

"Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind [and heart], that you may discern what...is good and pleasing and perfect" (Romans 12:2)

II. Breaking Our Bonds in the Cave The Body, Sex and Marriage in the Bible

- I. The longest 18 inches in the world
 - a. Easy to change the head, but not the heart
 - i. Will my dog be in heaven?
 - ii. Will I be married in heaven?
 - iii. "I'm going to love you for ever and ever. Amen" (Randy Travis)
 - b. Modern man must undergo a process of "deconstruction" of how we understand the body, sex and marriage, and then a process of "reconstruction" of the same ideas
 - c. Experience of Paris Island in JROTC
 - i. Men who don't care about self
 - ii. Men who don't care about others
 - iii. Transform them into men willing to die for each other
 - d. "To the men I say, get ready...I'm going to call you forth into battle...If there are warped men who are willing to kill in order to indulge their lusts (behind virtually every abortion is a man of lust) we, instead, must be men who are willing to die rather than ever indulge our lusts" (*Theology of the Body for Beginners*, 83)
 - e. The pope is our "Drill Sergeant" to deconstruct our ideas of the body, sex and marriage using 3 key passages of Scripture
 - i. **Gen. 2:25**, how Adam and Eve experienced their bodies in the Garden of Eden
 - ii. **Matt. 5:27-28**, how modern man experiences lust toward the body
 - iii. **Matt. 22:30**, earthly marriage is a preparation for the heavenly marriage
 - f. Some things painful to hear: not easy to be Marine ("the few"); not easy to be Catholic
 - i. "When we analyze these key texts of the Bible, penetrating to the very root of the meanings they contain, we discover precisely the anthropology that can be called 'theology of the body.' And this theology of the body is the basis of the most appropriate method of the pedagogy of the body, that is, of man's education

(or rather, self-education)" (TOB, 8 April 1981)

- g. At the end of the reconstruction process we will see the body, sex and marriage in a whole new light, giving us a new purpose in this life, and in next life
- h. In the allegory of the cave, the deconstruction / reconstruction process helps break our bonds and allows to see what the shadows reflect

II. **"The man and his wife were both naked, and they were not ashamed" (Gen. 2:25)**

- a. Before we can understand how Adam and Eve experienced shame, let's look at how we commonly experience it
 - i. We are not ashamed when we are alone and naked. But if a stranger bursts in as we come out of the shower, we cover our "private parts," shame causes us to do this
- b. Why is there shame? (The pope looks deeply into the common experience of humanity, where, he believes, we will find the truth)
 - i. Shame helps us to protect our naked body from someone looking at us for their own selfish pleasure. (We know that others will look lustfully at the naked body because this is what we do in the same situation.) Shame is a defense mechanism to protect us from being looked upon as object, and being used as such
 - ii. For John Paul the opposite of "to love" is not "to hate" but rather "to use," we use others when we look at them as an object of lust. We treat them as less than a person, as a mere thing
 - iii. "A person of the opposite sex cannot be for another person only **a means to an end** – in this case sexual pleasure or delight. The belief that a human being is a person [not a thing] leads to the acceptance of the postulate that enjoyment [to use another person] must be subordinated to love" (*Love and Responsibility*, 34)
- c. Now, let's return to the Garden before the Fall and consider Adam and Eve's shame.

They had a very different experience of nakedness and shame. They looked at each other's naked body and experienced no shame whatsoever. Why? Because when they looked at each other's naked body they experienced no desire "to use" the other to satisfy lust, but rather they felt something wholly different

- d. What was Adam and Eve's experience of sexual attraction? They certainly felt sexual arousal and a desire for union just like we do. But they felt sexual desire as a **pure power to make a gift of themselves** to each other, to serve each other, to make the other person happy
- e. A father's reaction seeing his firstborn son
- f. Think about your own experiences of sexual intimacy, and your use of sexual power. Did you use your sexual power to serve another, or rather to satisfy lust?
- g. The sight of the naked body inspired Adam and Eve to make a gift of themselves to each other, to serve each other – to die for each other like Marines! – thus sex in marriage was a "shadow" of the love of the Trinity
- h. "This reciprocal vision of each other is not only a share in the 'exterior' perception of the world, but also has an inner dimension of a share in the vision of the Creator himself... 'Nakedness' signifies the original good of the divine vision. It signifies the whole simplicity and fullness of this vision, which shows the 'pure' value of man as male and female, the 'pure' value of the body and [its] sex. The situation... does not contain an inner break and antithesis between what is spiritual and what is sensible" (*TOB*, 2 Jan. 1980)
- i. Adam and Eve could see that the body and sexual intimacy were shadows of something much greater: the love of God

III. **"You have heard that it was said: 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28)**

- a. For Jesus morality is a matter of the heart (not merely a matter of actions)
 - i. In the heart we make choices that are "morally charged" as good or evil

