

***“Theology of the Body” for Couples***  
***Talk 2: Christ Appeals to the Beginning***

**TOB/JPII Quotes**

**“...The circle of the human person’s solitude is broken, because the first ‘man’ reawakens from his sleep as ‘male and female’” (TOB 8:3).**

**“Theology of the Body...becomes in some way a Theology of sex, or rather a Theology of masculinity and femininity” (TOB 9:5).**

**“To say that the person is created in the image and likeness of God means that we are called to exist ‘for’ others, to become a gift.”**  
(St. John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 7.)

**“Our first parents... are free with the very freedom of the gift. This freedom lies exactly at the basis of the spousal meaning of the body” (TOB 15:1).**

**“...With man, holiness has entered into the visible world” (TOB 19:5).**

**“The body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and the divine. It has been created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it” (TOB 19:4).**

**“The sentence, ‘Adam united himself with Eve his wife, who conceived and gave birth’ is like a seal impressed in the original revelation of the body at the very ‘beginning’ ” (TOB 22:5).**

**TOB Terms**

**Adequate anthropology:** Understanding the human person through God’s eyes: as a person created in God’s image and called to greatness by living as Jesus lived. A total and *integral* account of what it means to be fully human, explaining *who* we are, and *why* we are this way.

**Original solitude:** in the beginning, Adam was different, *alone*, because he was neither an animal, nor was he God. Adam also knew that he was different and alone in the sense that he was not *complete*.

**Original unity:** In the beginning, man and woman know that they both share a common heritage *and* that they are destined to become “one flesh.”

**Double solitude:** Being “alone together;” the *union* of man and woman is fundamentally different than what the animals around them experience, because only *persons* can love.

**Original nakedness**—the state of our first parents, “naked without shame”. The full consciousness of the meaning and dignity of the body; To *see* another, and to *be seen* by another, lovingly, with “**all the peace of the interior gaze**” (TOB 13:1).

**Original innocence:** The state of our first parents before sin “in the beginning”; a state of being that was *totally* filled with grace.

**Freedom of the gift:** the capacity of one person to make a sincere gift of self to another; the ability to live out the spousal meaning of the body.

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***In Summary***

**“For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives,  
but from the beginning it was not so” (Mt. 19:8).**

Theology of the Body is divided into two halves: 1) The Words of Christ, and 2) The Sacrament. The 1<sup>st</sup> half, “The Words of Christ”, constitutes a sort of triptych—a 3-part story—of the human person that only makes sense when seen together. These 3 parts look at humanity in “the beginning”, now, and in the future resurrection. These 3 parts constitute what John Paul II calls an “adequate anthropology”, a total and complete way of understanding the human person.

In this talk, we looked at the first part of our triptych, which John Paul entitled “Christ Appeals to the Beginning.” Christ’s words direct us to the book of Genesis, and help us to look closely at the human person in the state of “original innocence”, i.e. before original sin. St. John Paul II helps us to understand the way God made us—like Him, to live in freedom and self-gift—through the “original experiences” of humankind: original solitude, original union, and original nakedness.

Our original solitude highlights our uniqueness in the created world, i.e. that we are qualitatively *different* than all else in the created order. It also shows that we, like God, are “one.” Our original unity highlights that man and woman were created for the “one-flesh union” in which they, as self-giving persons, participate in union *and* fruitfulness, thus mirroring/imaging God, Who is also a communion of persons in fruitful, self-giving love. Original nakedness was our original parents’ capacity to see the *entire* person purely and without lust. They could stand before one another unashamed and unafraid because there was only love, and no danger in being reduced to an object for use. These three dimensions are intimately a part of the *communio personarum*, the “communion of persons”, which describes man and woman so beautifully in “the beginning”, in which they could, like God, exist as more than one, in a communion of life and love.

John Paul highlights two very important dimensions of “the beginning”, which have *not been lost*, only *obscured*, and which we, too, are called to rediscover in our lives today. One dimension is the “freedom of the gift”, which is our capacity through self-mastery and authentic freedom to live out our call to love. The other is the “spousal meaning of the body” (discussed in our 1<sup>st</sup> talk), which shows that we were created to belong to one another fully and completely, becoming a gift to one another *through our bodies* (i.e. there is no such thing as a “disembodied” gift of self).