

IV. Theology of the Body: Historical Man Redeemed

Objectives

- What is eros and why is it important to our discussion?
- How are eros and ethos related?
- What does purity of heart enable?
- Why is virtue necessary for true freedom?
- How does Christ image the love of the Father?
- What does Christ's relationship with the Church teach us about marriage?
- How do husbands image the love of Christ?
- How do wives image the love of the Church?

Vocabulary

Eros—romantic or sexual desire for a person of the opposite sex. *Eros* is part of the God-given interior force that attracts us to all that is good, true and beautiful.

Ethos—that which corresponds to true moral or ethical values. The disposition, character, or fundamental values peculiar to a specific people, culture, or movement.

Interior freedom of the gift—the ability to give oneself to another in sincere love and purity, through self-mastery made possible by Christ's redemption.

Manichaeism—a dualistic philosophy that views the human body and everything belonging to the material realm as evil or worthless. Manichaeism see only the spiritual realm as valuable.

Purity of heart—the freedom to see the body in its true dignity as an expression of the inner person, rather than as an object for the satisfaction of one's own desires. Purity is a virtue acquired by practicing temperance, but also a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Temperance—the virtue of self-control, which enables a person to master his desire rather than be mastered by them.

Virtue—a habitual and firm disposition to do what is good, brought about either by repeated action or by a gift of grace.

Notes

I. Ethos of Redemption

- Christ calls us to an "ethos of redemption"
- To move from turning away to experiencing a genuine love
- From Eros to Ethos

II. Eros

- Erotic phenomena—those mutual actions and ways of behaving through which man and woman approach each other and unite so as to be "one flesh"
- Eros as lust
- Eros of the original unity of man and woman
- Where Eros and ethos meet in the human heart they bear fruit in purity

III. Eros and Ethos

- The erotic and the ethical do not differ from each other
- They are called to meet in the human heart
- Eros must be redeemed, transformed, sanctified—never snuffed out
- Through purification the erotic becomes true, good, beautiful

IV. Eros and Ethos (continued)

- Like a "guardian who watches over a hidden spring" we are called to discern the deep impulses of our hearts
- Our goal: to draw forth what is fitting for the dignity of the gift and communion of persons.
- Does not stifle Eros, but affords a mature spontaneity and noble gratification

V. Is something burning?

- Eroticism. Eros that burns and consumes us.
- Redeemed eros—like the burning bush on Mount Sinai burns but does not consume

VI. Christ's words—condemning or liberating?

- “he who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”
- Spoken in the perspective of the redemption of the body.
- “the perspective of the whole gospel, the whole teaching, the whole mission of Christ.”

VII. Christ comes to liberate

- Christ's words do not condemn, they liberate us.
- Mary Healy p. 44 Quadriplegic example.
- When he calls us to purity—he enables us to be pure

VIII. Pure of Heart

- “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God
- The Pure see the body as making visible God's mystery
- To attain purity of heart—to see God we must contend with the system of forces within us.

IX. The battle

- St Paul describes the battle between the flesh and the spirit
- The flesh—refers to the man of lust
- We must *authentically* move from selfishness to self-giving
- Purity is not halfway between promiscuity and prudishness. Healy p. 48

X. This movement happens by justification

- Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man
- It is a real power at work in us to free us from the bonds of sin and lust.
- We experience purity of heart to the measure that we experience the “freedom for which Christ has set us free.

XI. True Freedom

- Freedom to sin is the “flip side” of freedom to love
- If we seek to get rid of sin by getting rid of our freedom to commit it, we also sacrifice our freedom to love.
- Freedom is negated when it becomes a pretext for “indulgence”
- Not freedom but slavery to our passions

XII. The Virtues

- The virtues are important because they teach us to control our bodies “in holiness and honor”
- Temperance—turning from temptations
- Fortitude—the ability to endure and persevere in temperance
- Prudence—making proper choices to avoid occasions of sin
- Justice—giving another their due

XIII. Growth in purity

- “we must be committed to a progressive education in self control of the will, of the feelings, of the emotions; and this education must develop beginning with the most simple acts in which it is relatively easy to put the interior decision into practice.”—TB Oct 24, 1981

XIV. Authentic purity

- The parts of the body we think are “less honorable deserve greater honor.”
- Shame causes us to cover parts of our body
- Those parts have greater honor because they reveal our call to image God in life giving communion.

