

St. Joseph Society



Objective: Spiritual Theology has been referred to as the science of the saints. It can also be referred to as the science of Christian perfection. Spiritual theology attempts to guide the soul from the very beginning of the Christian life through the purgative, illuminative, and unitive way. Over the next six months, we will investigate this “science of the spiritual life” as we discover an authentic Catholic male spirituality.

- Unit 1 The Nature and End of Man
- Unit 2 Sin & Salvation
- Unit 3 Fundamentals of the Spiritual Life
- Unit 4 The Purgative Way
- Unit 5 The Illuminative Way
- Unit 6 The Unitive Way

Unit 2 Podcast Schedule

- Episode #5: Original Justice
- Episode #6: Original Sin
- Episode #7: Personal Sin
- Episode #8: Salvation

Episode #5: Original Justice

I. Introduction

1. Opening Question: What was it like for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden?
2. Last month, we discussed the nature and end of the human person. This month, we are going to discuss sin and salvation.
3. This week, we are going to discuss the original state of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We need to have a proper understanding of our original condition in order to see what went wrong and how it can be made right.

II. Man in Paradise

1. Man in Paradise (CCC 374-379) – The first man was not only created good but was also established in friendship with his Creator and in harmony with himself and with the creation around him, in a state that would be surpassed only by the glory of the new creation in Christ.
2. Original Justice: The Condition of Adam & Eve
 - a. The Natural Gift
 - i. Existence in a particular created nature is always gratuitous and utterly unmerited. No one can lay claim to being called out of nothingness.
 - ii. Ludwig Ott – “Every individual soul was immediately created out of nothing by God” (*Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, 108).
 - b. The Supernatural Gift: Sanctifying Grace (Gen. 3:8-10)
 - i. The Council of Trent – “If anyone does not confess that Adam, the first man, by transgressing God’s commandment in paradise, at once lost the holiness and justice in which he had been constituted . . . let him be anathema” (DH 1511).
 - ii. Theology refers to this original gift of intimacy with God by the name of sanctifying grace which would have been accompanied by the three theological virtues—faith, hope, and charity—which flow from sanctifying grace. Without faith, hope, and charity, it is impossible to walk in friendship with God.
 - c. The preternatural gifts are proper to angelic nature, giving Adam and Eve four angelic privileges (which would have been transferred to their offspring):
 - i. Immortality - The gift of immortality can be gathered from the punishment of death attached to disobedience.
 - ii. Immunity from suffering

- iii. Infused knowledge - Infused knowledge is evident in the fact that Adam and Eve had some elevated knowledge of their Creator and His will.
- iv. Integrity - Immunity from the onslaught of disordered passions of the sense appetites. The lack of the gift of integrity is referred to as concupiscence.

III. Application

1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
2. It is important to meditate on man's condition prior to the fall, because it helps us understand what God is attempting to restore in our sanctification and eventually, God willing, our glorification.

Episode #6: Original Sin

I. Introduction – What’s wrong with the world?

1. Opening Question: The London Times once sent out an inquiry to famous authors, asking the question, “What’s wrong with the world today?” G.K. Chesterton responded simply, “Dear Sir, I am.”
2. Last week, we discussed the original state of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, because we need a proper understanding of our original condition if we are going to be able to see what went wrong and how it can be made right.
3. This week and next, we will discover the nature of our problem, and in the next few months, we’ll discover the solution.

II. Original Justice & Original Sin

1. Original Justice: The Condition of Adam & Eve in the Garden of Eden
 - a. The Natural Gift: Existence
 - b. The Supernatural Gift: Sanctifying Grace
 - c. The Preternatural Gifts: Immortality, Immunity from Suffering, Infused Knowledge, and Integrity.
2. Original Sin – “That privation of original justice inherited at birth” (*Handbook of Moral Theology*, Prummer, 69).
 - a. Original Sin (CCC 396-421) – God created man in his image and established him in his friendship. Man, tempted by the devil, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness. In that sin man preferred himself to God and by that very act scorned him (CCC 397-398).
 - b. What are the chief punishments of Adam which we inherit through original sin?
 - i. The chief punishments of Adam which we inherit through original sin are death, suffering, ignorance, and a strong inclination to sin. In short:
 1. The Natural Gift: Yes, we retain this gift.
 2. The Supernatural Gift & Preternatural Gifts: No, these have been lost through Original Sin.
 - ii. The fact of original sin explains why man is so often tempted to evil and why he so easily turns from God.
 - iii. Because of the ignorance resulting from original sin, the mind of man has difficulty in knowing many necessary truths, easily falls into error, and is more inclined to consider temporal than eternal things.

- iv. The penalties of original sin--death, suffering, ignorance, and a strong inclination to sin--remain after Baptism, even though original sin is taken away.
- v. Although we have a strong inclination to evil as a result of original sin, our nature is not evil in itself; it can perform some good actions in the natural order without the aid of grace.

3. The Remedy – Baptism (Ott, 377-381)

- 1. Baptism – “Baptism confers the Grace of Justification . . . Baptism effects:
 - i. *the eradication of sins*, both original sin and, in the case of adults, also all personal, mortal and venial sins
 - ii. *inner sanctification* by the infusion of sanctifying grace, which the infused theological and moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are always joined.
- 2. “Baptism by water is, since the promulgation of the Gospel, necessary for all men without exception, for salvation . . . In case of emergency Baptism by water can be replaced by Baptism of desire or Baptism by blood.”

