

## Lecture 4: The Fall

- I. Original Integrity
  - a. In the Garden, the man and the woman were wired properly; every faculty worked perfectly
  - b. Practically, what this meant was that Adam and Eve felt the right emotion at the right time
    - i. They weren't hungry until it was time to eat, they weren't amorous until it was time for physical intimacy
    - ii. That is to say, they had perfect control over their desires and feelings; their emotional life was perfectly ordered
      - 1. Adam would have never let his physical desire overcome his appreciation of Eve as a person in her own right.
      - 2. Obviously, that's not the case any more
      - 3. Why?
- II. The Fall : The Negation of God's Fatherhood
  - a. In Original Sin, the devil attempts to seduce man into believing that he cannot trust God and his commands.
  - b. Gen 3:1-5. Placing doubt in the woman's mind, the serpent says: "Did God say... You will not die... God knows ... you will be like God."
    - i. Implication: God is withholding himself from you. God is not love. His a master who wants to dominate you as a slave.
    - ii. The lie is that God is not a Father, but a Master (Tyrant), seeking to dominate and enslave man by his laws.
      - a. The Lord appears jealous of His power over the world and over man (God is seen as power-hungry)
      - b. Consequences of this view:
        - i. Man feels driven to fight against God to achieve freedom
        - ii. Man is led into servile fear of God, the fear of a slave for his master.
      - c. JP II sees this view is far more present in people's consciousness today than the true understanding of *God as a loving Father in whom His children may trust and entrust themselves without fear.*
      - d. Need for the Recognition of God's Loving Fatherhood
      - e. Master-slave vs. Father-son
        - 1) JP II: the only force capable of effectively counteracting this false view of God is the "Gospel of Christ, in which the paradigm of master-slave is radically transformed into the paradigm of father-son."
  - c. Servile fear vs. authentic fear of God
    - i. JP II: in order to be set free from this servile fear, modern man must cultivate an authentic *fear of God.*

1. This fear of God is first of all the love of a son for his father.
  2. It is a filial concern that seeks to do the will of the Father out of love for him and out of recognition that the Father's will is that which will bring the fullness of life and happiness to the son.
- ii. Jesus Christ is the authentic and full expression of this filial love. He has come into the world in order to set man free from the sin that enslaves him by giving man the grace to become a son of God and teaching man to live in imitation of his filial love. For it is by this love that man is set free.

### III. Effects of Original Sin: Fallen Anthropology

a. The fall brought terrible consequences for all of us

i. Spiritual Death

1. Loss of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit
2. This is original sin: The rejection and loss of God's life and Presence from their soul. (Rm. 3:23—what we lost)
3. The Presence of the Life of God in their soul made them children of God and gave them eternal life. The loss of His life brings death, both to body and soul (CCC 403)

ii. Physical Death

1. Suffering, sickness and death make their entrance into human history (c.f. Rm 5:12)

iii. Disintegration of the powers of the soul

1. The intellect, the will, and the emotions are damaged
  - a. Intellect = headlights = presents reality
  - b. Will = steering wheel = chooses, decides
  - c. Emotions = accelerator = propels, pushes
2. Now we struggle to know what is right, and even if we know what is right, we have to struggle to actually do what is right
  - a. The intellect has been darkened; hard to see the truth
  - b. The will has been weakened; hard to do what is good
  - c. Our emotions are disordered
    - i. Because of original sin, our emotions long for evil, and resist what is good.
    - ii. This is called **Concupiscence**: it means *we have the inclination to sin*.

b. Nowhere is Concupiscence more apparent than in the relationships between men and women

i. Sexual desire has become inverted and self-seeking.

1. "Then their eyes were opened and they realized they were naked," so they covered themselves.

