

Le Nouvel Esprit:
A Video Series on the Theology of
the Body

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Two Kinds of Shame

- The man of original innocence is replaced by the man of concupiscence
- Cosmic shame is shame in the face of nature and the Creator
- A second kind of shame caused by inner disorder within the communion of persons
 - Immanent character:
 - Definition: “existing or operating within; inherent”, Oxford Dictionary
 - This shame takes place within the dimension of human interiority
 - Relative character:
 - Definition: “considered in relation or in proportion to something else”, Oxford Dictionary
 - This shame is in reference to the other person
 - This shame is reciprocal, both the first man and first woman hid their nakedness with clothing
 - Sexual character:
 - The man and woman made loincloths to hide the visible sign of their masculinity and femininity

The Sexual Character of this Second Kind of Shame

- Question: Is the sexual character of shame only relative or is there something immanent to it?
- Answer: yes, there is an immanent element to it
- This shame in its sexual character is a difficulty in sensing the human essentiality of one's own body
 - This difficulty was absent in the state of original innocence
- “I was afraid, because I am naked, and I hid myself.” Gen. 3:10
 - Signifies a fracture in the interiority of man
 - Signifies a break within the original spiritual-somatic unity
 - The body ceased to draw power from the spirit and to rebel against it

Resistance of the Body

- “For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members.” Rom. 7:22-23
- Shame has an element of fear to it, and this fear speaks of an unrest within conscience connected with concupiscence
- The body now resists the unity of the person
- Concupiscence
 - Resistance of the body against the spirit
 - A threat to man’s self-possession and self-dominion
 - A challenge for man to respond to in order to live as persons
- The man of concupiscence does not rule over his body in the same way with the same simplicity and naturalness as the man of original innocence

The Three Characters of Shame

- This inner imbalance between body and spirit connects the sexual and immanent characters of shame
 - Sexuality brings to light this imbalance of concupiscence immanent within man
- The fact that the first man and woman were naked and sought clothing speaks of a fracture in their experiencing of their personal integrity of their bodies and of their sexuality
- This shame is indirectly relative, since it is a shame of one's own sexuality in relation to another person
- Concupiscent desire is the adultery of the heart from Matt. 5:27-28

The Human Heart

- The heart is the place of desire, shame, and concupiscence
- The birth of shame points to the inner heart of man
 - This birth is the closing of the self off from God and an opening up to the world within man's heart
- The birth of shame is also the birth of the threefold concupiscence of 1 John 2:16-17
- Man's shame of the body is motivated by concupiscence
- Distinction between the Biblical and psychological meaning of desire and concupiscence
 - Psychological
 - Desire springs from a lack or necessity which must be appeased
 - Biblical:
 - State of human spirit distanced from original simplicity and fullness of values
 - Dimension of God
- The first experiences of the body in the “beginning” are transformed by the dimension of the world, introducing the birth of shame and the concupiscence of the body

Final Reflections on Shame

- Shame as a twofold meaning
 - 1) Threat to value
 - 2) Preservation of value in an interior way
 - Cf. “The Metaphysics of Shame” in *Love and Responsibility*
- Concupiscence and shame as born in the heart of man means that the heart must be appealed to in order to conquer concupiscence and affirm the full dimension of value

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