

“...from the beginning...” (5/16/2007)

Theology of the Body – Where do we start?

- Christ directs us back to the beginning
 - Matthew 19:4-8 – Jesus answering Pharisees questions on the legality of divorce
 - Twice refers His listeners to the “beginning”
 - The Pharisees would have had Genesis memorized, so Jesus’ reference to the beginning would have been a clear pointer back to the creation stories in Genesis
 - JP2 – “‘let no man put asunder’ is decisive.”
 - Jesus is clearly stating marriage is permanent and indissoluble “from the beginning”
 - Jesus directs us to look at how man was first created to understand how man is meant and designed to live
- Creation stories
 - Two separate stories of creation in Genesis 1-2.
 - First story of creation – Genesis 1:1 – 2:3
 - Referred to as the “Elohists” account
 - Word used for God in this account is Elohim
 - Considered to be a “newer” account of creation than second story
 - God is viewed as all-powerful, incredible, and as such distant and unapproachable
 - This is the standard “7 Days of Creation” story
 - On each day, God looked at what was created and “saw that it was good”
 - On the sixth day, God pauses to consider the creation of man
 - Man is the only point of creation defined *theologically* – with a likeness to God
 - After the creation of man, God sees everything created as “very good”
 - “...ens et bonum convertuntur (being and the good are convertible)
 - Man’s existence, just to *be* is “very good”
 - “...everything that exists is good in itself. Nothing that exists is evil in itself. Evil, by definition, is always and only the deprivation of what is good. Therefore, to exist – just to *be* – is very good. More specifically, to exist as *male* and *female* and to bring more males and females into existence (‘be fruitful and multiply’) is very good. To think otherwise is unbiblical.” – (*Theology of the Body Explained*, Christopher West, p. 63)
 - John Paul refers to the first story of creation as an “objective” account
 - Just the facts, no trace of perception in the story of creation
 - Second story of creation – Genesis 2:4-25
 - Referred to as the “Yahwist” account
 - Word used for God in this account is Yahweh
 - Considered to be much older than the Elohist account
 - God is viewed as personable, able to relate to and talk with. God has many “humanistic” qualities, such as walking and talking.

- This is the story of creation which includes creation of Adam and Eve
- Man is one of the first points of creation
- Bible calls the first human being “man,” (*‘adam*), but from the moment of creation of woman he is referred to as “man” (*ish*) in relation to woman (*ishshah*)
- John Paul refers to this story of creation as a “subjective” account
 - “The second chapter of Genesis constitutes, in a certain manner, the most ancient description and record of man’s self-knowledge, and together with the third chapter it is the first testimony of human conscience” (TB, 30)