XV. Dimensions of Purity

- Moral—as a virtue
- Charismatic—as a gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Connection to piety
 - The body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. The body reflects the image of God—“communion of persons”
 - Unchastity violates the communion of persons.

XVI. “Glorify God in your bodies”

- Purity is God's glory radiated in the human body. Healy p. 50
- “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.”
 - Not only eschatologically, but here and now.
- To the pure all things are pure
- To the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure.

XVII. Art

- Portrayal of the naked body in art demands a special responsibility.
 - It demands respect for the nuptial meaning of the body, or “the nuptial system of reference”
 - The body can be portrayed to elicit respect for the mystery
 - The body can be portrayed to degrade.
 - *Pornography reveals too little*
- XVIII. Anonymity
- Divorce of the person from the body.
 - Photography vs. sculpture or painting.
 - Preserving the “nuptial meaning of the body”
 - Danger in viewing anonymous artistic portrayals.
- XIX. A few things more.
- Redemption of the body applies to both human relationships and our relationship with Christ.
 - Theology of the Body has an impact on how we approach others, but also on how we approach and “experience” Christ in the sacraments
- XX. The Son comes into the world as the image of the Father.
- “I can only do what I see my father doing.” (John 5:19)
 - The incarnation is the temporal translation of the eternal processions in the Trinity.
 - The Son images the total giving of the father.
 - This is fully expressed in his total gift of himself on the cross.
- XXI. The Church images the receptivity of the Son.
- The Church fully receives the gift of the Son.
 - She is united to Christ as his body and bride.
 - Under the aspect of body, we see the unity that Christ has with the Church.
 - Under the bridal aspect, we see that the Church is still distinct from Christ.
- XXII. The Church as the body of Christ.
- Through grace, members of the human family are incorporated into the Body of Christ.
 - We are transformed into a ‘new creation’.
 - Through grace, we are formed in to the Body of Christ by the Spirit, and we share in the Son’s relationship with the Father.
 - We become ‘Sons in the Son’.
- XXIII. Christ gives himself completely on the cross.
- Unfortunately, because of sin fallen humanity cannot fully receive the gift completely.
 - However, there must be a personal response to the gift of Christ.
 - Christ enables the Church to respond to his love.
 - The personal response of the Church is embodied in Mary.
- XXIV. The Church as the Bride of Christ.
- Although we are united to Christ as his Body, we are still distinct from Christ (retain individuality).
 - We are not the Second person of the Trinity.
 - This distinction shows that we have an active role in our own salvation.
 - Christ will not force himself on us.
 - We must actively receive the grace that he wants to give us.
 - Christ has included our participation in his salvific work.
- XXV. The original covenantal relationship between man and woman is restored in Christ.
- After the fall man and woman were no longer able to give themselves completely to one another.
 - They were unable to be a total gift of self to one another.
 - This means that they could not love as they once did.
- XXVI. Christ notes the original dignity that the married relationship has.
- In the beginning it was not so, when he teaches against a divorce.
 - “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”
 - Christ restores the original union between man and woman
- XXVII. Marriage is raised to the dignity of a sacrament.
- The marriage relationship shares (participates) in the relationship between Christ and the Church.
 - Through grace marriage is elevated to be a sign of the unity and fruitfulness between Christ and the Church.

- The total giving and receiving between man and woman shows forth the love between Christ and the Church. The meaning of subordination (being subject).
- Controlling verse is the first, “be subject to one another”
- This does not mean slavery.
- Subordination means that there is a proper ordering in the marriage.
- The masculine and feminine ‘roles’ are different, (one is not inferior to the other).
- Men and women are different, but have equal dignity.
- Secondary sexual characteristics (arms, hips, tone of voice, personality)

XXVIII. Role of the wife.

- The wife is to be subordinate to the husband as the Church is to Christ.
- This means that the wife’s role is receptivity in the image of the Church.
- The Church freely and actively receives the gift of Christ.
- Receptivity does not mean inferiority

XXIX. Role of the Husband

- To image the self-giving love of Christ
- To give himself completely unto death for his wife.
- To serve his wife.