In the above reply Professor Reichenbach repeatedly announces or suggests that my thesis is this: the view that persons are resurrected in some physical sense is inconsistent with the Pauline view of the resurrected body. Having consulted both my original intentions and my text, I must affirm again my basic point in section III of the article: the belief that resurrected persons are not embodied is not incompatible with what Paul says about resurrected bodies. While not wishing to attribute such a belief to Paul himself (pp. 205, 211), I claimed that seeing resurrected persons as non-corporeal is a ‘supportable interpretation’ of the Pauline concept (p. 205), not forbidden by the text (p. 211), whereas the materiality of the resurrected body is ‘not necessarily implied’ (p. 209). So, of two interpretations, I have not attempted to show one inconsistent with the text; I have instead tried to argue that a rival interpretation is also consistent with the same text.

My defence may therefore restrict itself to the question whether Paul’s language denies the very possibility of disembodied resurrected persons. Professor Reichenbach’s strongest attack lies in his claim that a disembodied soma is indeed a contradiction in terms, in support of which may be discerned three arguments. (1) If soma used of human beings designates ‘the person in his totality’ (my pp. 206–7), it will include corporeality which must not be separated out as an unessential characteristic. (2) Paul’s language at I Corinthians 15.35 cannot intelligibly allow soma to mean ‘individual’ rather than ‘body’, since dead individuals come ‘with’ some kind of soma. (3) The list of items over which soma ranges in I Corinthians 15 demonstrates that the word must have some ‘intrinsic connection’ with the physical.

Of (2) it only need be said that a major difficulty in interpretation cannot rest on the grammar of a question Paul places in the mouth of a critic. For that grammar also presupposes a dualism of the dead and their bodies which Professor Reichenbach would not find congenial to his own view. (On further linguistic and exegetical questions see my note 3, p. 207.) Point (1) is an instance of the general claim of (3) that physicality is built into the very meaning of soma. I grant that the referents of the term in I Corinthians 15.36–41 are in fact physical; my suggestion was however that in introducing the concept of a soma pneumatikon Paul is stretching language in a way which may legitimately be seen as a pointing away from spatial extension. Some
clues: (i) in applying *sōma* to sun, moon and stars he departs from customary N.T. usage which restricts the term to the organic (Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* vii, 1057); (ii) his phrase *sōma Christou* in the same letter (12.27) does not require intrinsically the physicality of its referent; (iii) his association of the resurrection body with incorruptibility, glory, power, heaven and spirit functions to place it in a different sphere from this life and this world.

From another direction it might be argued that if the N.T. word best suited to denote non-extended, non-physical reality is *pneuma*, and if *sōma* must incorporate physicality in its meaning, it is Paul’s own expression *sōma pneumatikon* which is guilty of harbouring inconsistency. I prefer however to request that the ontological status of a Pauline resurrection *sōma* remain an open question in spite of Professor Reichenbach’s assertions.

It remains then to ask how we adjudicate between two rival interpretations of Paul’s text. Professor Reichenbach suggests one way, by considering consistency with the rest of Paul’s thought. Here he believes I should be embarrassed by my thesis because it leaves no future resurrective activity for God to engage in. But this does not follow from the thesis I have advanced. Though a dualistic view of persons in this life is compatible with my thesis I have not asserted such a view, let alone attempted to wean anyone from ‘anthropological materialism’ as true for pre-resurrected persons. The thesis does not require the automatic persistence of souls or minds after death; it only suggests that whenever God’s action of resurrection occurs, resurrected persons may be disembodied persons. There is, none the less, another way in which the adequacy of this interpretation of Paul may be tested: by its place in the wider scheme of Christian eschatology. My article raised philosophical and theological problems with an empirical resurrection world, some of which are avoided by the thesis of disembodied resurrected persons. That thesis does engender problematic offspring itself, I confess. The crucial point is that the standard reading of a physical resurrection has its own difficulties which are not resolved by closing off Paul’s text to the possibility of a resurrection to disembodied personal existence. It is in the context of philosophical and theological discussion about the nature of God, human persons, and their future relationships that the issue will be decided.