- a. Before they ate the fruit, they were both naked and felt no shame. Now their experience of nakedness changed. Why?
    - ii. Adam and Eve no longer clearly see in each other's bodies the revelation of God's plan of love
      - 1. They now see the other's body as a thing to *use* for their own selfish desires.
      - 2. This is **Lust**: selfish sexual desire
        - a. *Men*: "He will dominate you." Gen 3:16
          - i. are tempted to use women to get the physical pleasure, and also to get a sense of conquest, or achievement
          - ii. They ignore the relationship with the woman, and focus instead on sexual gratification and a sense of accomplishment ("There's another one I've conquered!").
        - b. *Women*: "Your desire will be for the man."
          - i. Are tempted to use men to get emotional affirmation, to satisfy her emotional needs.
          - ii. Women want to feel they are wanted, needed, important for someone. They will use the man to get self-esteem, to feel beautiful, or as an antidote to loneliness.
          - iii. She will use the man to get a relationship, even if she doesn't care about his good/fulfillment. ("Well, at least I have somebody.")
- IV. What we need to overcome the effects of Original Sin
  - a. Truth
    - i. We need the principles to live by, to understand the meaning of human life as centered in Christ and the Church
      - 1. a part of this means really grasping the reality and sanctity of sexuality, marriage, and family
  - b. The Grace of God
    - i. Comes to us primarily through **prayer** and the **sacraments**
    - ii. Prayer
      - 1. We must resolve to pray daily, to make time every day for both vocal prayer and meditation
      - 2. If you haven't done it already, resolve to set aside thirty minutes of every day to give to God in silence and solitude.
    - iii. Sacraments
      - 1. Our Lord has instituted seven sacraments, means for us to draw closer to Him through participation in these supernatural mysteries. In order to benefit from these gifts, we must be sure to make frequent use of:
        - a. The Holy Eucharist

- i. We should often avail ourselves of reception of Our Lord in communion. Only by this intimate union with Him will our sinful and broken humanity be made strong and holy.
        - ii. Visits to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament are also encouraged.
      - b. Confession
        - i. If we allow our sins to go unchecked, they will quickly fester and worsen. The healing graces of the sacrament of confession are a necessary prerequisite to overcoming the destructive forces of concupiscence and personal sin.
- iv. Virtue
1. Since, after the fall, our emotions have become disordered, and often impel us towards what is evil and harmful, we must have some way of realigning our passions with what we know to be right.
  2. This is **virtue**.
    - a. Virtue takes all the desires/emotions/passions and organizes them
    - b. It integrates and directs the passions to pull us toward what is truly good for us and away from what is bad
    - c. Those with virtue wouldn't even enjoy sin, and they greatly desire the good.
    - d. To summarize: a virtue enables you to do the good **spontaneously, easily, and joyfully**.
  3. How to get virtue: hard work and perseverance.
    - a. It's not easy trying to reform your feelings to draw you towards what is right. However, it is possible.
    - b. First of all, one must be sure to do resist impulses for what is not good. This is sometimes called "checking" the passions.
      - i. (e.g., look away from the object of lust)
    - c. Secondly, one should always try to focus mentally on the pleasing aspects of good acts and the displeasing aspects of bad acts. This is sometimes called "commanding" the passions.<sup>1</sup>
      - i. (e.g., think about all the horrible consequences that occur when lust is indulged)
    - d. Third, be sure to do what is right, regardless of what your feelings are telling you.
      - i. (e.g., be pure, faithful)

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<sup>1</sup> On checking and commanding the passions, c.f., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, Q. 24, a. 1.

- e. Lastly, reflect on your actions and your impulses, to see what your weak areas are. Make a regular habit of examining your conscience.
  - i. (e.g., what are the near occasions of sin that should be avoided?)
- 4. The motto of virtue is: *practice makes perfect!*
  - a. Virtue is not something obtained overnight; it takes repeated effort.
  - b. The most deadly obstacle to gaining virtue is the temptation to despair, to give up because you don't seem to be making any progress.
  - c. Remember that if you are determined to keep at it, you will acquire the skill of virtue.