She 'envision[s] the jockeying of disciples for proximity to the marked body…. a highly fraught room with decisions to be made amongst the disciples about who they are going to be together.'[124] But she notices Jennings does not linger with her: 'He is in the Pentecost room of Luke-Acts…in which disciple-bodies are electrified…released from the grip of whiteness.'[125] The difference in Rambo's and Jennings' understanding of Christ's role in the recrafting of our theological imagination exemplifies the stultifying effects of Rambo's somatic imagination, to the point that she negates and opposes Jennings' vision of bodies freed from whiteness. Here is how.

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[121] Jennings, *After Whiteness*, 151, 152.

[122] Shelly Rambo, 'Response to Willie James Jennings' "After Whiteness"', *Modern Theology* 37 no 4 (2021): 1002. Emphasis mine.

[123] Rambo, 'Response,' 1003.

[124] Rambo, 'Response,' 1003.

[125] Rambo, 'Response,' 1003.

Rambo can only imagine bodies separated from the touch and intervention of Jesus' physical body and breath, absent remaking through relational yielding to him. She envisions bodies jockeying to get close to Jesus' body in a power play, tasked by this non-touching Jesus with the responsibility of making decisions for themselves. This is not the surrender to, and intimacy with, Christ that Jennings names as necessary for the healing of our theological imagination. Her vision retains the white masculine ideal of bodily self-mastery, limited to the level of human responsibility and decision. These disciples are not empowered by surrender, as in Jennings' vision, which would free them from Rambo's constricted vision which cannot imagine the freeing action of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Her somatic imagination, reflecting the 'ownership' view of bodily autonomy, cannot allow for this release. Against Jennings, her inability to release the whiteness of the theological academy's vision prevents the very work of reshaping she hopes to accomplish.

Conclusion: The Path for a Feminist Pentecostal Somatology of Atonement

This chapter has demonstrated both the promises and limitations of a Pentecostal understanding of the body in relationship, for reimagining academic theological knowledge production. Its somatological analysis contrasted the theological academy's way of embodied knowing with Pentecostal theology's method embodied spirituality and doctrinal formation. Namely, Pentecostals' affectively embodied theology both shapes and is shaped by doctrine, known concretely in believers' bodies through the healing that Jesus enables through the Spirit. At the same time, a constricted binary of 'Spirit' and 'flesh' creates a 'corporal ignorance' in Pentecostal

theologising, preventing survivors of sexual abuse from connecting what happened to their bodies with what happened to his. This binary prevents imagining a redeemed sexual relationality that can speak life to relationally alienated bodies. Having demonstrated the gap between the academy's and Pentecostals' corporal knowledge, I now seek to address it theologically.

This analysis points to my culminating, constructive task of Chapter Five: a view of atonement that draws from the contributions of Pentecostal feminist scholars while expanding their insights into an ecumenical theological offering. Feminists working from within Pentecostal and charismatic traditions hold a unique space for re-envisioning bodily redemption in the wake of sexual abuse. They integrate a Pentecostal understanding of yielding, relational bodies with a critical evaluation of theologies that idolise a sexual purity that harms those who have suffered the embodied effects of sexual abuse. As such, they are able to present a theological basis for envisioning bodily redemption that makes space for the narratives of survivors. I work from this basis to develop a heuristic tool, entitled 'affections of Pentecost'. This approach to atonement connects the Holy Spirit to Christ's redeeming work by integrating pneumatology and soteriology into an understanding of divine reconciliation. A more expansive vision of the theological flow between sanctification, atonement, and bodily redemption through the affections corrects limitations in our understanding of healed, reconciled bodies. This heuristic can be applied beyond Pentecostal and charismatic circles, to offer a vision of atonement that can speak life that encompasses redemption to include sexual relationality—for *all* bodies.

CHAPTER 5

ATONEMENT AS 'AFFECTIONS OF PENTECOST': A PENTECOSTAL FEMINIST CONSTRUCTIVE THEOLOGY

The previous chapters of this thesis have dealt from different somatological perspectives with the question of how a Christian articulation of atonement speaks to the bodily redemption of those who have suffered the traumatic constrictions of sexual violation. This chapter culminates and extends those somatic explorations through a constructive theological vision of atonement. The result is a heuristic tool, which I name *affections of Pentecost*. While I apply *affections of Pentecost* to atonement, this heuristic offers promise to engage other doctrines, with broad ecumenical promise. The goal of applying this heuristic to atonement is not to replace other views, but to recover the role of the Holy Spirit in a robustly Trinitarian and somatological view of the doctrine. This Spirit-Christological approach corrects the marginalization of the Holy Spirit's role in soteriology, while showing how the incarnational reality of Jesus' body—and the consequences of his redeeming body within history for *all* bodies—are integral to God's redemption of all creation, through human participation in divine affections.

Those who suffer from the somatic constrictions of traumatic sexual violation highlight the limitations of a 'crucicentric' atonement theology, in which reconciliation with God is understood to be effected primarily through Jesus' death on the cross. This chapter focuses on two aspects of this limitation and seeks to correct them. First is the limiting aspect of an *ordo salutis* connected with atonement theologies that separate the cross from the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification. The second problem is the barriers that a crucicentric understanding of

atonement presents for envisioning redeemed sexual relationality. This examination shows how re-integrating the Holy Spirit into Christ's work of atonement offers a robustly Trinitarian atonement theology that also redeems a positive Christian vision of intimate sexual relationality.

Throughout the previous chapters I have demonstrated how trauma creates spaces of inaccessibility within the body and mind. Embodied memories of trauma cannot be accessed like non-traumatic memories. They cannot be integrated into one's everyday experiences in a way that we can think and talk about them, reflect on them, and then make decisions regarding them. In other words, while traumatic memories remain inaccessible, those holding them cannot take responsibility for them. As such, those holding embodied traumatic memories cannot respond to the expectations assumed by an *ordo salutis* in which Jesus effects human salvation via the cross ('crucicentric' atonement), the Holy Spirit convicts humans of sin, and humans provide an obedient response initiated by confession of and repentance for sin.[1] Disability theology has demonstrated how those with serious cognitive impairment cannot participate in an *ordo salutis* that requires personal intellectual examination, confession of, and repentance for sin.[2] While embodied trauma is different from intellectual disability, both share the theological problem of the inaccessibility of personal redemption in traditional atonement models. The Holy Spirit's role both within the believing community, and within the individual through the difficult processes of grieving and healing, therefore become key aspects of redemption. A Spirit-Christological

[1] Grace Milton, *Shalom, the Spirit and Pentecostal Conversion: A Practical Theological Study*, Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, vol. 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 87–117.

[2] Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity* (Waco, TX: Baylor Press, 2007), 230–5.

approach centered on affections of Pentecost also demonstrates how communal and individual redemption are innately connected.

What is missing from both 'traditional' and feminist revision accounts of atonement is a link between the difficult process of coming to terms with how traumatic sexual violation has affected sufferers' lives and relationships, the newness of life that Christ offers through union with him, and the role of the Holy Spirit throughout the redemptive process. A feminist Pentecostal constructive approach to atonement as *affections of Pentecost* aims to address these shortcomings. In order to redeem embodied sexual relationality, addressing the 'corporal ignorance' around sexual trauma and positive embodied sexual relationality is also necessary. A somatological Spirit Christology embraces the fullness of embodied relationality, including redeemed sexuality. As a result, this view corrects flesh/Spirit binaries within (and beyond) Pentecostal theologies.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I show the relationship between a 'crucicentric' view of atonement and a legalistic view of sexual relationality that inhibits a theological vision of redeemed embodied sexual intimacy. Second, I show how a somatological, Spirit-Christological vision of atonement fits with recent trauma findings around how bodies respond to sexual violation. The Holy Spirit's role in redeeming ordered time out of chaos, enabled through Christ, is key here. Once this groundwork is established, I show how atonement envisioned as *affections of Pentecost* describes this somatological Spirit Christology within God's redemptive narrative. In the Incarnation, God enters into human history through Jesus' Spirit-anointed body. Jesus' experiences of bodily life, death, resurrection, and ascension mark ongoing developments in divine redemptive work. Pentecost marks the point at which those suffering from trauma

become able to connect their own embodied experiences of violation with Jesus' body, and be healed and redeemed through the same Spirit who healed and redeemed his body.

The Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, makes known the truth and reality of the resurrection of Jesus' body, through communal worship practices that invoke the affections of Pentecost. Worshippers affectively engage in mutual, intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit in practices that open spaces for healing in the body, evoking complex emotional, physical, and spiritual responses. From a trauma-informed perspective, Pentecost can be understood as the ongoing, participatory event through which embodied trauma becomes redemptively available as suffering, then integrated and transformed toward the eschatological end of joyful, redeemed relationality.

The chapter concludes by naming the barriers to accepting atonement conceived as affections of Pentecost, both from within feminist theologies and from within Pentecostal theology. The chapter as a whole demonstrates how this feminist Pentecostal view both highlights the limitations of Pentecostal and feminist theologies of atonement and corrects them. Feminist views based on personal empowerment as acceptance or refusal of agency to address injustice fail to account for affective embodied experiences of surrender in doctrinal development. Pentecostal views that account for the relationship between transformation and doctrinal development envision the affections within too narrow a frame. As such, Pentecostal views struggle to integrate difficult affective responses to trauma within a soteriological framework, although these difficult responses are operational at the event of Pentecost and are key to redemption.

Both feminist and Pentecostal theologies express discomfort with a continuous (rather than binary) relationship between sexual relationality and affective components of embodied faith practice that understand Jesus in an intimate way. However, if atonement is to reconcile the entirety of humanity with God, self, and other, physical intimacy including sexual relationality cannot be excluded from the redemptive vision. A somatic view of atonement as affections of Pentecost reveals how embodied worship practices serve as a 'pattern of transformative affections,'[3] cultivated toward the end of redeemed intimate bodily relationality. This includes the mutually surrendering, healing nature of healthy sexual relationality. Understanding affective union with Christ in its empowering capacities as continuous with, and not in contrast to, sexual union creates space to envision and live out embodied relationships of redeemed sexuality. Constructing a vision of atonement that includes redeemed embodied sexual relationality also requires a theological understanding of 'flesh' that does not negate the goodness of bodily experiences and relationships.

With this chapter I attempt to construct a somatology that links atonement and Pentecost through a Spirit Christology. In this pneumatological vision, the Holy Spirit who redeems Christ's body is the same Spirit poured out on 'all flesh' at Pentecost, redeeming flesh rather than negating it. Pentecost is therefore key both for Christ's redeeming work through his body and our embodied participation in that work through the Spirit. Human healing and transformation comes through affective union with Christ through that same Spirit in embodied practices of Pentecost. In this 'at-one-ment', known bodily through affections of Pentecost, human bodies

[3] Wolfgang Vondey, *The Scandal of Pentecost: A Theology of the Public Church* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023), 109.

become freed to engage in intimate, healing relationships of mutual surrender with others. Survivors of sexual abuse are able to connect with Jesus as the one who died in body and Spirit following his own sexual violation. The Spirit enables them to engage in his resurrection through the resurrection of embodied life known through intimate encounter with him. They thereby become healed and freed to engage in intimate bodily relationship with another. This understanding of atonement presents an embodied vision in which the present experience of resurrection become continuous with God's eternal promise of our resurrected bodies.

Part I: Consequences of 'Crucicentric' Atonement for Imagining Redeemed Sexual Relationality

This section explores the limitations of a 'crucicentric' view of atonement creates for envisioning redeemed sexuality. Doctrinally situating sanctification as separate from and subsequent to atonement—particularly as it enforces a binary understanding of flesh and Spirit in terms of demonstrating a sanctified life—creates a barrier for imagining sexually redeemed, relational bodies. This split understanding of atonement and sanctification presents particular barriers for those who have suffered sexual bodily violation. The bodies of survivors and how they (fail to) connect with this bifurcated understanding of doctrine then serve as a lens, demonstrating the dangers of 'disembodied' sexual relationality for soteriology broadly. I conclude that the relationship between atonement, sanctification, and 'holy sex' understood from this perspective creates barriers for envisioning a positively embodied, mutually intimate view of redeemed sexual relationality.

A view of redemption that includes restoration of the sexually violated body requires a theological understanding of a healed, integrated sexual body—a body 'at-oned' in its sexual relationality. This section reveals the limitations of current understandings of soteriology that divide atonement and sanctification for offering that vision. The subsequent section then shows the potential to address those limitations through a somatological Spirit Christology. This Christology draws together the participation of Jesus' body and our human bodies in a holistic vision of atonement and redemption.

Crucicentric atonement and sanctification: A problematic separation

The separation of the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work from Christ's atoning work has concrete consequences for envisioning redeemed sexual embodiment. Two results of the theological separation of the Holy Spirit from atonement affect our ability to envision redeemed sexual relationality. The first is the connection between 'cruciformity' and 'holy sex', based on a crucicentric reading of atonement. The second is the relationship between sanctification and denial of 'the flesh' in imagining embodied sexual Christian redemption. I offer some concluding remarks on the relationship between crucicentric atonement models, separating sanctification from atonement, and envisioning redeemed embodied sexual relationality following violation. These theological turns have sharp consequences for those who have experienced sexual bodily violation. However, the implications for understanding embodied redemption that includes redeemed sexuality are universal.

In the dominant North American Protestant view, salvation proceeds according to a series of events and experiences called an *ordo salutis*, or order of salvation.[4] Each stage of the *ordo salutis* involves particular human and divine responsibilities, based on an understanding of salvation rooted in creation, fall, and redemption. Divine and human roles in salvation are understood to have distinct areas of participation and responsibility. God's responsibility for salvation consists of 'divine election, justification, reconciliation (union with Christ), adoption and glorification.'[5] Human participation and responsibility consist of 'calling, conviction, conversion, regeneration, and sanctification.'[6] Once God initiates reconciliation through union with Christ, the Holy Spirit provokes human response through conviction of sin. The resulting crisis within an individual then requires an obedient response of repentance and conversion to participate in God's salvific work.[7] In the above *ordo salutis*, Jesus' atoning work on the cross—the point of reconciliation—is theologically, somatically, and temporally separated from the Holy Spirit's convicting and sanctifying work. The result is an articulation of atonement that splits the Trinity. The Father and Son participate in atonement as a 'binitarian' exchange. The Holy Spirit becomes the connection point for human beings, subsequent to and separated from Christ's atoning work.

Based on the above understanding, human response to the work of salvation is both cognitive and passive. Jesus' atoning work on the cross excludes a connection point with human participation. Such an understanding has resulted in feminist rejections of atonement, on the

[4] Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 230–2.
[5] Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 232.
[6] Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 232.
[7] Milton, *Shalom*, 97.

basis that our salvation is isolated from relationality with Jesus and others.[8] Human responsibility consists of receiving the truth made known through the Holy Spirit's convicting work. Once the individual has taken responsibility for their sin through confession and repentance, the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification begins. Human bodies so conceived are 'static receptacles,' tasked with a binary possibility of response to receiving God's gift of salvation (acceptance or rejection).[9] In terms of bodily autonomy, human bodies are understood as passive objects of God's intervening work, who either accept or refuse via the exercise of their will.

