

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

TOB 68, General Audience of Dec. 16, 1981

Trinitarian Communion of Persons

- Eschatological communion is man's participation in the Trinitarian communion of persons
 - This is a loving, perfect communion nourished by seeing God face to face
 - Subjectivity
 - Man keeps his subjectivity, it is not absorbed or destroyed
 - Man acquires his subjectivity in a more perfect and full measure
 - Those in communion with God have a perfectly mature subjectivity
 - The body is not separated from communion
 - The masculinity and femininity of man and woman is to be explained by his or her response to God's self-communication, God's gift of self

The Response to God's Gift of Self

- In response to God's gift of self to man, man responds with his subjectivity as a gift of self to God
 - Fn 79, Joseph Ratzinger
 - Immortality and resurrection are dialogical.
 - God is He who is both Knower and Lover of ourselves, who knows and loves us and is the principle of life
 - This response to God is beatifying
 - In this response, the virginal state of the body will manifest itself as the eschatological fulfillment of the spousal meaning of the body and sign of personal subjectivity

Quote

- “In this way, then, the eschatological situation in which “they will take neither wife nor husband” has its solid foundation in the future state of the personal subject when, as a consequence of the vision of God “face to face,” *a love of such depth and power of concentration on God himself* will be born in the person that it *completely absorbs the person’s whole psychosomatic subjectivity.*” TOB 68:3, (p. 395)
- “Absorb”
 - Is JP II contradicting himself?
 - Not to be understood as how Buddhism or other Eastern religions conceive the after-life, cf. TOB 67:3, (p. 393)
 - Analogy with marriage, husband and wife so love each other that this communion of persons “absorbs” them such that they do not have room in their subjectivity to enter into a second communion of persons, a second communion proves itself to be impossible subjectively and objectively

The Beatific Vision

- Full participation in God's inner life
- This full participation can be described as a concentration of knowledge
- Man discovers in God the whole world of relation that is constitutive for the ordering of the cosmos
- Man rediscovers himself in the fullness of depth of personhood and intersubjectivity proper to the union of a communion of persons
- Man becomes a sharer in the other world only through the realization of this reciprocal communion of persons that is commensurate with created persons
- The other world is a rediscover of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, in which man finds the definitive fulfillment of his personhood and the spousal meaning of the body
- In the Beatific Vision man concentrates fully on God
- This does not take away from the definitive fulfillment of man but introduces man to it and consolidates him into his fulfillment

Concluding Remarks

- Christ's words complete the revelation of the body
 - This revelation penetrates the heart of reality, experience, and the body
 - This revelation passes beyond reality in two directions
 - 1) Christ directing us to the “beginning”, Gen. 1-3
 - 2) Christ directing us to the other world, heaven
 - These two directions are extensions of the experience of the body
 - The experience of historical man is not entirely cut off from either direction
- The theological anthropology of man can be reconstructed from these two directions based on the experiences of historical man
 - All of man is able to understand these truths on the basis of their own experiences

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