- ii. Not morally permissible to “look at the menu as long as you don’t order”
- b. Think about how the face, the look, conveys the feelings hidden in the heart
 - i. Perplexed parishioner at Mass
 - ii. How do you look at people? What is the look on your face telling people about what’s in your heart
 - iii. “The eyes are windows of the soul”
- c. Sometimes the look on one’s face betrays lustful feelings lurking in the heart
- d. The pope’s radical assertion: Jesus prohibits looking lustfully at **any** woman, which includes one’s own wife; marriage is not “permission” to treat your wife as an object to satisfy lust
 - i. “Adultery in the heart is committed not only because man looks in this way at a woman who is not his wife, but precisely because he looks at [any] woman in this way. Even if he looked this way at the woman who is his wife, he could likewise commit adultery...if he treats her only as an object to satisfy instinct” (*TOB*, 8 October 1980)
- e. Adultery with your own spouse?
 - i. “Consider the male who has been at the office all day long. He has been assaulted by sexual stimulation all day long; when he drives to work, when he turns on the T.V., when people tell dirty jokes, when there’s scantily clad women in the office place, his imagination starts to run. All day long, he’s fantasizing about some woman. He comes home at night and he’s really ready to go. And there’s a female in the kitchen, you see, who’s quasi available. And now he has sex with this woman. He doesn’t make love with this woman. He has sex with this woman. He’s fantasizing about some other woman, hasn’t thought about his wife all day long” (Janet Smith, “Contraception: Why Not?”)
 - ii. Have you been treated this way by your spouse?
 - iii. Have you treated your spouse in this way?
- f. At the end of the day, the pope – really it’s Jesus! – leaves no room for lust anywhere in the human heart

- g. What's in your heart?
 - i. The "looking test"
 - ii. What was going through your mind?
 - iii. What was going through your heart?
- h. "Deconstruction" and "reconstruction" is directed to changing our heart, the pope calls this changing one's "ethos"
 - i. "As the Pope puts it, 'Christian **ethos is characterized by a transformation of the conscience and attitudes** of...both man and woman, such as to express and realize the value of the body and sex according to the Creator's original plan' (Oct. 22, 1980)... As we're **gradually loosed from the chains of lust**, we're freed to love according to God's original plan" (*Theology of the Body for Beginners*, 39-40)
 - i. The bonds that hold us in the cave are the "chains of lust" which allow us to see only shadows; lust reduces people to objects, lust reduces them to "shadows from nowhere"

IV. **"In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30)**

- a. Earthly things reflect heavenly realities
- b. "The experience of being married" is also a shadow on the wall – the wedding, the honeymoon, a house, mortgage, retirement, angry teenagers, mid-life crisis, etc. – the life-long process of loving another person and being loved by another
- c. Jesus helps us look outside the cave to see what the shadow of marriage reflects: the marriage of Jesus and His Bride, the Church
 - i. "For this reason a man shall leave [his] father and [his] mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:31-32)
- d. This sounds harsh, but marriage is also a "shadow," it's not the "be-all and end-all of life", some put marriage on a pedestal and hope it fulfills all our desires for happiness
 - i. "What we need to understand is that the union of the sexes, as beautiful and wonderful as it is, is not our be-all and end-all. It's only an 'icon,' a **sign of**

something infinitely greater" (*Theology of the Body for Beginners*, 56)

- e. How many people enter marriage thinking it will make them totally happy?
 - i. 40% success rate (not too good!)
- f. Why bother getting married?
- g. Three reasons why marriage is a great and necessary vocation
 - i. **First**, marriage is the "school of love" where we overcome selfishness
 - ii. "[Married] people who have children, become better people almost instantaneously...[I've] met several of my male friends as they've exited from the delivery room...Such individuals are generally delirious and they say things like, "It's incredible. It's the most miraculous, marvelous, mysterious thing I have ever been a part of in my whole life." And they say, "Everything's different now." And that's absolutely true because yesterday they could care less who the mayor was or who was chief of the police force or who was president of the school board and whether the playgrounds were safe or how they spent their money or how many movies were rated PG and what was on TV. But today they care...When you have a child you're sending out to the world, all of a sudden you become protective of this child and you know that all these influences need to be attended to. You also become more patient and generous and kind and hardworking because this baby is very demanding. It takes a lot of your time and a lot of your effort. And so you become a better person and you're married to a better person and that makes for a better marriage" ("Contraception: Why Not?" Janet Smith)
 - iii. **Second**, marriage helps us make a total gift of self, expecting nothing in return, "unconditional love"
 - 1. What pronouns did you use in the wedding vows?
 - iv. **Third**, lasting marriages require realizing that my spouse is not "God"
 - 1. "Experience attests that the most wonderful marriage doesn't fully satisfy our hunger for love and

union. We still yearn for 'something more.' I love my wife, Wendy, more than any words can express, but she won't mind my saying that she is not my ultimate fulfillment. Do not hang your hat on a hook that cannot bear the weight! If we look to another human person as our ultimate fulfillment, we will crush that person" (*Theology of the Body for Beginners*, 58)

2. Do you expect your marriage to make you totally happy?
3. Do you expect your spouse to meet all your needs for intimacy and love?

- h. Earthly marriage helps us to
 - i. Overcome selfishness
 - ii. Love unconditionally
 - iii. Not expect our spouse to be God
 - iv. Ultimately, earthly marriage prepares us for marriage to Jesus
 1. "Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:9)
- i. Sex in marriage gives a glimpse of love between Jesus and His Bride in heaven
 - i. "For all human longing, when purified, leads us to Christ, and none more so than the longing to unite with an 'other' in the sexual embrace. 'For this reason...the two become one flesh.' For what reason? To reveal, proclaim, and anticipate the union of Christ and the Church" (*Theology of the Body for Beginners*, 122)

V. Conclusion

- a. TOB helps us deconstruct our ideas, attitudes and habits regarding the body, sex and marriage and "reconstruct" them according to God's plan in the Bible, this change has to go down deep into the heart, and change our "ethos"
- b. "Knowing is half the battle" (G.I. Joe)
- c. Do you still need your dog to be happy in heaven? Do you still need your spouse to be happy in heaven? Then it's time to go back to "TOB Boot Camp"