In somatological terms, the above *ordo salutis* separates human bodies from the physical experiences of Jesus' body. In other words, what happened to Jesus' body in the historical events of the crucifixion and resurrection are both physically and theologically distinct from human beings. Atonement occurs as an exchange between the Father and the Son, in which the Son is responsible for effecting the work of divine union on the cross. Human participation in redemption then arrives through the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification. Two spiritual and somatic splits result from this articulation of soteriology. The first split is between the Holy Spirit and the Father and the Son in the act of atonement, since the Spirit's work in individuals follows after Christ's atoning work. It is unclear how atonement can be trinitarian in a separated atonement and sanctification model. It is also unclear how human bodies become part of the body of Christ, when the Holy Spirit seems to act as a 'buffer' between the two. This leaves the question, how do human bodies become integrated into the body of Christ in a way that is

[8] Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York, NY: Crossroads Publishing, 1988), 55–6; Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for What Saves Us* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001), 53.

[9] Vondey, *Scandal of Pentecost*, 11.

manifested in bodily existence now? If, as Paul states, we are redeemed through the same Spirit who resurrected Jesus' body (Rom 8:11), what does the redemptive relationship between Jesus' body and ours look like? From a somatological perspective, the divide between atonement and sanctification in the above soteriology cannot speak to the embodied redemption of human persons. The next question becomes, how do sanctification and embodied sexuality relate in such a soteriology? The following section shows how a binary view of flesh and Spirit impedes a redeeming vision of embodied sexual relationality.

Sanctification, Sexuality, and Denial of 'the Flesh'

The second barrier for conceptualising redeemed sexual relationality within a cross-centred view of atonement is a binary understanding of the relationship between sanctification and 'the flesh'. Sanctification, particularly in the Western Protestant view as it developed in North America and Europe, has understood a relationship between sexuality and 'the flesh' that makes imagining redeemed embodied sexual relationality difficult. Sanctification is the aspect of soteriology that deals with how human beings become 'transformed into the image of God,'—how people become holy.[10] Particularly within the North American evangelical context, the actions one takes and the decisions one makes with their body are closely associated with holiness. And living out bodily holiness serves as evidence of a sanctified life. Within the Wesleyan Holiness and Pentecostal traditions, the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work is demonstrated through bodily

[10] Joerg Rieger, 'Sanctification,' in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*, ed. Ian A McFarland et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 458–60.

behaviours that 'keep the body holy for the resurrection.'[11] Engaging in bodily behaviours considered of a 'fleshly' nature are understood to contradict holiness, and sexual relationships have been among the most scrutinised.

A binary relationship between holiness and sexuality creates a contradiction in imagining redeemed sexual relationships. Sexual activity *in general* has been associated with matters of 'the flesh,' and therefore suspect. 'Flesh,' when understood as 'carnal' bodily experiences of pleasure, is understood to exist in a binary relationship with the Spirit.[12] In order to manifest the latter—to offer evidence of the Spirit's sanctifying work—humans are expected to surrender the former. And churches have condemned sexual pleasure in particular as acutely 'fleshly'. Engaging in the act of sex has been understood to be redeemed through the larger communal good of producing children within the frame of heterosexual Christian marriage.[13] As a result, sexual abuse *as* abuse has not been distinguished from consensual sexual relationships that occur outside the context of a lifelong heterosexual marriage union. Both are considered sinful, without consideration for relationality or intent.[14] When the measure of holiness is the avoidance of sexual activities outside an accepted frame, the phenomenological differences between mutually enjoyable sex and rape become irrelevant. Both are acts of 'the flesh' if they occur outside the parameters that set the bounds of holiness. This disembodied understanding of the Spirit's work of sanctification leads to an eschatology that valourises the loss and absence of created, bodily goods.

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[11] Frances Young, *God's Presence: A Contemporary Recapitulation of Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 273.

[12] Vondey, *Scandal of Pentecost*, 161–6.

[13] Thomas E. Breidenthal, *Christian Households: The Sanctification of Nearness* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 1997), 122–8.

[14] Smith, 'Born Again,' 345.

Beginning from a body-denying flesh/Spirit binary informs soteriology broadly, with concrete consequences for imagining redeemed sexuality. Atonement is no exception. The Holy Spirit's work of sanctification has been understood to occur subsequent to and separated from Jesus' atoning work on the cross.[15] The reconciliation Christ effects is understood to involve union with him. But what manner does that union take? The church is comprised of those being incorporated into the body of Christ. But if Jesus' physical body performs the reconciling act in isolation from our bodies, who (or what) are we incorporated into? A Spirit/flesh binary posits that union occurs when our 'flesh'—understood as bodily materiality and its desires—is 'overcome,' resulting in the triumph of the 'spiritual' (not 'flesh') body. In other words, the materiality of Jesus' body for redemption becomes a problem, to the extent that it is comprised of physical flesh. Yet the materiality of his physical body in the resurrection is central to Christian confession. His body has been—and ours shall be—physically resurrected, in some way continuous with the properties our bodies have now.[16] Physical bodies are comprised of flesh—the bones, skin, etc., and the processes of living in a physical body. Therefore, soteriology must present a vision of redeemed—not 'overcome'—flesh.

Understanding the relationship between a cross-centric atonement and how it informs present-day life—in this case, sexual relationships—has primarily been the work of Christian ethics. Attempts have been made within evangelicalism to account for the value of sexual relationships in an ethical framework. However, these attempts also negate the role of mutual

[15] This section draws from Steven M. Studebaker's argument against evangelical atonement theology in *The Spirit of Atonement: Pentecostal Contributions and Challenges to the Christian Traditions* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021). This chapter details Studebaker's theological contribution to a Spirit Christology in more detail in Section II A.

[16] Amos Yong, *The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 118–42.

bodily pleasure in sexual relationality. Associations of sex with bodily pleasure are read as inherently sinful, evidence of sexual immorality or libertinism (*porneia*). Michael Gorman makes explicit the connection between a 'cruciform' view of atonement and sexual holiness. In his reading of Pauline soteriology (which he argues should be normative for contemporary Christian sexual ethics), he writes:

> 'sexual libertinism/immorality is the denial of cruciform existence, for it fails to appropriate the work of the triune God in *redeeming the human body through the cross* and to express the kind of obedience to God that marks off God's people from the "Gentiles"…"'unlawful sexual intercourse'…including homosexual practice and sexual immorality in general" and cruciform love cannot coexist, for *porneia* is at best a form of self-love, of self-indulgence that harms others and *diminishes the holiness of both the individual and the community*. Thus an alleged instance of self-giving, covenantal love outside the bounds of *licit sexual relations* is not, Paul would argue, an example of either cruciformity or holiness; it is not the work of the Holy Spirit.'[17]

Here, Gorman links bodily redemption, the cross, obedience, holiness, and sexuality under a legal framework (lawful/licit sex). His sexual theology makes clear the links between a 'crucicentric,' legal understanding of atonement and a legal ('licit') view of proper ('holy') Christian sex.

Gorman clarifies even more explicitly an ethical separation between the Holy Spirit and erotic, mutually pleasurable embodied sexual union:

[17] Michael J. Gorman, *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 127. Emphasis mine.

> 'neither eroticism nor erotic love is synonymous with the divine Spirit…the divine gift of sex is properly used only when it is linked to the other-regarding, community-regarding kind of love that can be expressed within the covenantal bonds and bounds of marriage.'[18]

Here we see the direct relationship between a judicial understanding of the cross and a view of sexuality as 'licit'. Both a forensic view of atonement and a 'licit' understanding of sexuality exist within a legal framework. The goal becomes taking personal responsibility to engage in proper sexual actions at the expense of one's own desires, just as Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross to justify us before the Father. Ethically, the purpose of licit sexuality stems from this particular understanding of Jesus' self-sacrifice on the cross—the nexus of a judicial understanding of atonement.

The problem with the above argument is that a conception of 'licit' sex based on atonement seen as a legal exchange offers no place for erotic intimacy within the context of bodily redemption. The aspect of sexual intimacy where partners experience mutual joy by being in bodily union with one another is not considered an aspect of redeemed embodied sexuality. 'Holy' sexuality is not understood affectively; holiness here can only serve a pragmatic purpose, fulfilling ethical requirements of service to the other. This 'crucicentric' view does not account for the transformation that needs to occur within bodies that feel unsafe in a relationship of the most intimate trust and vulnerability with another: one that may literally involve penetration.[19]

[18] Gorman, *Inhabiting the Cruciform God*, 127.

[19] See Maia Kotrosits, 'Penetration and its Discontents: Greco-Roman Sexuality, the Acts of Paul and Thecla , and Theorizing Eros without the Wound,' *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 27, no. 3 (2018), for a nuanced discussion of sexual agency and penetration.

Sexual bodies are considered holy to the extent that they obediently protect themselves from diminishment via 'self-indulgence.' A body that obeys the example of this theology of the cross is an untouched body—a body that only gives. An ideally sanctified body is one that is never itself touched or desiring of touch.

Connecting a legal, self-sacrificial model of the cross to sexuality as 'licit sex' does not answer the deep, embodied need for physical intimacy that all humans share. But it is especially damaging for those who have experienced sexual bodily violation—who might have only known a sexual body that has been used by others without a positive experience of union between self and other. Either sexlessness or disembodied sexual service to the other becomes the ideal. Neither speaks to the joyful, healing, restorative mutuality of embodied sexual union.

Womanist theologians have named the way black women's bodies have been literally used as sexual objects, their rape justified by a theology that negates their existence.[20] A vital task of womanist theology is to correct distortions of tradition, in order that women in racially oppressed bodies are freed to live as embodied bearers of the *imago dei*.[21] The limit of community-focused 'licit sex' within the bounds of Christian marriage did not apply to black women's bodies under slavery. Even within a 'licit' sexual framework, absent a positively affective embodied dimension, a 'cruciform' sexuality can be used to justify marital rape. Feminists have long demonstrated that women take the brunt of expectations of self-sacrifice, with no regard for their own well-being. This has been particularly true in regard to women's sexual availability. Part

[20] Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom*, xi-xvi; Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 196; Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenges of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), Chapter Two.

[21] Lisa Allen, *A Womanist Theology of Worship: Liturgy, Justice, and Communal Righteousness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2021), 217–18.

of obedient, licit, community-focused sex could be understood as producing children, without regard for one's own embodied feelings and sensations within the act of sex. For a woman, serving the other through giving her body for that purpose, without first healing the alienation that sexual violation has created, will only re-traumatise her and exacerbate the damage. Research demonstrates that sexual trauma can even be passed on intergenerationally, placing the daughters of victimised women at a greater risk of sexual victimization themselves.[22] Rather than communal redemption, sex that does not account for mutual pleasure and joy results in children born 'for calamity' (Is 65:23), opposing God's shalom. Such sex may be 'licit' and serve the goal of other-oriented good, but it cannot be redemptive.

Rather than a crucicentric view of atonement, broader Christocentric understandings offer a more holistic frame. Envisioning at-one-ment beyond the cross is particularly helpful for those who have experienced victimization. Rather than relating to Jesus through a 'cruciform' framework of self-sacrifice, women who have been victimised can find strength from biblical examples where Christ flees against needless violence inflicted against him, and connect to the new life he offers in the resurrection.[23] The Holy Spirit's presence throughout this process offers a more life-giving basis for a redeemed sexuality that honours the goodness of embodied relationality. In short, a view of atonement that presents the Spirit's work of sanctification as a separate soteriological function creates barriers to envisioning redeemed sexual relationality, particularly when sanctified sexuality is framed in terms of licit actions.

[22] Maria Testa, Joseph H. Hoffman, and Jennifer A. Livingston, 'Intergenerational Transmission of Sexual Victimization Vulnerability as Mediated via Parenting,' *Child Abuse & Neglect* 35, no. 5 (2011): 363–71.

[23] Sarah Jobe, 'Carceral Hermeneutics: Discovering the Bible in Prison and Prison in the Bible,' *Religions* 10, no. 2 (2019), online at https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/10/2/101.

In terms of bodily autonomy, in a crucicentric view of atonement, human bodies respond in a passive, binary way to divine reconciliation and union that has been handled on their behalf. Atonement has been effected through a body (Jesus') that is separated from their bodies. Read through this lens, the binary choice to accept or reject receiving the Holy Spirit does not account for the difficult, complicated realities that factor into the ability to make such a choice.[24] Rather than being 'co-builders' (1 Cor 3:9) with God through the Spirit, humans are expected to receive the Spirit and respond to the work of sanctification by evidencing distance from 'fleshly' actions that would interfere with spiritual purity. This logic is disastrous for those who have either been abused in church settings, or who have tried to share abuse they have suffered and met further harm through flawed theologies of forgiveness, sacrifice, etc.[25] No space is offered for a positive integration of healthy, joyful sexual fulfillment within one's body, in mutual vulnerable embodied connection with another. To truly represent the fullness of life that Jesus' comes to bring, a healing of fractured sexual relationality is required within a soteriological vision of atonement. The following section explores how a somatological Spirit Christology informed by a view of atonement that centres the Holy Spirit's role in redeeming embodied life holds the potential to address this need.

[24] Vondey, *Scandal of Pentecost*, 11–12.

[25] Lisa P. Stephenson, 'Toxic Spirituality: Reexamining the Ways in which Spiritual Virtues Can Reinforce Violence Against Women,' in *Sisters, Mothers, Daughters: Pentecostal Perspectives on Violence Against Women*, ed. Kimberly Ervin Alexander et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 33–48.

Implications of a Spirit-Christological Somatology for imagining Redeemed Embodied Sexual Relationality

The previous section has demonstrated the consequences of separating the Holy Spirit from the work of atonement for those who have suffered sexual bodily violation. An atonement theology in which the Holy Spirit is inherent to the trinitarian work of redemption holds the potential to correct these problems. Rather than an exclusive focus on the cross in Christ's atoning work, a somatological Spirit-Christological view emphasises God's eternal work of redemption, in which the cross is a necessary component. The Spirit's redeeming work from this perspective precedes, is present during, and continues subsequent to the cross, with an eschatological emphasis toward creation's ultimate redemption. The place of Pentecost as personal and communal event—how I define my use of 'Pentecostal theology'—is central to this vision.

A Pentecostal approach is well suited for presenting a Spirit-Christological view of atonement that speaks to the redemption of relational bodily intimacy for two reasons. First, in terms of doctrinal articulation, a pneumatological approach to atonement centres the Holy Spirit as inherent to Christ's atoning work. Recentering the Spirit holds particular implications for those who have experienced trauma. The Spirit's work of redeeming embodied life through the recovery of time out of temporal chaos is key here. Instead of a judicial view of atonement presenting a binary exchange, a Spirit-Christological view emphasises the concrete, physical redemption of human bodies in the here and now.

