

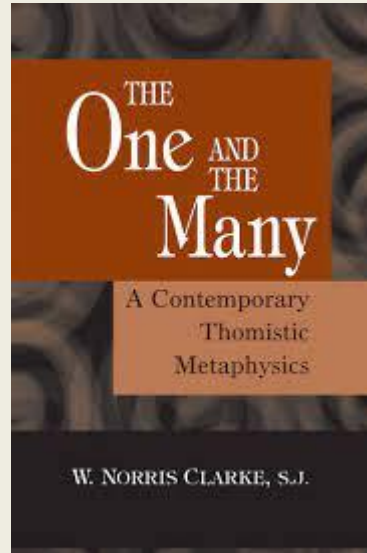
Le Nouvel Esprit:
A Video Series on the Theology of
the Body

TOB 11, General Audience of Dec. 12, 1979

Original Experience

- Genesis 1-3 require us to reconstruct the original experience of the first man and woman
- Original experience is **essential** experience with **ontological** depth
 - “Original” not because this experience is first, but because it is foundational
 - Important not because this experience in our prehistory, but because it is the root of all human experience
 - We can discover the extraordinariness of original experience because of the unified presentation in the first chapters of Genesis describing in near completeness the original experience of male and female
- Ontology is “the branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being.” Oxford Dictionary
- Essence is “that which makes a being to be what it is, i.e. this particular being distinct from every other.” W. Norris Clarke, *The One and the Many*, p. 159.
- “The essence of a thing is its nature, that whereby it is what it is. It is what we grasp intellectually when we identify a thing’s genus and specific difference.” Edward Feser, *Introduction to Scholastic Metaphysics*, p. 211.

Resource on Aristotelian-Thomistic Metaphysics



Le Nouvel Esprit, 2022

“Now both were naked, the man and his wife, but they did not feel shame.” - Gen. 2:25

- The concept of shame is not accidental, but key for understanding Biblical anthropology
- Original solitude, original unity and original nakedness are all essential experiences
- Naked without shame
 - Describes a state of consciousness
 - Is a reciprocal experience of the body of each person in their masculinity and femininity
 - Masculinity and femininity reveals itself through the nakedness of the body
 - Shame is an essential, fundamental experience

“Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked” - Gen. 3:7

- The opening of the eyes signifies a new consciousness of a new moment and situation due to breaking God’s covenant
 - Shame is hence a boundary experience between original innocence and original sin
- “They knew that they were naked”
 - Not the case that the first man and woman did not realize they were naked in the state of original innocence
 - This transformation of shame indicates that something deeper than mere sight and visual presentation is operative
 - It is not a question of knowledge, transitioning from not knowing to knowing, but a radical change in original nakedness
 - This radical change affected the consciousness and experience of the body
 - Before God and creatures (given that man and woman made clothes and hid from God, cf. Gen 3:10)
 - Before each other as male and female and how they relate to each other
- The task of reconstructing original nakedness is possible through analyzing shame

Thank You for Watching

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