



Naked without Shame

Pope St. John Paul II gave the world the Theology of the Body, teachings on the profound meaning and beauty of the human person: what it means to be a man, what it means to be a woman, in God's design. The following outline provides you with key points from Session 2 of **YOU: Life, Love, and the Theology of the Body**, so you can have discussions with your son or daughter throughout this important process.

The Power of a Pure Heart

- God created everything good, and he gave man a pure heart. When Adam saw Eve, he saw her as God intended, as a bride to be loved, not a body to be used. He felt a good and natural desire for her, but this desire was not contaminated by lust. Eve felt the same pure love for Adam.

The Spousal Meaning of the Body

- Creating man and woman in his image, God designed their bodies to be able to be joined in loving union. Adam and Eve knew in their hearts that this was meant to be not just physical union, but a mutually self-giving union of persons, mirroring God's own love. Pope John Paul II called this the "spousal meaning of the body."
- Adam and Eve were naked without lust or shame, without fear of being used.

The Effects of Shame

- Adam and Eve, tempted by the evil one, lost trust in God and sinned. Their original innocence was thus corrupted, and lust and shame entered our story. Shame refers to the painful awareness of our fallen capacity to use – or to be used by – another person sexually.
- This loss of innocence inclines us to forget the goodness of the body, and the painful shame we feel can lead to different reactions. One good reaction is modesty, which seeks instinctively to protect oneself from being gazed upon or used as an object. Sadly, another reaction is to reject this protective instinct of modesty and instead to give in to the lust of using or being used. This 'shameless' behavior can come from numbing one's conscience. But it can also come from having been violated by another person, and thus losing one's sense of self-worth. In any case, the price is always the loss of the sense of the precious dignity and value of the human person.

The Hope of Redemption

- Jesus Christ lived, died and rose to redeem us from the Fall. Our hearts can be renewed. Jesus won for us the grace not only to be saved, but also to transform our fallen inclinations.
- By cooperating with God's grace received in the Sacraments, as well as through prayer and acts of charity, a husband and wife can experience something of that 'original nakedness without shame,' that 'original innocence' – an experience of authentic, safe, self-giving love.

Questions to engage with your son/daughter

1. In what ways have you doubted the goodness of God and not trusted Him, feeling tempted to break away from Him in order to get something you want?
2. Why are people often inclined to make fun of modesty (in dress, in speech, etc.)? How would you explain it to them to try to get them to see its positive value?

Adapted from **YOU: Life, Love, and the Theology of the Body – Parent's Guide**, Ascension Press, 2016.