The second reason Pentecostal theology offers a more holistic view of atonement flows from the first. Pentecostal theology is intertwined with embodied spiritual praxis, which centers

atonement in bodily redemption. For Pentecostals, bodily healing is made possible through the atonement, as expressed through testimonies and methods of biblical reading.[26] Within Pentecostalism the event of Pentecost is central for understanding human participation in bodily redemption. Two aspects of a Pentecostal view of atonement are helpful for articulating a life-giving vision for survivors of sexual abuse. First, centering the Spirit's role in atonement demonstrates how the Spirit redeems presence and time out of chaos, with Jesus' body as the locus of connection between our bodies and the divine. For those experiencing embodied trauma, the inability to access traumatic memories and temporally locate them within their embodied history prevents the ability to live free from paralyzing fear and stagnation in the present. The ability to connect and relate with Jesus' body as the healer of trauma fits with this view of atonement.

Second, physical embodied healing occurs through material, somatic practices of Pentecost. Humans encounter Christ through the Holy Spirit as a result of affective embodied engagement in worship, in which releasing oneself in trusting openness to divine touch opens spaces of healing in the body. Testimonies and physical practices such as prayer with laying on of hands and glossolalia (speaking in tongues) offer opportunities to intimately engage in renewed, embodied life in the Spirit. 'Belief' in Christ becomes part of one's 'corporal knowledge'[27] in the form of somatic trust. Those who have been affectively paralysed, whose bodies have been traumatised, are empowered through the Spirit to release embodied fear. Suspicion and distance

[26] Kimberly Ervin Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing: Models in Theology and Practice* (Dorchester: Deo Publishing, 2006), 36–63; Mark Cartledge, *Testimony in the Spirit: Rescripting Ordinary Pentecostal Theology* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 105–29; Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 116.

[27] See Chapter Four of this thesis.

become transformed into trusting, mutual relationality with the Spirit, which becomes the basis for trusting relationality with others. In terms of mutually joyful sexual relationality, this shift also requires a reevaluation of the Spirit/flesh binary that upholds fear and distance from the 'fleshly' act of sex. Part II develops these observations toward the end of a view of atonement that offers a vision of holistic, embodied redemption.

Part II: 'No Atonement Without Pentecost': Affective Bodily Worship Praxis and Bodily Redemption

Part I of this chapter has demonstrated the somatic, material consequences of separating the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work from a theological articulation of atonement. This section develops a somatology that reconnects the Holy Spirit to atonement through the practices that result from transformed human relationality at Pentecost. Pentecost serves as the pinnacle of Christ's reconciling work through the Spirit, resulting in the redemption and renewal of embodied life. Resulting life in the Spirit is comprised of particular affective practices with concrete effects for redeemed present-day life. A focus on how the Spirit of Christ redeems sexual relationality in the aftermath of abuse serves as a lens for a universal, material, somatic view of atonement.

Beginning an atonement theology from the central point of Pentecost offers two corrections to the issues raised in Part I of this chapter. First, it corrects the marginalization of the Holy Spirit within atonement, presenting a fully Trinitarian vision of reconciliation. Also, in terms of at-one-ment as incorporation of our bodies into the body of Christ, it corrects the Spirit/body ('flesh') binary. This Pentecostal feminist approach also breaks down a binary in how feminist

theologies tend to relate to power. Feminist theologies tend to situate power within an immanent framework, in which humans are limited to two responses: either conforming to the power structure or strategically resisting it.[28] Accepting the transformative interruption of the Holy Spirit allows for creative alternatives where power itself is changed—where the Spirit of Christ's transcendent yet mutual embodied relationality with us transforms power itself towards God's liberating, redemptive ends.

Situating Pentecost within Christ's atoning work is key to the concerns of this thesis because of what research shows survivors need in order to heal. Namely, constructing a life-giving narrative following trauma requires a community who can support survivors in the painful work of accessing traumatic memories safely. The church as the body of Christ, which lives out the redeeming practices of Pentecost in community, demonstrates the reformed life narrative where Christ's presence and power are centered, offering space for renewal. To that end, I outline how a theological vision where atonement is intertwined with the Spirit's renewal of embodied life, recovering of time out of chaos, undergirds a trauma-informed redemptive vision.

Reconceiving atonement in terms of the Spirit's empowering renewal of embodied life presents a material, 'fleshy' view of human and divine reconciliation. For the 'first fruits' of the resurrection to be known in present-day bodies, humans must somehow participate in Christ's atoning work. He cannot simply serve as an ethical example apart from the Spirit's empowerment for transforming lived, bodily practices:

> 'there can be no atonement without Pentecost…. in speaking of the cross we speak of the Trinity, and the continuing work of the Spirit…. From the very beginning Christianity was a

[28] Catherine Holtmann, 'Introduction,' in *Sisters, Mothers, Daughters*, 3.

> "way," a disciplined following intended to have concrete results…. In this connection we have to insist that an exclusive focus on the symbol of "the cross" leads us to miss the significance of [Jesus'] teaching and healing ministry which is also, of course, salvific. As the early community recognised, out of the new forms of prayer and practice learned from Jesus comes an alternative way of doing things (Mark 10:43).'[29]

The particularity of Pentecost as praxis shows that it is not prayer and practice as generic concepts that result in the concrete changes of life that mark discipleship. Jesus offers specific prayers and practices to follow.[30] The disciples receive the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 2 after following Jesus' instructions to stay and wait, and engaging together in prayer. It is this participation in the Spirit of Pentecost, which Christ makes available as a result of receiving the Holy Spirit, that leads to renewed life for disciples.

The connection between spiritual praxis and the doctrinal construction of atonement theology is not new. In fact, Anselm's articulation of atonement theology was intertwined with the prayers and meditations he wrote for devotional practice, which were intended for deeply emotional affective transformation.[31] This praxis-doctrine connection shows how embodied practices inform both intellectually articulated and somatically lived expressions of doctrine, toward the end of bodies redeemed in Christ. In other words, the co-informing of bodily worship practices and doctrine work together to materialise the present reality of bodily redemption—

[29] Timothy J. Gorringe, 'Atonement,' in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Theology*, 2nd ed., William T. Cavanaugh and Peter Manley Scott, eds. [403–415], (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2019), 411.

[30] Most obviously in terms of how to pray, Mt 6:9–13 and Lk 11:2–4.

[31] Flora Keshgegian, 'The Scandal of the Cross: Revisiting Anselm and His Feminist Critics,' *Anglican Theological Review* 82, no. 3 (2000): 486–8.

how healing comes through atonement. Affective worship practices that characterise Pentecostal and charismatic spirituality are key to this constructive, somatic approach to doctrine.

While Pentecostal and charismatic worship is characterised by its spontaneity, its affective components are not random or arbitrary. Pentecostal worship praxis is creative and playful, taking many forms. But those forms of encounter with Christ through the Spirit are always understood eschatologically.[32] When responsibly theologically articulated and practiced, Pentecostal worship practices contribute to our participation in God's transformative redemption of our bodies, relationships, and communities through the liberation of subjugating forces.[33] These practices contribute to the transformation of our embodied being toward God's redeeming ends in Christ through the Spirit, restoring our connection to the Father and enabling our participation in his kingdom.

A Pentecostal understanding of salvation places Christ's work within a broad frame of redemptive, affective, transformational embodied praxis.[34] This frame includes Christ's atoning work within a fully Trinitarian act of redemption, in which the Son participates through the Spirit.[35] Human participation in redemption comes through the Spirit's outpouring on all flesh at Pentecost. Rather than splitting the Spirit apart from the Trinity in the atonement, this Spirit-Christological view shows how the Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost is a continuation of the Trinity's work of atonement on the cross, now inclusive of all humanity.

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[32] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 12–14.

[33] Joel D. Daniels, 'From Normative to Nothing: A Pentecostal Theological Conception of the Body,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 43, no. 2 (2021): 233–49.

[34] Wolfgang Vondey, 'Embodied Gospel: The Materiality of Pentecostal Theology,' in *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion, Volume 8: Pentecostals and the Body*, ed. Michael Wilkinson and Peter Althouse (Boston: Brill, 2017), 102–19.

[35] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*.

Situating Pentecost within Christ's atoning work, and vice versa, addresses the limitations presented in Part One of this chapter. First, it presents a Trinitarian vision that includes the Holy Spirit within salvation. If the Holy Spirit is detached from Christ's work of atonement, She is also detached from his body. In that case, our union with Christ through the Spirit remains separated. Yet the same Spirit who raised him is the one who dwells in us and 'will give life to [our] mortal bodies' (Rom 8:11). For this to be true, the Spirit cannot be disembodied from Jesus' body in the divine work of reconciliation. Articulating redemptive practices of Pentecost as a necessary aspect of atonement addresses this disconnect. The event of Pentecost also shows how painful emotions are part of soteriological religious affections, because they open the way to connecting with Christ in the Spirit. That form of intimacy serves as the basis for all other intimate relationships. The following section develops this vision.

Atonement as the Spirit's Redemption of Embodied Life Through Re-Ordered Traumatic Memory

To construct a theological vision that can promise relational redemption for sexual abuse survivors, I develop a somatologically situated Spirit-Christological view of atonement. On this understanding, the Holy Spirit redeems time out of chaos and into the fullness of embodied life. This theological shift offers present-day, material, embodied renewal for those living in bodies suffering the somatic constrictions of traumatic sexual violation. Practices of Pentecost within the believing, worshipping community serve as redemptive disruptions to the temporal frozenness of

traumatic memories. Through redeeming the disruptions of 'time, body, and word'[36] that occur in the aftermath of trauma, the Spirit of Christ draws us into the redemptive life of God in our present, mortal bodies, with the promise of future wholeness to come in the resurrection. The work of the Pentecostal and feminist scholars below forms a foundation for this construction.

Steven Studebaker's *The Spirit of Atonement* develops a Pentecostal theology that centres the Holy Spirit in articulating atonement as 'the fundamental work of redemption.'[37] Studebaker's constructive atonement theology offers two contributions to my own somatological view: the Holy Spirit's work of atonement through redeeming time from chaos and in redeeming embodied life. I bring these contributions into conversation with Shelly Rambo's trauma theology, which names disruptions in 'time, body, and word'[38] as key factors in constructive theology that speaks to the realities of traumatised bodies. Finally, I show how the practices of Pentecost within the worshipping community live out the articulation of the Spirit's role in atonement, in concrete ways that redeem bodies in the present. Somatologically, the affective transformation of bodies in and through the Spirit of Christ are material expressions of God's atoning work.

By decentering the cross as a site of judicial exchange, Studebaker negates the classical understandings of atonement as redemptive violence that have led to feminist rejections.[39] Instead, Studebaker begins from Eleanore Stump's definition of atonement as the 'resumption of friendly relations.'[40] This view focuses on relational connection that frees humanity to live in

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[36] Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 26.

[37] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, ix.

[38] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 26.

[39] See Chapter Two of this thesis for examples.

[40] Eleanore Stump, *Atonement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 7; quoted in Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 8.

reconciled relationships 'without fear of brutality.'[41] Instead, 'pentecostal praxis reflects the narrative of the Spirit of Pentecost—the embodied life and material redemption described in the Hebrew Bible stories of the Spirit and carried on in the life of Jesus Christ.'[42] From a somatological perspective, removing violence and fear from atonement contributes to a theology that can open violated bodies to experience redemption, moving from fearful constriction to faith in Christ as trusting relationality.

Studebaker laments that Pentecostal theology has previously failed to connect Pentecost with atonement because of its colonization into inherited evangelical theological categories.[43] The problem with inherited evangelical atonement theology is its Christocentric and crucicentric nature, in which Christ's saving work on the cross is separated from the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification.[44] Such a view of sanctification frames redemption judicially, cordoning off and subordinating the Spirit's sanctifying work: 'In this theology of grace, atonement is exclusively Christological, crucicentric, and an extrinsic or objective work of redemption.'[45] We participate in sanctification through the Spirit, but not atonement.[46] From my constructive somatological perspective, the atoning work made possible through Christ's body in a judicial understanding of atonement is separate from our bodies.

I agree with Studebaker that crucicentrism does not tell whole story of atonement. Focusing on Jesus' suffering and death on the cross 'obscures the fundamental nature of

[41] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, ix.
[42] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 6.
[43] See Chapter Four of this thesis.
[44] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 4–5.
[45] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 5.
[46] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 6.

atonement, which is receiving and participating in the Spirit of Pentecost.'[47] It is this participation, in which the Spirit restores time out of chaos and embodied life from death, that can speak a redemptive vision to those living with embodied trauma. The previous section of this chapter has demonstrated the consequences of this separation for framing a vision of redeemed sexual relationality. A somatologically focused Spirit Christological view of atonement, in which the Spirit redeems bodies for restored, friendly relationality, corrects this limitation.

Studebaker's Spirit Christology is intertwined with the incarnation, oriented toward the end of renewed, embodied life.[48] Defining the Incarnation pneumatologically reveals the limitations of a Logo-centric Christology for situating atonement. Shifting from a Logos Christology to a Spirit Christology, with Pentecost as the culmination point of atonement, restores a more biblical narrative vision of redemption.[49] This is because an overfocus on the Logos as a concept external to the biblical narrative has marginalised the agency of the *pneuma* alongside the *Logos* in the work of creation and redemption. This relationship is seen, for example, in the link between the Lord's word and breath in creating the heavens in Psalm 33:6–7.[50] And Genesis 1 'portrays the Spirit of God as the divine agent that redeems the elements from that dark abyss and ushers in a world ordered for the flourishing of life.'[51] At the beginning, then, the biblical narrative shows the Spirit already effecting the work of redemption out of chaos.

The Spirit whose agency redeemed creation from formlessness is that same Spirit who operates redemptively at Pentecost: 'The pneumatic imagery of the wind that tamed the abyss in

[47] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 7.
[48] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 128–49.
[49] See Chapter Three of this thesis for an extended discussion of the limitations of a Logos Christology for envisioning redeemed sexual relationality.
[50] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 21.
[51] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 21.

Genesis 1 is the wind that accompanied the outpouring of the Spirit of Pentecost.'[52] The Holy Spirit at Pentecost is this same Spirit, continuing the work of renewing embodied life from the chaos of the abyss, the gift that Jesus has promised and that continues our connection with him: 'Jesus' saving work does not reach its climax on the cross or even in the resurrection, but on the Day of Pentecost with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,' forming 'the perennial condition of the ongoing narrative of redemption.'[53] The Spirit's work within humans—sanctification—is therefore connected to the saving work Jesus effects for us. From my own constructive somatological application of Studebaker, the salient point is that Jesus' salvific work occurs necessarily through his body. We then participate in the body of Christ through this ongoing embodied narrative of incorporation. Spirit and body—ours and Jesus' body—are joined in continuous union.