III. Application

- 1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
- 2. We need to have a proper understanding of original justice and original sin, so that we can understand what issues we have all inherited from our first parents. You must have a clear understanding of the problem if you are going to understand the solution. As we will see next month, God made us to be perfectly happy with him in heaven for all eternity, but the road to glory must be traversed against the evil inclinations of our sinful nature. However, there is no reason to despair, because God has supplied every grace we need to overcome our threefold enemy: the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Episode #7: Personal Sin

I. Introduction: What is sin?

1. Over the last two weeks, we have been discussing the difference between Original Justice and Original Sin. The differences can be explained as follows:

Original Harmony (Justice)

Man & God

Man & his Appetites

Man & his body

Man & Creation

Original Sin: Life After the Fall

Loss of Sanctifying Grace

Man prefers lower goods to God

Man's appetites attempt to rule the reason

Suffering & Death

Disharmony with the natural order

2. This week, we are going to discuss the nature of personal sin, the different kinds of sin, and the conditions for a sin to be mortal.

II. Personal Sin

1. Personal Sin (CCC 1846-1876)

- a. Sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. (CCC 1849).
- b. Sin is an offense against God: "Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in your sight" (1850).

2. Different Kinds of Sin (CCC 1852-1853)

- a. There are a great many kinds of sins as St. Paul indicates in his Letter to the Galatians 5:19-21 (CCC 1852).
- b. Sins are rightly evaluated according to their gravity. The distinction between mortal and venial sin, already evident in Scripture (1 Jn. 5:16-17), became part of the tradition of the Church. (CCC 1854).
- c. Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law; it turns man away from God, who is his ultimate end and his beatitude, by preferring an inferior good to him (CCC 1855).
- d. Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it. Venial sin weakens charity and merits temporal punishment. Deliberate and unrepented venial sin disposes us little by little to commit mortal sin (CCC 1863).

3. Mortal Sin – For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met:
 - a. Grave matter is specified by the Ten Commandments, the gravity of sins is more or less great, and one must also take into account who is wronged (CCC 1858).
 - b. Mortal sin requires full knowledge and complete consent. Feigned ignorance and hardness of heart do not diminish, but rather increase, the voluntary character of a sin (CCC 1859).
 - c. Unintentional ignorance can diminish or even remove the responsibility of a grave offense (CCC 1860).

III. Application

1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
2. Practice a daily examination of conscience and go to confession monthly.

Episode #8: Salvation

I. Introduction: What's the good news?

1. Last week, we discussed the bad news, personal sin.
2. This week, we are going to discuss the good news, the redemption of mankind through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

II. The Atonement of Christ

1. The Good News (CCC 422-429)
 - a. The Gospel is the revelation in Jesus Christ of God's mercy to sinners.
 - b. God has sent his Son (CCC 422-424) – 'But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.' This is 'the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God': 'God has visited his people. He has fulfilled the promise he made to Abraham and his descendants. He acted far beyond all expectation - he has sent his own 'beloved Son' (CCC 422).
 - c. God's saving plan was accomplished "once for all" by the redemptive death of his Son Jesus Christ (CCC 571).
2. The Soteriological Importance of Christ's Sacrifice: **Ransom** – The slavery from which Christ purchased mankind through His sacrificial death is (Ott, 202):
 - a. The Slavery of Sin (Tit. 2:14; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:12)
 - b. The Slavery of the Mosaic Law (Gal. 3:13, 4:5; Rom. 7:1)
 - c. The Slavery of the Devil (Col. 1:13, 2:15; Heb. 2:14)
 - d. The Slavery of Death (2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14)
3. The Soteriological Importance of Christ's Sacrifice: **Atonement** – Atonement refers to the satisfaction of a demand or the reparation of an insult and is accomplished through a voluntary performance which outweighs the injustice done. If the atonement is not performed by the offender himself, but by another in his stead it is a vicarious atonement. Christ, through His suffering and death rendered vicarious atonement to God for the sins of man (Ott, 203).
 - a. Jesus' Death was caused by the Sin of All People – All sinners are guilty of Christ's suffering and death
 - b. Jesus' Death was part of God's plan of Salvation – The crucifixion is not a result of chance. Jesus is predestined to be crucified.
 - c. Jesus took the Punishment of Fallen Humanity upon Himself – Christ is the New Passover: an "unblemished" male lamb (Ex. 12).

- d. Jesus' Death Showed Eternal, Relentless, Universal Love of God – God desires the salvation of all (Matthew 20:28).
 - e. Jesus' Whole Life is an Offering of Love to the Father (CCC 606-608) – Redemption begins with the Incarnation.
 - f. Jesus Willingly laid down His Life for Us – Christ's sacrifice is the greatest expression of love.
 - g. Jesus' Death is the Unique and Definitive Sacrifice – Christ's obedience is substituted for our disobedience.
 - h. Jesus' Infinite Divine Love makes His Sacrifice Infinitely Valuable
4. The Resurrection, Ascension, and Return of the Messiah
- a. The Resurrection of the Messiah: A “real event” that can be “historically verified”. The empty tomb is the essential sign.
 - b. The Ascension of the Messiah: Jesus is “bodily” in heaven in his “incarnate” and “glorified flesh,” and the Ascension is the “beginning of the Messiah's kingdom.”
 - c. The Return of the Messiah: Jesus Will Come to Judge the Living and the Dead: We are to be “watching and waiting” for glorious messianic kingdom.

III. Application

- 1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
- 2. Sharing the Good News (CCC 425-429) – The transmission of the Christian faith consists primarily in proclaiming Jesus Christ in order to lead others to faith in him (CCC 425).