

“Theology of the Body” for Couples
Talk 4: Christ Appeals to the Human Heart (2): Life After the Redemption

TOB/JPII Quotes

“*Freedom exists for the sake of love...Man longs for love more than for freedom—freedom is the means, and love is the end.*”
(Karol Wojtyla (St. John Paul II), “Love & Responsibility”, 135-136)

“...Through an adequate maturity of the spirit, [the body]...becomes a sign of the person...In other words, through spiritual maturity, man discovers the spousal meaning that is proper to the body” (TOB 59:4).

“Purity is a requirement of love. It is the dimension of the inner truth of love in man’s heart” (TOB 49:7).

“Christ’s words are realistic. They do not attempt to make the human heart return to the state of original innocence...rather, they point out to him *the path toward a purity of heart that is possible and accessible for him*” (TOB 58:5).

“Purity is...a condition for finding wisdom and following her” (TOB 57:4).

“Purity is the glory of the human body before God. It is the glory of God in the human body...” (TOB 57:3).

“Everything we have tried to do in the course of our meditations...has its definitive foundation in the mystery of the redemption of the body” (86:8).

“What is decisive for the dignity of the human body...is not only the human spirit...but much more so the supernatural reality of the indwelling and continuous presence of the Holy Spirit in man—in his soul and in his body...” (TOB 56:3).

“Christ’s words are not a call hurled into emptiness...The words of Christ testify that the original power and...mystery of creation becomes...the power...of the mystery of redemption” (TOB 46:5).

TOB Terms

Redemption of the Body: The *whole* person—including the body—is saved in Christ, allowing the *spousal* meaning of the body to be rediscovered.

Virtue: A good habit which strengthens us to do what we must, even when it’s difficult. When we perform virtuous actions, we become more like God, in Whose image we are made.

Life according to the spirit: A life lived in conscious awareness of the redemption of the body; openness to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Reverence: Awe and wonder in the presence of holiness; **“the most essential power for keeping the body ‘with holiness’”** (TOB 54:4) (remember, this “keeping the body ‘with holiness’” is **chastity**).

Piety: Reverential respect for those who are “excellent” in our lives: God, and the ones we love; A gift of the Holy Spirit that helps to foster purity; **“The gift of reverence for what is sacred,...for what is created by God”** (TOB 131:2).

Modesty: Preserving and protecting one’s own virtue *and* the virtue of others. The body is sacred, and we cover what is sacred.

Justification by faith: Being saved *by* and *for* love through Christ’s gift of self. “The power flowing from Christ’s resurrection” (Phil 3:10); **“The power of Christ Himself working in man’s innermost [being] through the Holy Spirit”** (TOB 51:3). **“the human spirit [is] permeated by the Spirit of God”** (TOB 51:6).

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“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self mastery” (Gal. 5: 22 - 23)

In Summary

In this talk, we continued on with of the 2nd panel of our triptych, which continues to unfold St. John Paul II’s “adequate anthropology.” In this section, John Paul addresses human nature today as redeemed in Christ, and he uses a lot of new words and terms to do it!

We looked closely at the redemption of the body, which is Christ’s gift of salvation to the “whole” person. And it is purity of heart that defines the whole person as redeemed in Christ, because purity of heart is the quality that allows us to come into ever more intimate union with God and into deeper communion with one another. Jesus invites us to a new way of looking at one another, a way that cherishes and understands the right relationship between freedom and love: specifically, understanding freedom as the capacity to do what brings *true* happiness, which is to say, true *love*. In a word, freedom exists for the sake of love.

We also looked at “life according to the Spirit”, seeing that through purity in this life we invite a little bit of Heaven into our heart, because we create a space for God the Holy Spirit to dwell, and to fill our being. This happens through reverence (awe and wonder) for what is sacred and good, what brings us closer to God, and by abstaining from what does *not*. This helps us to reverence the body as sacred, while seeing that modesty—an appropriate “covering up” of the body—cradles and fosters that reverence. Remember, the Church veils what is *holy*, and the body is holy.

“Justification by faith” was an important part of this talk. This is the intimately personal reality of the power of Christ’s resurrection, continuously making us new and “saving” us. Through justification, the fundamental ruptures between body & spirit, between me & you, between me & creation, and between me and God, are tended to and healed. This unfolds in that most important place, the human *heart*. In the heart, the relationship between faith and love is realized and enfleshed: love is a gift of self, and faith is openness to the gift.

The fruit of the redemption of the body—what John Paul calls the focus of his meditations up until this point—is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God dwelling in our body as in a temple. The sending of the Holy Spirit continues the risen Christ’s redeeming and sanctifying work. The sending of the Spirit is the apex of Jesus’ gift of self, because the Spirit transforms the body into a dwelling place of God, making a “little Heaven” of our earthly life.