This vision of the Holy Spirit finds resonance with Rambo's 'middle spirit,' which 'oscillates in the abyss of re-creation and redemption.'[54] Yet unlike Rambo, my somatology does not imagine a different spirit. Instead it makes space for the Holy Spirit's work of redemption, from creation through to Pentecost, showing how the work of the middle that Rambo centralises is the work of that same Spirit.[55] In this way, the biblical narrative vision of restoration and renewal through the Spirit is expressed in a holistic, embodied atonement into which humans are invited and transformed. Rather than negating the realities of embodied trauma, this embodied narrative vision allows the distortions of traumatic violation to be safely addressed and integrated

[52] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 21.
[53] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 9.
[54] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 116.
[55] Cheryl M. Peterson also engages with Shelly Rambo's concept of the 'middle Spirit', citing it as a continuation of the work of the Holy Spirit for survivors of sexual abuse. See note 59 below.

into a narrative that offers the promise of new life in the aftermath, while contending with the wounds that remain.

The Holy Spirit's work of redeeming time out of chaos, begun at creation, continues through the life of Jesus, and is and communicated to and received by humanity at Pentecost. The Spirit's work at Pentecost breathes life into those suffering from trauma as follows. Bringing chaos into temporal reality that can be physically experienced and narrativised by created, story-making beings has been the Spirit's work since the beginning: 'At the initiative of God's Spirit, the *days* of creation emerge from the primal pandemonium…. The Genesis 1 creation story, consequently, portrays the Spirit of God as the divine agent that redeems the elements from that dark abyss and ushers in a world ordered for the flourishing of life.'[56] The emergence of 'days' from chaos speaks to the re-ordering of traumatic embodied memories from the abyss of chaos within bodies. From inaccessible eruptions that disrupt the ability to live daily life, through Pentecost as affective, transformational encounter with the Spirit, the bodies of survivors become healed and integrated toward wholeness of life. The Spirit of Christ becomes the healer of the dislocations of time, body, and word that characterise somatic trauma.

From a somatological view of atonement, in which redemption involves integration into the body of Christ, Jesus' participation in the Holy Spirit's redemptive life becomes humanity's entry point for bodily redemption. Such an understanding of atonement presents a fully Trinitarian view of the divine life, and how we encounter it:

> 'Atonement is participating in the life the Holy Spirit realised in Jesus Christ—fellowship through the Spirit with Christ and the Father, the fellowship with all those who participate

[56] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 21. Emphasis mine.

> in the community of Pentecost, the community created by the Spirit of Christ, and the renewal of life in this world…. Thus, a pneumatological and pentecostal theology of the atonement shows that the Spirit of Pentecost's renewal of life, not Christ's penal punishment and death, is the primary plotline and nature of the atonement.'[57]

Atonement and Pentecost are linked because the repaired relationality in the divine life that Jesus Christ makes possible is intertwined with humans' embodied participation in it.

This subsection has outlined a somatologically developed Spirit Christology, in which the Incarnation and atonement are linked, toward the end of redeeming embodied life in current time-bound reality. This focus of the redemption of embodied life via the ordering of time out of chaos, into a speak-able narrative of flourishing, has direct relevance for survivors of sexual abuse. The integration of embodied practices of Pentecost in time, word, and body offer a basis for flourishing life in the aftermath of trauma. The following section develops this line of thinking by detailing the disruptions of embodied trauma, and how they are healed through the embodied worship practices that make real the particular biblical narrative of Pentecost. Thus, bodies whose narratives have been subject to unspeakable chaos are liberated toward life.

The Spirit-Christological Particularity of Sexual Bodily Violation and Redemption: Participation in Pentecost

The experiences of those with sexually traumatised bodies reveal the necessity of a theological vision in which the redemption of intimate, embodied sexual relationality becomes part of God's

[57] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 9–10.

atoning work in Christ through the Spirit. In this view, joyful sexual relationality is demonstrative of fully living, sanctified flesh—not in contrast to it. The loss of safe bodily relationality and need for the reparation of healing touch show why an embodied understanding of atonement is necessary. Survivors' need for safety and trust, developed theologically here as 'belief in Christ,' are met in this vision. Survivors of sexual abuse need first and foremost to feel safe within their own bodies. The violation that has been meted out to them must be safely accessed so it can be realistically brought to life and integrated into one's life narrative. Only then can they begin to come to terms with the present-day intrusions of trauma in daily life and begin to imagine a different future—to imagine *any* future.

Survivors must be enabled to access trauma in their bodies—often through a lengthy, painful process that requires the intercession of a community of supportive others—before they can begin to connect safely with their embodied pain and imagine alternative ways of being and relating. As they become enabled through the Spirit to enact such change, they can begin to reorient their way of being towards God's redemptive vision. Theologically, this process can be translated from the Greek root word *metanoia* as either 'repentance' or 'conversion,'[58] demonstrating the range of meanings this term can take. Conceptualising repentance/conversion as an ongoing work, rather than a singular event motivated by a crisis experience, allows theological space for this protracted, difficult, yet ultimately renewing process. A nuanced understanding of 'Christian affections,' including the painful, difficult emotions associated with grief and mourning, reveals the Holy Spirit's role in Christ's work of atonement as it is received by

[58] Cynthia S.W. Crysdale, *Embracing Travail: Retrieving the Cross Today* (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1999), 160n21.

people and integrated into renewed lives. The Spirit's role in opening up grieving toward the end of transformation through Christ also complicates typical Pentecostal views of 'Christian affections' as only positive and joyful ('enthusiastic'). This nuancing of Christian affections therefore addresses feminist critiques of Pentecostal atonement theology as overly triumphalistic.

In sexual violation, what is lost is the ability to openly, intimately, physically connect with another human being. Without healing the embodied constrictions of trauma, attempts at sexual connection remain always at a distance—disembodied from intimate engagement with another. Living relationally well after trauma requires a repatterning of embodied affections, so that the touch of another is not frightening or numbing, or engaged in out of a sense of duty or payment. Intimate connection requires positive physical connection with the body of another. In order to experience that connection, survivors must be able to redemptively engage with, give voice to, and receive healing for what their abusers have taken from them.

The Spirit's role in atonement, presented above, reveals a soteriological concern for the redemption of embodied life through the ordering of formlessness into time. This vision speaks to what has become shattered for survivors. Traumatic memories that are still lodged in the body cannot be experienced as past, spoken, expressed, and placed within the context of an embodied narrative of suffering. In order to reach a state where they can engage in positive, intimate, embodied relationality, survivors must become freed to grieve how that ability has been violently stolen from them—how they have been sinned against. This grieving process is the beginning of redeeming the body toward life-giving, intimate relationality. Grieving is therefore part of bodily redemption. Placing trauma within a life narrative of suffering that can become integrated into

one's bodily being requires a repair of the foreshortening of time and non-narrative disruption of life that results from violation.[59] Theologically, the Spirit's work of bodily redemption is, at Pentecost, a continuation of redemption from chaos at creation. The Spirit's redemption of dislodged time and memory in the body frees traumatised persons to live redeemed existence, including intimate relationality. This atoning vision of transformation is lived in bodies in a way that does not negate what has been violated in trauma. Instead, the Spirit redeems survivors' ability to connect intimately with their own bodies and the bodies of others in trauma's aftermath.

Engaging with Pentecost as the culminating moment of atonement is key for survivors. The following section details how Jesus experienced the nakedness and shame of sexual abuse. For those who have experienced sexual trauma, that violation becomes healed via his Spirit at Pentecost, and is realised in bodies connected to him via his healing presence. By connecting their story to his, survivors are able to speak what has been lost.

Jesus' place in redeeming nakedness and shame begins at the Garden of Eden, a story about the loss of nakedness and feeling safe in others' presence. When Adam and Eve turn away from transparent relationality with God, they become severed from the ability to engage in trusting relationship. In their assertion of their own power apart from God, Adam and Eve find that God becomes a threat rather than a companion.[60] Now that nakedness and trust are lost, they live in shame, whose forced hiddenness of self serves to destroy relationality: 'Shame severs people, whether perpetrator or victim, from the fundamental relationships that make life

[59] See Matthew Ratcliffe, Mark Ruddell and Benedict Smith, 'What is a "Sense of Foreshortened Future?" A Phenomenological Study of Trauma, Trust and Time,' *Frontiers in Psychology* 5 (2014): 1–11.

[60] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 26.

meaningful.'[61] For survivors of sexual abuse, the shame they experience cuts them off from trusting relationality. It is vital to note that the perpetrator's experience of shame is different, coming from a place of abused power. The repentance required of rapists looks different from that of their victims. Care and protection of the one abused is always paramount, given the differences in power and the experiences of broken relationality.[62]

The nakedness and shame that Adam and Eve experience in Genesis 2–3 is overturned through Christ, and experienced by humanity at Pentecost. Studebaker notes:

> 'God's Spirit created Adam and Eve "naked, and they felt no shame" (Gen. 2:25). Jesus' exposed body on the cross is the nadir of the human experience of nakedness and shame. Stripped, tortured, humiliated, the object of derision, insult, and finally execution, Jesus bears the collective nakedness and shame of the human race. But his life does not end in a meaningless denouement in the dust. The Spirit of God raises him from the dead. The Spirit of Pentecost then becomes the way for all to participate in the resurrected life of Christ.'[63]

This vision connects Jesus to survivors, who experience him somatically as both a fellow sufferer of sexual bodily violation,[64] the healer of that trauma in the resurrection, their intimate companion in ecstatic encounters of Pentecost, and in their renewed ability to re-narrate their lives in the context of union with him.

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[61] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 27.

[62] Detailing the requirements for abusers' repentance is beyond the scope of this work. See Andrew Sung Park, *Triune Atonement: Christ's Healing for Sinners, Victims, and the Whole Creation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, John Knox Press, 2009), 73–93, for a discussion of the different nature of repentance between abusers and victims.

[63] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 27.

[64] See Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs, and Rocío Figueroa, eds., *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse* (London, SCM Press, 2021), for multidimensional discussions on the significance of Jesus' crucifixion as sexual abuse. Note that some contributors disagree with the assertion.

The above discussion shows how the Spirit intercedes, empowering survivors. Through the Spirit's affective awakening, they are enabled to give voice to their pain through testimonial narratives that connect their own experiences to Jesus' experience of violation. This pneumatology 'from the middle' of survivors' experience differs from Rambo's, which remains in the 'abyss' of Holy Saturday.[65] Rather, 'the Spirit accompanies the survivor into a new life that does not deny the trauma and its scars but carries it forward. The crucified and risen Christ who appeared in the upper room to breathe on his disciples the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, returned bearing the scars of his own trauma.' [66] Out of the chaos of embodied trauma, the Spirit of Jesus enables survivors to speak the words that connect their pain to his—to place the disruptions of pain into a sensible narrative frame.

Through relationships with the worshipping community living together into the healing Christ's Spirit brings, survivors' pain can be witnessed and brought to the light of embodied healing. The festering wounds of traumatic restriction are thereby exposed, healed, and allowed to become scars. Their present-day 'first fruits' of redemption bear the marks of their history amidst the stories they can now tell. The difference is the renewed ability to live in a healed way, both in one's own body and in redeemed relationality with others. As such, the affective dimensions of communal Pentecostal praxis repair the dislocation of time, body, and word that have constricted sufferers, freeing them to embodied life.

From the perspective of survivors of sexual bodily trauma, two elements of this view of atonement are key. The first is the affective and communally relational nature of human

[65] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 113.
[66] Peterson, 'Pneumatology in the Time of #MeToo,' in *Sisters, Mothers, Daughters*, 23–4.

participation in atonement through the Spirit of Pentecost. Rather than a solely individual and intellectual affair, worshippers encounter the Spirit affectively and collectively, through emotionally engaging music, singing, dancing, moving rhythmically, the sharing of testimonies, moving forward for prayer, laying on of hands, speaking in and interpretation of tongues, and other practices. Bodies filled with the Holy Spirit in affective worship are freed from constricting categories characteristic of Eurocentric expectations of a 'normative', controlled (white) body.[67] Encounter leads to transformation, which is shared and encouraged in testimonies and words of knowledge and wisdom.

Charismatic worship practices integrated into life narratives revealed in testimonies and lived out in bodies—both personally and in community—push against a judicial view of sin and atonement. In Christian writing on charismatic spirituality,

> 'Personal renewal was associated with practices that integrated the reorientation of human love, the therapy of desire, and the encounter with God through the Spirit in its sanctifying and charismatic dimensions. With its goals of ecstatic embrace and union, the mystical life attested to the fusion of the charismatic, internal transformation and affectivity. Ecstasy, in particular, referred to modes of charismatic encounters as well as sanctifying moments.'[68]

This mystical soteriology presents 'analyses of sin and salvation as a therapeutic enterprise in which the Spirit heals and empowers the soul.'[69] An affective and embodied soteriology, which

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[67] Joel D. Daniels, 'From Normative to Nothing: A Pentecostal Theological Conception of the Body,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 43, no. 2 (2021), 233–49.

[68] Dale M. Coulter, 'Introduction: The Language of Affectivity and the Christian Life,' in *The Spirit, the Affections, and the Christian Tradition*, ed. Dale M. Coulter and Amos Yong (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016), 3.

[69] Coulter, *Introduction*, 3.

characterises Pentecostal and charismatic spirituality, creates an alternative, corporeally transformational understanding of sin and salvation rather than a legal one. For survivors, such a theological framing offers the space to re-connect with disjointed areas of trauma in the body. Atonement conceived in this way includes reconciliation with inaccessible areas of one's bodily being, through restorative intimate ecstatic encounter with the Divine Other, mediated through the touch of loving human others.

The following section demonstrates how the particularity of Pentecost speaks to the complex affective dimensions of atonement, as understood above. Pushing against the oversimplification of affections as joyful and positive, the heuristic of 'affections of Pentecost' demonstrates the range of difficult affective responses that may precede joyful ones. The goal is to present an articulation of atonement that speaks more honestly to the realities of bodily redemption in the wake of sexual trauma, with implications for redemption more broadly.

Part III: Affections of Pentecost: A Heuristic for Framing Atonement

Within Pentecostal spiritual praxis, the role of the affections is central to soteriology. Reconciliation with God, self, and others comes through encountering Christ through the Holy Spirit via an often emotionally intense experience known as 'spirit baptism'. The baptism in the Spirit baptism can take many forms, and has a variety of theological interpretations.[70] From a somatological perspective, Spirit baptism can be understood as the affective, embodied

[70] Frank D. Macchia, 'Spirit Baptism: Initiation Into the Fullness of God's Promises,' in Vondey, *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, 247–56.

encounter between human beings and the Holy Spirit. This encounter commences a relationship of sanctification and transformative empowerment through liberation from constrictions that impede relationality, toward the eschatological end of partnering with God to live out the promised redeemed life in Christ. From the beginning of the Pentecostal movement, Spirit baptism, signifying 'an individual's personal Pentecost, marked an intimate relational experience with God and the community,' resulting in 'a sense of special importance and dignity, which, in turn, encouraged an ecclesiastical missional fervor.'[71] Receiving the Holy Spirit, then, is both personal and communal, leading to further interpersonal engagement through mission. Reception of the Spirit initiates the transformation toward the eschatological end of God's redemption of all creation.

Human bodies participate in God's redemptive work in Christ as they become incorporated into Christ's body through the Spirit. Pentecostal theologian Chris E. Green argues that our integration into his body is possible because:

> 'in Christ the divine and human "natures" are eternally at-one-ed, which means, among other things, that his human will is in perfect, transparent communion with the divine will. By incorporating us into his body, then, Christ draws our wills into alignment with his humanity. And how does he draw us? By his perfect openness to the Father and the Spirit in their witness to him: that relational openness, after all, is just who he is.'[72]

[71] Kenneth J. Archer, 'Pentecostal Theology as Story: Participating in God's Mission,' in Vondey, *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, 45.

[72] Chris E. Green, '"From His Fullness We Have All Received": Reflections on Divine Agency, Time, and the Experience(s) of Salvation,' in *Essays on the Trinity*, ed. Lincoln Harvey (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018), 133.

This Trinitarian understanding of 'at-one-ment' aligns with the somatological view of atonement this thesis has argued for throughout. In terms of Christ's divine and human wills, his bodily autonomy is fully relational, representing the 'bodily integration' view. Atonement does not mean the subjugation of the Son's will to the Father's, as some feminist theologians charge.[73] Instead, the complete relationality of his human and the divine will mean he is open to the witness of the Father and Spirit.

I would nuance Green's articulation of the 'eternal at-one-ment' of Christ's human will with Kathryn Tanner's incarnational understanding—that Jesus grows into that place of full communion.[74] I propose further that the way his human will grows to fullness is through the affections, enabled by the Spirit. And that he incorporates our bodies into his resurrected and glorified body via the ongoing affective experience(s) of Pentecost—where the outpouring and reception of the Holy Spirit are made possible via the act of witnessing to Christ's redemption across corporeal boundaries. I call this framework for understanding Christ's atoning work 'affections of Pentecost.' This framework is seen within the complexity and range of the affections on display at Pentecost. Both Peter and the crowd have their own affective responses, and each is only able to communicate/receive the message of Christ because of the witness of the other. Therefore, theologies that look to the day of Pentecost for their framework of Christian affections cannot limit themselves to joyful, enthusiastic expressions. I then show how Christ's atoning work through the affections is present throughout the course of his life and ministry, culminating at Pentecost, which continues Spirit-empowered acts of reconciling witnessing today.

[73] See Chapter Two of this thesis.
[74] See Chapter Three of this thesis.

The Day of Pentecost: A Somatological, Affective Reading

This section shows the affections at work on Pentecost, as presented in the text of Acts 2:1–42. I choose this text because it is pivotal for Pentecostal and charismatic Christians as the model for Spirit baptism and the identity of the church. Notable are how expressions of grief, not solely joy, are essential aspects of the narrative. From a trauma-informed perspective, the consequences of expressing and witnessing difficult affections toward redemptive ends are therefore integral to Pentecostal affective practice.

Pentecostal theologians emphasise the content of Peter's powerful speech, which the Spirit enables (2:14–36), for what it presents about the redemption that Christ makes possible and the new direction of the Kingdom on earth.[75] Understood as powerful proclamation, Peter's words stir and demand a response. Yet a relational moment between Peter and the crowd is missed in this reading. Remember that Peter and the rest of the disciples were witnesses to the trauma of Jesus' crucifixion.[76] While they encountered Jesus again in his resurrected body and continued to learn from him, at his ascension they are still left with this unspoken pain. As previous chapters have noted, remaking of the self in the aftermath of trauma requires supportive others who offer witness by listening, and responding in ways that open relational connection.[77] I argue this act of expressing the pain of trauma, and witnessing the trauma, is at

[75] For example, Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 79.

[76] David M. Carr, *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* (New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 2014), 156–75; Karen O'Donnell, 'Surviving Trauma at the Foot of the Cross,' in *When Did We See You Naked? Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse*, ed. Jayme R. Reaves, David Tombs, and Rocío Figueroa (London: SCM Press, 2021), 260–77.

[77] See especially Chapters One and Two of this thesis.

play in Acts 2. Mutual witnessing is key to the experience of the disciples and crowd receiving the Holy Spirit and, as a result, coming to know embodied renewal and redemption.

The text of Joel 2, which promises the outpouring of God's spirit on all flesh, becomes narratively integrated into the bodies of the disciples who witnessed Jesus' death and resurrection through Peter's sermon in Acts 2. In that sermon, Peter 'identifies the outpouring of God's Spirit as the eschatological work of redemption (see Acts 2:14–21).'[78] Somatologically, the disciples encounter the Spirit in Acts 2, which produces embodied activity which is witnessed by the bystanders from surrounding nations. It is at this moment, through Peter's witness to the weakness and trauma that have paralysed the disciples in his speech and its reception, that the disciples become the church. The Spirit's presence and renewal through the public expression of grieving, creating a space of brooding within both Peter and the hearers, and the resultant transformation toward new life are the key.

The disciples—both those already recognised as such and those listeners who encounter the Spirit at Pentecost—become the body of Christ through tangible connection with, communication of, and affective reception of Christ's redemptive work. The church lives the witness of Christ's atonement through weakness and pain more faithfully than through powerful, commanding proclamation. This is how Christ's reconciliation is expressed and received through the vulnerable expression of trauma, which opens bodies outward: 'The continuity of the church with the flesh of the crucified and resurrected Jesus as the flesh of those empowered by the Holy Spirit is embodied in a scandalous witness of the ordinary, the weak, the sick, the disabled, the

[78] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 9.

marginalised and the persecuted.'[79] In other words, it is because Peter is speaking from a vulnerable place of trauma, and the crowd are able to hear, to truly witness, integrate, and seek healing for both his pain and their own—that the Spirit is poured out on and received by the flesh of those present. Peter describes the 'agony of death' (Acts 2:24) Jesus faced in his crucifixion, alongside his being 'raised up,' (2:32)—and that he and the other disciples witnessed all of this. Peter speaks both of his experience of witnessing Jesus' murder and his resurrection. Through the sharing of the sermon, Peter's encounter with the Spirit is given voice.[80] The result is that the message of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ongoing encounter with the Spirit becomes available to those listening, some of whom are 'cut to the heart' (2:37). They then join the body of believers through their own encounter with the Spirit. As such, through Pentecost, they participate in Christ's ongoing work of atonement, through affective connection with his body—as believers continue to do today through Spirit-empowered encounter.

Peter's preaching of the message identifies the moment where he is able to grieve—to verbally articulate the trauma that he and the other disciples have experienced, and for that narrative to be witnessed by others. Those who are 'cut to the heart' act as the witnesses—the ones who are enabled to hear, and thereby engage with their own embodied pain, becoming disciples themselves. The Spirit's brooding work can then begin in them—together as a community—toward the promised end of new creation and transformation. This process of grief—both the Spirit's enabling Peter to speak his own and the disciples' collective grief at Jesus' crucifixion to those who will witness it, and those witnesses being 'cut to the heart'—is part of

[79] Vondey, *Scandal of Pentecost*, 195.

[80] Andrea Hollingsworth, 'Spirit and Voice: Toward a Feminist Pentecostal Pneumatology,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 29, no. 2 (2007).

salvation. Only once this (densely telescoped) grieving process is complete are the witnesses able to ask 'What now shall we do?' At that point, repentance can begin. But right remembering, contending with the truth of what has happened to Jesus' body, comes first. And placing salvation within the Spirit's larger work of redemption, Christologically centred, shows how those who have suffered participate both in the suffering of Jesus' body, and in his resurrection (Romans 6:1–14). Once the Spirit enables the crowd to ask, 'What can we do?' they enter the community of disciples. Their Spirit-empowered witnessing to Peter's expression of his own traumatic memory enables them to become witnesses for Christ, living into the newness of resurrection life.

Peter's ability to declare the gospel is itself a demonstration and extension of Jesus' healing ministry. It is not until the Spirit is upon the disciples that he is able to express the significance of what happened to Jesus to the crowd. His declaration is directed to witnesses of it. He does not speak to no one; there must be hearers, and the Spirit works in the relationality between the two.[81] Therefore, the Day of Pentecost was the necessary time for the Spirit to be poured out. It was the time when witnesses from all nations would be present, allowing this redemptive, mutual, Spirit-empowered witnessing to take place. The disciples are enabled to live the ministry that Jesus promises when they encounter the Spirit—when the trauma that they have been holding in their bodies becomes redemptively available, as suffering. When their suffering can be witnessed by others, grief can be expressed, received, and transformed to new life. Because witnessing grief is not the end of Peter's speech. He affirms that the Spirit Jesus promised has been poured out, so that those gathered may receive the promise of Christ's

[81] Hollingsworth, 'Spirit and Voice.'

resurrected life.[82] Engaging with the grief of Jesus' crucifixion is a necessary precedent to confession and repentance. Grieving, therefore, is itself a redemptive affection, and an aspect of Christ's atoning work.

This affective reading of the Day of Pentecost reveals the complexity of reactions to receiving the Spirit which are at play, beyond joy. We see perplexity, being 'cut to the heart.' We see the witnessing of grief, repentance, and action. Therefore, any contemporary theology that looks to the Acts 2 passage for its model of Christian affections must include the full range of affective responses in its views of renewal and redemption, and express how we have access to them today.

The Continuation of Affections of Pentecost for Atonement Today

Pentecostal theologians identify the Spirit-enabled affections poured out at Pentecost in glowing terms—joy and enthusiasm.[83] This understanding has developed in part as a response to dominant theological attitudes that refuse to make space for such affections in theological work.[84] Such a description of Christian affections centers the eschatological purposes of God, toward spaces of joy, healing, and renewal. At the same time, for those who are currently unable to feel joy and enthusiasm within their bodies, a transformation of affections toward the *ability to feel positive embodied emotions*, enabled through the Holy Spirit, sometimes precedes the positive emotions themselves. The process of unearthing painful emotions to be healed and

[82] Studebaker, *Spirit of Atonement*, 28.
[83] See, for example, Vondey, *Spirit of Pentecost*, 107–108.
[84] Vondey, *Scandal of Pentecost*, 85–115.

elevated to ecstatic worshipful joy is itself part of bodily redemption. The previous section has shown those same responses on display, on the Day of Pentecost. As it concretely connects with the reconciliation of human being to God, engagement with difficult affections is also part of Christ's atoning work. Including difficult affective responses within the range of affections—what I call 'affections of Pentecost'—addresses limitations in current Pentecostal theological thinking. While affective transformation of grief has joy as an ultimate end, making space for grief as inherently a soteriological affection is a necessary move. Coming to terms with traumatic pain takes time and space, and must be factored into soteriology.

Christian faith can be understood as a 'pattern of transformative affections', with their ultimate goal as union with God.[85] However, when only *positive* affections, such as enthusiasm, are viewed as part of Pentecostal spirituality, the pain of coming to terms with trauma and abuse are seen as outside of the spiritual affections. The lengthy process of grieving and brooding precede an ability to act and speak externally, but are necessary for transformation.[86] Therefore, the Holy Spirit's work of grieving with survivors, toward the eschatological end and hope of experiencing the positive affections associated with Pentecost, are part of the soteriological process. The failure to articulate a theological account that includes the painful (and often protracted) reckoning process of grieving is consistent with Pentecostal theology's difficulty in accounting for suffering.[87] An overfocus on a 'crisis moment,' such as coming to the altar, assumes a body already able to function physically in the face of embodied restrictions. In terms

[85] Vondey, *Scandal of Pentecost*, 109, 240.

[86] This model of the Spirit's work as grieving, brooding, and transforming comes from Cheryl Bridges Johns, 'Grieving, Brooding and Transforming: The Spirit, the Bible, and Gender,' in *Grieving, Brooding and Transforming: The Spirit, the Bible, and Gender*, ed. Cheryl Bridges Johns and Lisa P. Stephenson, (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 7–19.

[87] Peterson, 'Pneumatology in the Time of #MeToo,' 14.

of bodily autonomy, an atonement theology that encompasses the Spirit's work of 'grieving with' includes the responsibility of the believing community to accompany one who is unable to (yet) believe, without covering over the truth of their story or forcing a narrative on them that negates their story.

This view of Spirit-empowered witnessing as part of God's reconciling work also expands our understanding of sin. A relational understanding of sin clarifies that the 'body ruled by sin' being 'done away with' (6:6 NIV) does not refer only to sins one has committed and is responsible for repenting of. Rather, the Spirit who comforts and opens us to witness and be witnesses allows the hidden wound of trauma to be revealed, so it can be salved. This work requires connection with the pain, supported by others, so that right remembering and coming to terms with what has happened can begin. For experiences where one has been sinned against, such as sexual violence, justice must be included in transformation. Otherwise salvation becomes isolated from the larger community, not part of the Spirit's communal redemptive work. Obedience to God follows positive, healing encounter with God, because God is known in the body as the one who brings healing, and who offers that gift to us in order to be shared and spread.

Engagement in affective worship practices mark the 'place' within oneself and one's community—the moment(s)—where trauma becomes redemptively available as suffering in the body. The Spirit's interruption is redemptive rather than retraumatising because those who are traumatised encounter the somatic touch of the Spirit positively. Survivors are freed when they can speak the truth of their own experiences in safe, supportive spaces, relating their sexual abuse to Jesus'. They must be heard by others who are 'cut to the heart' and respond, 'What should we do?' Then obediently respond.

The resurrecting Spirit is recognised as the same Spirit who resurrected Jesus' body because She is experienced as a healing, comforting presence, the bringer of healed, resurrected life. Christ's Spirit is recognised as such—as opposed to any other Spirit—because He incorporates us into himself toward the eschatological end of God's promise of bodily redemption. In other words, the phenomenological, embodied sensations of positive intimate encounter experienced in Pentecostal worship praxis are themselves soteriological, because they engender positively embodied, redemptive life within the bodies of those who have been alienated from it. And this Spirit is known as Christ's Spirit because he is recognised as the one who heals us in the Spirit—and into whose very body our bodies become united. However, that healing and comforting presence often accompanies survivors through immense pain that is brought to the fore when long-suppressed memories are finally able to be remembered correctly. We see this in the crowd at Pentecost who are 'cut to the heart.' They are coming to terms with their own complicity. Survivors of trauma must first come to terms with what has been done to them, with supportive witnesses. As such, the relationship between the Spirit, sanctification, and human participation is deeply embodied. Pentecostal and charismatic worshipping communities centre their communal spiritual life around transformation through practices of affective divine encounter, often resulting in concrete life changes that are shared in community.

Pentecostal worship praxis is structured to facilitate such redemptive affective encounter with the Spirit, through deeply emotional singing, prayer, and other expressions that alter consciousness and invite ecstasy. These practices reach places of pain in the body in ways that subvert the barrier of verbal articulation, which is still inaccessible for survivors: 'In ecstatic

settings, the mode of communication is often precognitive, verbally inchoate, and somatic…claims of inner or emotional healing including forgiveness, pain reduction, and physical healing'[88] are some of the results those who engage in this type of worship report. The cultural focus on trauma has been reflected in more recently reported accounts of healing in charismatic worship practice. For example, at a widely publicised extended worship event in 2023 in Asbury, Kentucky, participants (largely students) reported experiences of healing from trauma, anxiety, and mental distress more than outward physical healing.[89] In this way, instances of healing through ecstatic encounter in worship can be understood as an extension of Jesus' healing ministry, enabled by the Spirit he promised, incorporating worshippers further into Christ's body. Such a view of affections of Pentecost includes them in God's atoning work in Christ. At the same time, the ability to give voice to pain and be witnessed, with no immediately visible signs of healing from that pain, is part of God's atoning work through faith in the ongoing healing that the encounter initiates.

Spirit baptism understood through the heuristic of affections of Pentecost shows how the Spirit moves through communal worship practices to enable healing from the embodied effects of trauma. That process includes the difficult aspects of coming to terms with pain in ways that do not always lead to immediate testimonies of victory, particularly when justice remains undone. Yet the Spirit initiates the possibility for the survivor to take agency within community, since 'the Holy Spirit, through the gifts of the Spirit, delivers the individual from isolation for the

[88] Wilkinson, 'Pentecostalism, the Body, and Embodiment,' in *Pentecostals and the Body*, 31.

[89] Ruth Graham and Jesse Barber, '"Woodstock" for Christians: Revival Draws Thousands to Kentucky Town,' *New York Times*, February 23, 2023, https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/woodstock-christians-revival-draws-thousands/docview/2779262793/se-2?accountid=8630.

purpose of engaging in the transformation of the self and others in community.'[90] Walking patiently with survivors through that process becomes the relationally embodied responsibility of those who witness the embryonic beginnings of God's reconciling work through the Spirit, together in Christ.

The chapter so far has shown how the Day of Pentecost establishes a broad frame of affective responses that lead to redemptive renewal, and how engaging in affective practices that allow individuals in communal worship to experience a 'personal Pentecost' today. The emphasis has been on the effects of affective worship for unearthing embodied trauma toward God's redemptive ends. The following section shows how atonement as 'affections of Pentecost' functions as a feminist Pentecostal trauma-informed theology. It then shows how the contribution of 'affections of Pentecost' answers limitations in Shelly Rambo's rejections of atonement and theologies of redemption. Finally, it names some limitations in Pentecostal and charismatic communities that must be addressed in order for the theology to be appropriated, with concluding remarks on the implications of Jesus as a sexual abuse survivor for theological engagement.

'Affections of Pentecost' as a Feminist Pentecostal Trauma-informed Heuristic

The previous section showed how disciples who witness to Jesus at Pentecost were themselves survivors of trauma. From a somatological perspective, they participate in his atoning work through their own embodiment of grieving, brooding, and transformation. Participation is made

[90] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 185.

possible through communal and personal practices of Pentecost—in which embodied trauma becomes redemptively available as suffering. Redemptive embodied practices of Pentecost bring sufferers into encounter with Christ through the Holy Spirit. As a result, constricted spaces in the body are opened to healing. Because healing encounter requires trusting, intimate opening to Christ, sexual intimacy is also restored. This is why 'belief' in Christ—understood as relational, embodied trust rather intellectual assent to a set of ideas—is necessary. Christ becomes known somatically as the one survivors can trust. He has not simply suffered the same fate of sexual violation in solidarity with other victims. Because of his existence as the 'Spirit of Jesus' through his intercession within human history, he also redeems bodies within time. The Holy Spirit redeems the 'lost time' within the bodies of survivors. This is possible because the Spirit's communication of the gospel and enactment in human persons traverses the bounds of time and space.[91] Trusting embodied relationality then begins to become a possibility for those bearing the wounds of sexual trauma. The Spirit of Jesus is the one who heals us by connecting us to himself.

As a result, the dislocations of body, time, and language begin the long path toward recovery. Bodies begin to trust redemptive, rather than violating, touch. Through movement and affective engagement in worship, constrictions within the body begin to become freed.[92] Within a supportive community, the Spirit releases memories frozen in time and body through relational restoration and narrativization. Survivors can re-narrate the events of the past in a powerful new story that allows them to become integrated—not negated, but able to be faced and spoken. They can say, what happened to Jesus' body is what happened to *my* body. In the Eucharistic

[91] Wolfgang Vondey, 'The Holy Spirit and Time in Contemporary Catholic and Protestant Theology,' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 58, no. 4 (2005): 393–409.

[92] Daniels, *From Normative to Nothing*, 243.

liturgy, the words, 'This is my body, broken for you,' hold the promise of redemption through integration with his body. By connecting with Christ in the touch of loving encounter, life becomes renewed in the body. In this way, the same Spirit who raised Christ raises those who have suffered traumatic bodily constriction into the 'first fruits' of resurrection life.

In terms of bodily redemption, this relational view of atonement reveals different responsibilities and capacities within the body of Christ (understood as the followers of Jesus in this context), in terms of those who have suffered sexual abuse themselves and others who support them. Participation in the redeemed life of Christ through the Spirit, toward reconciliation with God the Father, will take different shapes for those of different backgrounds. Bodily autonomy is conceived as relational on all levels—humans in yielding, trusting relationship with the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, which guides relationality with one another and oneself. Embodied redemptive practices of Pentecost, such as the sharing of testimonies, glossolalia and interpretation, and laying on of hands for healing, increase and expand trusting relationality among believers.

In addition, the Spirit's empowerment for mission means believers are called to live faith in Christ outward for those who do not have the capacity to trust for themselves—holding trust, love, and hope for them.[93] The call to grieve with those who have been abused, living in the space of long divine transformation without 'rush to Easter victory,'[94] are necessary for a relational model of atonement that honours the soul-crushing experience of sexual violation. At the same time, the community of faith's concrete hope in the resurrection and redemption of the

[93] Linda Mercadante, 'Anguish: Unraveling Sin and Victimization,' *Anglican Theological Review* 82, no. 2 (2000): 301–2.

[94] Peterson, 'Pneumatology in the Time of #MeToo,' 21.

body, demonstrated through the actions and stories of those whose lives have been transformed through Christ (including survivors of sexual abuse and others), centres the communal narrative that guides this mission.[95] Cognizant of the dangers of overly triumphalistic visions of atonement that erase narratives of pain and trauma, believers are called to be honest about the complexities of their own testimonies. Patience and trust in the unique shape and pacing of the Spirit's work in others who do not (yet) possess the capacity for faith in Christ is also key to redemptive relationality.

Theology must allow space for grieving within soteriology. Jesus grieved, and grieving was part of the restoration of life begun in his healing ministry, through to the reception of the Spirit to the Church at Pentecost. He grieved Lazarus' death before raising him from the dead. He grieved in the garden of Gethsemane. Specific to survivors, he grieved his own sexual violation. When he cried out, 'My God, My God…' he cried out what others who experienced what he suffered went through: stripping, rending of clothes, being exposed for ridicule, etc. As those who have suffered as he did come into union with him in the Spirit of Pentecost, their own trauma becomes available to them as suffering, within supportive church community. Part of affective embodied behaviour is becoming enabled to grieve. Rather than victorious defeat of death, sexual abuse survivors experience the Spirit's empowerment through the gift of being able to give voice to their experiences.[96] That means communities must create safe, supportive, Spirit-filled spaces that allow testimonies (in appropriate environments) in which survivors are able to name the connection between themselves and Jesus in this way.

[95] Susan Shooter, *How Survivors of Abuse Relate to God: The Authentic Spirituality of the Annihilated Soul* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 169–72.

[96] Peterson, 'Pneumatology in the Time of #MeToo,' 23.

Naming Jesus' experiences as a victim and survivor of sexual abuse, in conversation with a somatologically framed Spirit Christological understanding of atonement, also demonstrates the limitations of the 'bodily ownership' model of bodily autonomy for offering a redemptive vision to survivors. In the Passion and resurrection, Jesus does not 'claim' autonomy over his body. In one way, his embodied experiences mirror what happens to others who experience sexual violation—Jesus' suffering is comparable to their suffering. However, his role does not stop at solidarity or identification. Unlike many others who experience sexual violation, his suffering does not result in the embodied aftereffects of psychological trauma. Because of his divine nature, Jesus is able to take the entirety of the effects of traumatic bodily violation into himself. Through the Spirit, in his death, experience of Holy Saturday, and resurrection, Jesus' experience of sexual bodily violation is healed and transformed. The process of grieving, brooding, and transforming[97] is lived out in Jesus' skin, akin to survivors' experiences of trauma (and healing from it). That his resurrected body bears the marks of his torture demonstrates the reality that transformation is not erasure—his body remembers, but lives in fullness of life following trauma.

The particularity of the trauma that Jesus suffered through the cross, and how the Spirit redeems his body through the resurrection, includes the pain of sexual abuse. Naming Jesus as a victim and survivor of sexual abuse, and as living a flourishing resurrection life that does not negate that experience, opens space for those who have experienced sexual abuse to narrate their own experience within his. Through this naming, survivors become aware of their pain within the frame of Holy Saturday. This was a time of the Spirit's brooding; the disciples could not live into Jesus' commands yet. This time relates to those who've experienced sexual bodily

[97] See note 81 above.

violation; allowing space for grieving means not jumping steps to Easter. This means understanding on the part of communities that walk with survivors, not expecting their life transformation to unfold in a linear, 'checklist' fashion.

The church must also accept that the transformation of ability to receive and engage in sexual relationality begins from intimacy of relational encounter with Christ. The church must not be afraid to accept the continuity between intimacy with Christ in the Spirit and sexual intimacy within romantic relationships, with the former defining the shape of the latter.[98] The above truths: that Jesus suffered sexual abuse, that atonement includes reconciliation of embodied relationality in the wake of that abuse, and that our own redeemed sexual relationality through incorporation into his body is continuous with sexual relationality initiated through encounter with Christ in the Spirit, may be uncomfortable for the church to hear. But they are essential if we are to make space for the wholeness of human embodied redemption in our articulation of soteriology.

How 'Affections of Pentecost' Answers Rambo's Critiques of Atonement and Redemption

This subsection clarifies how using 'Affections of Pentecost' as a heuristic for framing atonement answers limitations in Shelly Rambo's trauma-informed theology.[99] Rambo's disembodiment of her 'middle Spirit' from 'the Pentecost Spirit'[100] stems, in part, from a view of the Holy Spirit at

[98] Sarah Coakley, *The New Asceticism: Sexuality, Gender, and the Quest for God* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 85–100.

[99] See Chapter Two of this thesis.

[100] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 106.

Pentecost as overly equated with new life, without also contending with the complexities of the aftermath of traumatic death.[101] By contrast, viewing the Holy Spirit's role in atonement at Pentecost as a continuation of the Spirit's work that began at creation, redeeming life from chaos, corrects this limitation.

Revealing Christian spirituality as a 'pattern of transformative affections'[102] connects with a Spirit-Christological view of atonement that answers Rambo's disconnection of the 'middle spirit' from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Christ is the one who grieves with survivors in the abyss, empowering them to give voice to the pain.[103] In worship believers concretely encounter the person of Christ in the Spirit. The body of Christ, who is encountered in the Spirit, establishes the basis for all other intimate embodied connections, sexual or otherwise. It is through encountering the concrete person of Christ in worship, through His Spirit who mourns with survivors in the abyss, but also promises relational connection on the other side—holding them even when they are unable to hold him in return—that sexual relationality within themselves and with others is restored.

Rambo's disembodiment of the 'middle spirit' from the person of Jesus destroys this possibility. She describes a spirit that is 'not isolated to the figure of Jesus.'[104] In her attempt to demonstrate the spirit's presence with those experiencing embodied death in the aftermath of trauma,[105] she cuts the spirit off from the promise of new life in Christ. Her theological response to the elisions of death in triumphalist accounts of redemption disconnects her ability to imagine

[101] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 114.
[102] Vondey, *Scandal of Pentecost*, 109, 240.
[103] Peterson, 'Pneumatology in the Time of #MeToo,' 23.
[104] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 121.
[105] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 120.

the particular eschatological hope of bodily redemption via the resurrection. In looking at the atrocities of history, she concludes, 'victory does not come quickly, *if it comes at all*.'[106] In other words, if victory is not visible and made present before physical death, Rambo accepts the possibility that the hope of victory will never happen, against hope and Christian teaching across time.

Disconnecting the bodies of the living from hope of reconnection with the bodies of the deceased mirrors an inability to connect presently living bodies with one another. The middle spirit Rambo envisions is not tied to any particular embodied hope or material encounter. It is also explicitly disconnected both from the body of the resurrected, ascended Jesus, and the promised outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. Instead, responsibility falls on humans to 'remain' in the aftermath of traumatic death amid the presence of a spirit that exists as 'persistent witness with the concept of love,' understood in terms of 'indeterminate blowing and formlessness.'[107] Without concrete hope or Christic encountering touch, she concludes, 'Forms of life arising from this Spirit have yet to be imagined.'[108] In attempting to fill the gap traditional accounts of redemption have left for abiding in the middle, she has detached survivors from the promised hope of intimate, concrete connection with Christ, which forms the core of Christian spirituality, theology, and practice. Encounter with God's tangible, transforming presence through the intervention of the Spirit is removed from a theological account of atonement and redemption. Like the crucicentric focus on atonement and 'holy sex' presented above, Rambo's revisioned view of redemption does not account for the significance of divine touch in bodily redemption.

[106] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 129. Emphasis added.
[107] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 139.
[108] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 141.

For survivors, faith in Christ means entrusting their own traumatised body to his body—trusting that, in him whose body was physically resurrected, ascended and glorified, our bodies will also be resurrected. This articulation of faith in Christ enables healing because it is through the same Spirit who raised him—not another, 'middle' spirit. Releasing control of one's illusory ownership of the body also releases trauma. Survivors trust in Christ's body to make what has been made unavailable within their own bodies now available, as suffering. They can do this because through the Spirit they *know* their bodies—experience them—as becoming redeemed through his body. And his body is redeemed in the context of the Spirit's life and work, which is Jesus' Spirit. That is why the Christological particularity of Jesus' embodied self as the one who promises the Spirit is necessary.

Rambo's rejection of salvation and atonement leave her with no mechanism for identifying positive outcomes for 'tracking the undertow' and 'sensing life'.[109] Therefore she is unable to imagine life in the aftermath of trauma beyond a 'weary trickle.'[110] Her restricted imagination is the result of a pneumatology that understands bodily autonomy within a framework of (white, self-sufficient) mastery, possession and control.[111] This framework cannot imagine concrete embodied life that is sustained and dependent upon another, even the divine other, even when that other empowers our own flourishing. Atonement understood through the lens of 'affections of Pentecost,' in which surrender to the Spirit enables our incorporation into the body of Christ and empowers us to live redemptively and relationally, corrects this limitation.

[109] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 160–3.
[110] Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 172.
[111] See Chapter Four of this thesis.

Barriers to Engaging with 'Affections of Pentecost' in Christian Communities

The previous section has developed a view of atonement as 'Affections of Pentecost,' arguing that the praxis seen in Pentecostal and charismatic worship has the potential to open up bodies that have been constricted by traumatic sexual violation: to create space for a 'redemptive interruption' of the Spirit. At the same time, Pentecostal and charismatic communities who engage in such worship practices possess beliefs and practice that erect barriers to integrating sexual healing in this model. This section outlines some of these barriers, with constructive comments on where 'affections of Pentecost' might find the most purchase.

First, emotionally affective spirituality can also hold the danger of 'other-worldliness.' As well, a self-oriented 'prosperity gospel,' where persons are believed to receive material blessing as a result of faithful practice, is prevalent in some Pentecostal communities. However, such a reading of the gospel is consistent with the ideals of middle-class Western consumerism. In terms of bodily autonomy, Chapter Four of this thesis demonstrates how a goal of possession, mastery, and control can affect Christians' view of redemption. Bringing material goods into oneself for one's own use is a distortion of the gospel. In terms of relational intimacy, the goal on such a view is to acquire, which destroys relationality. However, recent research shows that in many contexts this is not the case. In fact, globally, many 'Spirit-empowered' churches are actively engaged in social and political work driven by their desire to manifest God's kingdom.[112] A difference in how worship praxis affects day-to-day lives can be connected to how God's gifting is

[112] Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

understood—whether inward toward personal enrichment, or outward toward communal engagement.

Of course, the very influence of Christian social engagement has been recognised as a danger to women and vulnerable populations when it enforces patriarchal, oppressive norms of sexuality and gender—the second barrier. A pertinent example is the effort led by American Evangelical groups to support the death penalty for LGBTQ+ persons in Uganda.[113] This chapter has demonstrated how such views are linked to a theology of sanctification in which 'Spirit' and 'flesh' are viewed in a binary relationship, and how this view contradicts a notion of redeemed affective embodied sexual relationality. Sexuality in these communities is understood in terms of behaviour, in a framework of protection against 'unholy' sexual behaviour.[114] However, Pentecostal spiritual practices do not inherently detach worshippers from the concrete world, and more immediately their own bodies. In fact, it often results in powerful, concrete personal and communal transformation, including testimonies of bodily healing. I argue that the particular communal spiritual practices that characterise Pentecostal and charismatic worshipping communities are responsible for these changes. Contra classical Pentecostal denominations, charismatic and neo-charismatic communities tend to focus on healing and renewal rather than emphasising holiness as mortification of the flesh.[115] It may be the case that Christian communities outside of classical Pentecostal denominations that experience renewal of the Spirit

[113] Emma Sanderson, 'The Unholy Relationship Between Uganda's Anti-LGBTQ+ Law and US Evangelicalism,' *Global Insight Blog*, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, June 8, 2023, online at https://globalaffairs.org/commentary-and-analysis/blogs/unholy-relationship-between-ugandas-anti-lgbtq-law-and-us.

[114] See Section I of this chapter.

[115] Wilkinson, 'Pentecostalism, the Body, and Embodiment,' 33.

in worship may be more likely to embrace a view of 'affections of Pentecost' that includes redeemed sexual relationality. This heuristic therefore has promising ecumenical applications.

Part IV: The Promise of a Feminist Theology of Pentecost for Atonement Theology

This chapter has provided a heuristic tool for engaging with atonement that speaks to the needs of survivors of sexual abuse, from a feminist perspective that centres the Spirit's role at Pentecost. The conception of bodily autonomy presented here reflects the 'bodily integration' model. It serves as a corrective to both autonomous and heteronomous extremes of traditional (white) academic Protestant theology and Pentecostal theology that overemphasises embodied submission at the expense of bodily goodness.

Conceiving of atonement as 'affections of Pentecost' answers limitations in both Pentecostal and feminist theologies. Understanding the complicated nature of affections as including grief and communal response answers the limitations of Pentecostal affective views that overly stress joyful enthusiasm. At the same time, this view names the limitations in feminist theologies that fail to take into account the emotional nature of particularly Christian affections, developed through practices that centre the particularity of Christ as attached to the person of Jesus, encountered through the Spirit.

To develop this tool, I offered an overview of Studebaker's Spirit Christology, which centres Pentecost in God's redemptive narrative. I highlighted its implications for how that shift addresses the abusive potentials of traditional Western articulations of judicial atonement. I then expanded on Studebaker's observation that the Spirit enables the renewal of embodied life to

detail how that happens within the lives of sexual abuse survivors. To attach my theology to the Day of Pentecost, I showed how these affections were at work in that event, within Peter's body in the biblical text of Acts 2 through the crowd's act of witnessing. I showed how the heuristic reveals the Spirit's work of grieving, brooding, and transforming, in relational agency with Peter and the crowd. I then looked at how that somatological heuristic might translate for a survivor of sexual abuse engaging with the biblical text of Acts 2, as well as the congregation who supports them.

As an additional note, when speaking of the Spirit's work, we have to be aware of cultural assumptions external to the gospel that shape how Pentecost is understood and experienced. For example, Pentecostals are described as 'a people invaded by the Spirit.'[116] Such phrasing imports a theology of force that is not present in the gospel. By contrast, the text itself states that the disciples somatically experiencing the tongues of fire as 'resting' on them—the same term used to describe how they are sitting in the room (Acts 2:2, 3). Understanding the Spirit's work with survivors as 'resting' is both closer to the biblical witness and a gentler way of providing space for those who have been violated.

This reframing of atonement shows how death on the cross is not the goal of Christ's work when the end of bodily redemption is understood eschatologically. Rather, atonement points to the promise of bodily resurrection, while acknowledging the present lived realities of trauma. The first step in post-traumatic remaking is remembering rightly. Both Jesus' crucifixion and bodily resurrection are our right remembering. Through the lived practices of faith, we

[116] Terry L. Cross, 'The Rich Feast of Theology: Can Pentecostals Bring the Main Course or Only the Relish?' *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8, no. 16 (2000): 34.

remember the truth of what has happened to Jesus' body, and the promise of what we now live into, together. For survivors, trauma memories must be freed from the body, opened up so that the suffering can be integrated into a life story. So correct memory of trauma is not enough. Once it is accessed, it must be transformed. Jesus enables our transformation through his body.

Within a Christian theological narrative, all humans live in bodies that are *being reconciled*, and that reconciliation comes through Christ. In a Gospel-shaped view of atonement, the movement is always toward the redeemed body of Jesus, the body for us, with whom we join in and are part. Atonement cannot be divorced from the historical event of Jesus' bodily resurrection and our own eschatological hope for bodily resurrection.

CONCLUSION

THE PROMISE OF PENTECOST FOR ECUMENISM: UNITING THE BODY OF CHRIST

This thesis has offered a corrective to this tragic constriction in theological imagination. It has provided a way of understanding atonement—Christ's reconciling work on our behalf—that includes the abundant life of healed sexual relationality. To get there, I have exposed the underlying assumptions about bodies that shape our theological thinking, both by feminists who have rejected atonement wholesale and those who insist that a redeemed life is evidenced in legal views of sexual relationships. These assumptions about the relationship between bodily agency, and human and divine power, have led to distortions in how we imagine God's reconciling work in Christ, and how we participate in God's work of reconciliation.

In particular, this thesis has challenged assumptions about bodies and empowerment that limit our ability to imagine redeemed sexuality. I then offered a constructive alternative: understanding our participation in God's reconciliation via the affections of Pentecost as the culmination of Christ's reconciling work. Yet the implications of reimagining our understanding of 'atonement' to include the reconciliation of embodied humanity has consequences beyond those traumatised by sexual violation. This thesis has shown how our whole being, including our bodies, become alienated from relationality as a result of sexual trauma, and imagined a fully orbed vision of reconciliation that includes sexual relationality. The resulting constructive contribution, affections of Pentecost, offers Christian theology a tool to enrich its vision for redeemed relationality more broadly.

To make the link between reconciled relationality and sexually violated bodies, I began with two related questions: how do those who have suffered the traumatic violation of sexual abuse experience 'atonement': the reconciliation of embodied relationship with oneself, others, and God? And how does God's atoning work through Christ empower survivors to live within this life toward the Christian hope and promise of bodily redemption? Addressing these questions required an interdisciplinary approach. Families of questions came to the fore: what does it mean to have a 'redeemed body' in a Christian sense, and what is its relationship to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus? For those who have suffered sexual bodily violation, what does a body redeemed in its sexual relationality mean? Findings from trauma research, and the insights of theologians who incorporate trauma into their critical and constructive work, helped inform this question.

Those who have been separated from healthy physical relationality with others, due to others' violation of what should have been trusting intimacy, exemplify the limitations of a 'disembodied' atonement theology. In other words, if the reconciliation between God, human beings, and oneself is understood to take place as a legal exchange between the Father and the Son that solely changes the 'standing' between humanity and God, redemption stops at a conceptual level. What, then, of the redemption of relationally alienated *bodies*? Ultimately, the question of how violated bodies experience redemption is latched to a larger question: how, and what, do bodies know, and how are they limited in their knowledge? How does the somatic knowledge of others inform our own embodied knowing, and what do our bodies have to contribute to wider knowledge? Trauma research demonstrates how physical violation disrupts the borders and access points of corporeal knowing, blocking from awareness aspects of

ourselves that would allow us to address pain, name it, and thereby live relationally well with ourselves and others. Theologically and physically, our minds and voices become unknown to ourselves and others. It is God's reconciling work that allows our embodied knowledge, expression, and connection.

This work has sought to name the elisions between body and Spirit that Christian doctrine has placed in opposition, as well as between death and life, in theologising atonement. It is this gap that has allowed feminists who rightly name the need for agency on the part of the oppressed and abused, and the need for doctrine that speaks to the realities of lived experiences in flesh-and-blood bodies, to reject atonement. While feminists' sharpest condemnations of atonement have been aimed at penal substitution, some have rejected the concept, wholesale, as salvific. If God's reconciliation does not inherently include humans, our relationships and bodies, it does not connect the spiritual and material aspects of redemption. At the same time, feminist concerns for agency and honestly reflecting lived experiences in theological construction have carried their own elisions. This work has demonstrated that feminist rejections of atonement share a conception of the body informed by Western (white) ideals of an owned, controlled, body that operates out of, and seeks, its own power. Such a view of the body is both inconsistent with trauma findings that show the necessity for surrender to outside agents in regaining one's own power, and a Christian theological imagination that centres the role of hope for redeemed bodies.

My conclusions about bodies, trauma, and atonement began by digging at the roots of second-wave North American feminist theologising about bodies. This exploration made explicit the underlying assumptions that have guided contemporary feminist discussions about Jesus'

body, our own bodies, and the relationality between the two. Chapter One placed feminists who reject atonement within their historical and cultural context, specifically in terms of the models they adopted for understanding bodily autonomy. The goal was to demonstrate the relationship between conceptions of bodily autonomy, findings from trauma literature about the experiencing of self-remaking amid the ongoing effects of trauma, and theological understandings of the human/divine relationship. To gain the critical distance needed to evaluate assumptions of bodily autonomy, I developed a somatology, or theology of the body. This somatology contrasted two models for understanding bodily autonomy (the 'bodily ownership' view and the 'bodily integration' view). I then applied a somatological analysis to the development of second-wave North American feminist theologians' rethinking of embodiment and agency. The analysis concluded that these feminists assume an understanding of human bodies as property, owned and controlled by one's will. Relationships with others, then, are envisioned as ongoing negotiations of property rights—exercising autonomy over one's bodily property through refusal or acceptance of connection. Such a separable view of bodily autonomy and relational connection contradicts what research shows is necessary for survivors of sexual abuse to experience intimate relational connection: a paradoxical relationship between bodily autonomy and relational connection. Ultimately, a 'bodily ownership' view also rejects a relationship of dependence on God, seeing the human/divine relationship within a framework where empowerment is sparked among and between human selves. Even when human intercession is acknowledged, collective human bodies are still responsible for their own redemption. Such a view assumes that, while we may experience collective dependence in order to achieve

redemption, human bodies still maintain their collective ownership and reject dependence on an ultimate other who cannot be bounded by human conceptions of empowerment.

The somatology developed in Chapter One, which outlined the contours of the development of feminist theological thinking around the body, was then applied to feminist rejections of atonement in Chapter Two. It demonstrated how the theological conclusions of Joanne Carlson Brown, Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker established the early basis and criteria for feminist rejections of atonement. Beginning from their rejectionist approach, subsequent feminist attempts to retain a revised understanding of atonement that do not challenge the 'bodily ownership' model continue to inform contemporary trauma-informed feminist theologies. These assumptions produce concrete consequences for how bodily redemption is understood.

Shelly Rambo served as an example. She names the need for remaking selves in the 'ongoing-ness' of trauma within human communities. Yet by reconceiving atonement, redemption, witnessing, and pneumatology within an immanent frame, she rejects the unique significance of Jesus' body for our salvation. By seeing salvation from the perspective of bodies that are responsible for asserting their own agency and claiming their own power from within the bounds of human community, God's initiating, interceding grace is left out. An overly immanent view of humanity's ability and responsibility to craft its own remaking (*not* redemption) leads to Rambo's emaciated Christian imagination. On her view, conceiving the possibility of a God who acts on our behalf to take on death, toward the promise of fully redeemed relationships and bodies beyond humans' own abilities, becomes unimaginable and seemingly irresponsible. Her insistence on human bodily control limits her theological vision to a 'weary trickle' of human

responsibility, with no ultimate, concrete hope for redemption. The central historical Christian hope of bodily resurrection is thereby boxed out from Rambo's somatic imagination.

While the first chapters focused on feminists who reject atonement, Chapter Three shifted to feminist theological approaches that challenge the aforementioned understanding of bodily autonomy in the human/divine relationship. This chapter somatologically evaluated Kathryn Tanner's incarnational atonement approach. Tanner acknowledges human dependence on God, challenging the 'bodily ownership' view of the previous chapters. In addition, by making Incarnation intrinsic to atonement, she centralises the significance of Jesus' body in his atoning work. However, because she begins from a Logos ('high') Christology, she struggles to articulate how fractured people come to participate in God's redeeming work. She mentions the Holy Spirit in passing, but extrinsically to the work of atonement. As a result, she misses out how Jesus' participation in God as Logos connects with our own participation through the Spirit, as well as the Spirit's agency alongside the Logos. The chapter demonstrates the need for an approach that takes feminist concerns seriously while avoiding the 'high/low' Christological binary. This observation sets up the work of the final two chapters, which in their outworking subvert this binary.

Chapter Four contrasted Pentecostals' embodied knowledge with the framework and expectations of academic knowledge production. This contrast showed why academic theology has struggled to imagine theology from the perspective of the body—especially yielding, dependent bodies. The chapter revealed how Pentecostal scholarship has been hindered in its theological offerings by being forced to fit the shape of a disembodied, self-sufficient academic knowledge frame. By challenging this framework based on its alternative bodily way of knowing

through dependent relationality, Pentecostal scholarship holds the promise to offer a more somatically engaged theological vision. At the same time, Pentecostals' acknowledgement of human susceptibility to outside spiritual influences has been combined with a vision of sexual purity that has led to a non-relational understanding of sexual relationships. The combination of corporal knowledge and corporal ignorance create a barrier within Pentecostal theology for envisioning redeemed sexual relationality. These paradoxical promises and limitations set up the work of Chapter Five: a feminist-informed view of atonement that critically and constructively incorporates Pentecostal theological contributions regarding the body, Spirit, and relationality.

Chapter Five moved to a constructive contribution to atonement theology, developing the heuristic of 'affections of Pentecost.' It showed how bodies come to know the 'first fruits' of redemption through the healing of fractured affections. Renewal comes through encountering the ongoing experience of Pentecost that the Spirit initiates. The affections that are opened, and what they change in the person, depends on what within them stands in need of redemption. For the sexually sinned against, reparation of intimate touch and connection is needed. For perpetrators, being 'cut to the heart' and brought to repentance are necessary. Just as the lowly are raised and the haughty brought down, those who fear and are repelled by touch are released to enjoy it, and those who have taken in non-relational ways from others are moved to take action meet for correcting their rapaciousness. In the meanwhile, the vulnerable are protected from further harm.

Through our affective engagement in Pentecost as ongoing encounter through communal worship practices, we come to a corporeal sense of redemption—knowing within ourselves how the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead gives life to our mortal bodies. Bodies that have

been affectively dead come to life, through and into Christ's body, via the Spirit's interceding touch. This work of reconciliation is both personal and communal. When others share their pain of violation, redemptive witnessing means experiencing painful affections alongside survivors, seeking justice and redeemed relationality.

Affections of Pentecost and the Reconciliation of Feminist and Pentecostal Theologies

With 'affections of Pentecost,' this thesis has offered a tool to reconnect affective faith engagement with doctrinal development and expression. This tool repairs a limitation in Christian theologising about bodies, to offer a more expansive understanding of both Christ's reconciling work and our participation in it. I explored Pentecostal spirituality and theology as a basis for engaging in this repair work for two reasons. First, it is the tradition that formed my early worldview, and I experienced a pain of spiritual separation when I left, due to my tradition's inability to meet the needs I faced in light of my own sexual abuse. Bringing together charismatic faith practice with feminist theological reflection has repaired a breach in my own embodied, spiritual, whole being.

My personal reconciliation in bringing these theological traditions together is reflected in the second reason for the work. Namely, in engaging with Pentecostal and feminist theologians attempting to bring the wholeness of their faith experiences into the work of academic theology, I sensed a similar pain of separation. There is a desire to faithfully do the work of addressing barriers in the tradition and proclaiming God's kingdom in Christ. But the assumptions and structures of academic theology itself, in terms of a separation between body and intellect, have

created hindrances to that proclamation. Absorption into ill-fitting intellectual frameworks has erected a false binary between doctrine and the body for feminists who seek to bring the charismatic elements of faith into their theologising. Surrender to Christ has been read as negation of self, rather than empowerment of self through the touch of the Divine Other. By beginning from the assumption of bodies needing to gain and assert their own power from within human frameworks, renewal through Christ is lost in this vision. Understanding Christ's atoning work in terms of the reality of what he takes into his own body, what he does for us through the Spirit, and how he invites and empowers our participation in the Spirit, answers this gap.

In addition, when our understanding of power relationships is limited to a binary that assumes either our conformance or resistance,[1] God's intervening, reconciling grace is placed to the side. Christian theology then loses the ability to trust God in working toward reconciliation with those with whom we fundamentally disagree, engaging instead in an immanent power struggle. When feminist theologians accept a binary that assumes an inability to reconcile with those on the 'other side' of the church, casting aside broad swath of the tradition as 'fundamentalist,' Jesus' key command to love our neighbour as ourself is lost. The 'ministry of reconciliation' (2 Cor 5:18) we are called to live out falls away. Divisiveness and 'finding one's tribe' take the place of witnessing and living in community with others. We close ourselves to the Spirit's work of interceding and opening us toward mutual growth and understanding. This thesis seeks to name the necessity to open ourselves to the Spirit, naming how our affective

[1] Catherine Holtmann, 'Introduction,' in *Sisters, Mothers, Daughters: Pentecostal Perspectives on Violence Against Women*, ed. Kimberly Ervin Alexander et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 3.

engagement empowered by the Spirit releases us to trust (wisely and carefully) across such divides.

By shifting the Spirit to the centre of Christ's atoning work, a number of binaries break down. In the Spirit's binary-breaking work, reconciliation that would have been impossible within the realms of solely human relationality are opened up and integrated into the life of the Triune God. The first is the Spirit/body binary. Jesus participates in atonement, in his body, through the Spirit. This is the same Spirit who hovered over and breathed redemption into the 'nothingness' at the start of creation, and whose redemption continues throughout scripture. Jesus as the Incarnate Word possesses both a human voice as well as the 'Divine Voice' of the Holy Spirit.[2] In his crucifixion, human powers reject the Divine Voice when they kill the human Jesus. His human voice was silenced when he 'breathed his last' on the cross, giving up his spirit.[3] The disciples participated in that silencing of the Divine Voice when they were kept from witnessing to his death, kept from speaking by the weight of their own trauma.

Much contemporary commentary names the *choice* the (male) disciples made to abandon Jesus on the cross. Missing from this evaluation is their inability to bear witness, wrought by the traumatic violence and its effects on their bodies and being. Underlying much of our contemporary reflection is a theology that assumes bodies free to make choices—for example, assuming the disciples could equally have chosen a different pattern of engagement. But recent scholarship names the disciples as also witnesses to trauma, who are constrained in their reactions by its embodied effects. They are paralyzed when they witness Jesus being taken

[2] Andrea Hollingsworth, 'Spirit and Voice: Toward a Feminist Pentecostal Pneumatology,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 29, no. 2 (2007).

[3] Mt 27:50; Lk 23:46, Jn 19:30.

away. Panic has set in: the disciples cannot breathe. They close themselves into locked rooms, metaphorically and physically. They are only freed from those restrictions when the Holy Spirit redeems the flow of breath within their bodies. Scripture shows this redemption in two places: John 20 and Acts 2. In both cases, the bodies and souls of the disciples are freed when they come into contact with the Spirit that Jesus has promised to send. And the result of their freeing comes in confessing Jesus as the one who has enabled this miraculous redemption.

Bringing together feminist and Pentecostal theology breaks down the binary that prevents each from imagining how they could find points of connection with the other. Therefore, the exercise of Pentecostal feminist theology is itself participation in God's reconciling work through Christ.[4] When the Holy Spirit falls on the disciples at Pentecost, the gospel is spread when the participants become enabled to speak and hear in the languages that each can understand—when they can be witnesses to and for one another. Understanding in this context extends beyond intellectual assent, including affective, embodied knowing.

The somatological differences that underlie feminist understandings of bodily autonomy and Pentecostal theology respectively are different embodied languages—different ways of informing and shaping worlds. This is the reason 'feminist Pentecostal' theology has been regarded as a contradiction in terms. But by making explicit the understandings of the body that inform theological critique and construction, translation, as well as points of mutual connection and enrichment, become possible. I chose one doctrinal area, atonement, to explore the

[4] I have written elsewhere on the practice of Pentecostal feminist theology as a reconciling act of the Triune God. See Faith Van Horne, 'Somatic Pneumatology: A Pentecostal Contribution to Feminist Liberation Theology,' *Journal of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity* 44, no. 1 (2024).

potential of 'affections of Pentecost' as a theological tool, and only scratched the surface. I hope this tool can offer Christians across the traditions a way to explore other doctrines and practices.

Sexuality and Embodied Vulnerability

This thesis addresses redeemed sexual relationality, but in a larger way speaks to the creative overcoming of somatic 'unknowing,' whether from trauma or other ways we hide from ourselves. Sexual affection is an acute example of the promise and danger of vulnerability, and our concerns for power, in relationships. Vulnerability does not mean that unequal power in sexual relationships must (or even can) be done away with. Being finite humans, we will always both need and have something needed to offer one another, in varying capacities. Every relationship necessarily negotiates status and power differences, and, when negotiated in healthy ways, those differences may even contribute to intimate sexual relationality.[5] The danger comes when those differences are mandated through oppressive structures, rather than recognising the differing lived, embodied capacities of those within the relationship. Honouring our differences comes through being shaped into Christlike relationships of care, intimacy, and mutual integration, through the power of the Spirit. When we embody the hope for our eschatological ends toward the redemption that we live partially now, we can 'imagine that redeemed differences of rank will well look utterly different from the disordered differences (like our enactments of those based on

[5] Maia Kotrosits, 'Penetration and Its Discontents: Greco-Roman Sexuality, the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, and Theorizing Eros without the Wound,' *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 27, no. 3 (2018).

gender, class, and race) that we sinfully perpetuate in our embodied lives together now.'[6] A healthy theology that acknowledges our differing bodily capacities, needs, and responsibilities is necessary to live this vision. God's reconciling grace in Christ, made known to us through the Spirit, who enlivens our affections, works in the midst.

Coda: Atonement and the Fullness of Sexually Relational Life

When I share with others about my thesis, including that my own experience of sexual abuse and resultant theological struggles inspired my work, sometimes others are vulnerable enough to share their own stories of abuse. I have heard different friends, in coming to terms with their own experience and trying to be sincerely supportive of my work, say some variation of the following: 'Isn't it a relief that Jesus tells us that in the resurrection we won't have to worry about any of this?' *This* refers to sexual relationships, and sexuality in general. Without naming the passage, they are referring to Jesus' response to the Sadducees' legalistic question about marriage in the resurrection. Since marriage is between one man and one woman, a woman who remarries (properly, under the law) after her husband's death presents a legal challenge, if resurrection is true: to which husband does she belong?[7] As he so often does, Jesus deflects their question by naming the trap they have set and not stepping into it. The question, he says, is irrelevant, since in the resurrection 'they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven' (Mt 23:30, Mk 12:25). He cleverly points out the limitations of the legalistic

[6] Beth Felker-Jones, *Marks of His Wounds: Gender Politics and Bodily Resurrection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 102–3.

[7] Mt 22:23–30; Mk 12:18–25; Lk 20:27–36.

view that closes off the Sadducees from imagining redeemed, embodied, resurrected life. The structures of our relationships, he is saying, will no longer fall into earthly proprietary models, concerned with who belongs to whom. He challenges them to reconsider their notions of what it means to belong to one another, trusting in God's power and a more expansive understanding of scripture.

Ironically, the well-meaning Christians who offer the above response are speaking from the same constricted imagination that Jesus subverts in his rebuttal. But they are only speaking from the limited frames we have adopted in understanding the relationship between God's reconciling work in Christ and our own bodies. Namely, we assume the sexual aspects of our bodies are accidental and temporal, detached from the eternal bodies we will have in the resurrection. Likewise, because Jesus is fully divine, the binary we place between the spiritual and the 'fleshly' prevents us from seeing the sexual aspects of Jesus' fully human body. As a result, we cut out from our imaginations the reality of the sexual abuse that Jesus' torturers inflicted on his body in his crucifixion. Consequently, when we imagine atonement, the sexual nature of the broken relationality Jesus assumes into his earthly body does not feature into his reconciling work on our behalf, nor into his resurrected body. In other words, by theologising sexuality as a temporary 'fleshly' feature of human life in opposition to the Spirit, we lose our ability to imagine redeemed sexual relationality.

For survivors of sexual abuse, the binary we place between Spirit and embodied sexuality prevents a vision of redeemed sexual relationality. This binary stunts our hope for the redemption of the traumatic aftereffects of sexual abuse. Our greatest hope becomes that, one day in our resurrected bodies, the entire sexual aspect of our nature will be erased. In the

meantime, we are called to bear the cross of violation and its somatic wounds: mistrust, fear of intimacy, physical stress and fear at intimate touch. While other forms of platonic touch may experience redemption, a lacuna remains around intimate sexual touch. We just need to wait out this temporary inconvenience.

Yet Jesus offers a promise to those who live in the aftermath of what thieves have sought to steal, kill and destroy—for survivors, healthy intimate sexual relationality stolen in rape and abuse. Jesus promises not erasure, but abundant life.[8] When the most physically intimate form of human touch is severed from our lived experiences, all other relational connections are fractured as well. Abundant life includes intimacy in all its forms. Imagining less than the full restoration of human relationality shows that we do not know the power of God in our bodies.

Jesus gives the reason the Sadducees are unable to see beyond the legalistic frame that prevents them from trusting in the resurrection: 'you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God' (Mk 12:24). The way we apply the models we have adopted for understanding God's reconciling work are guilty of the same charge. By separating the flesh-and-blood nature of Jesus' human body from the reconciling work he enacts for us, and the Spirit's place in integrating our bodies into his, empowering us and inviting us to live reconciled lives, we misunderstand the power of God and replace it with our own.

Rejecting atonement, as some feminist theologians do, fundamentally alters our engagement with the Christian theological tradition. That Jesus Christ in some way acts to restore relationship between humans, God, and oneself is key to the narrative of the New Testament, and the formative creeds and practices of the church throughout its history. When atonement as

[8] John 10:10.

Christ's work on our behalf becomes doctrinally separated from resurrection, in which Christ's body is redeemed from all that separates us from flourishing relationship with God, enabling our own, doctrine becomes abstract to bodies. As a disembodied, legal exchange, humanity is left grasping onto the trailing ends of the Spirit, who seems to act in wispy ways: touching here and there the exchange between Father and Son, and, separate from them, convicting each of us for our individual limitations. Atonement as true relational reconciliation, body and soul, offers a fuller vision. It is this understanding of 'at-one-ment,' in which we affectively participate with our whole selves, that this thesis has sought to promote.

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