Conf 3 Lesson 2: Creation & Sin – Sept 25
Fall 2024; Instructor: Michael Bromley

Objectives: *Connect Creation with God's act of love & existence of evil and sin*
Opening prayer: John 1 & "Lord, Open our Eyes" prayer
Warmup: Hand in homework due ("prior knowledge" vocab)

The Word of the Lord, Jn 13:34:

> *"I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."*

I.   The Road to Emmaus (after the Resurrection; Lk 24:13-35)

> *Jesus himself drew near* ... *but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him* ... *With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him*

II.   Creation (Genesis)
- Creation glorifies God
- God created the world out of love, destined for perfection (CCC 302; see diff. w/ other religions)
- Therefore, the highest glorification of God is to love God -- <u>freely chosen</u>:

"The Great Commandment: In Deuteronomy (Dt: 6:5):	*Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength*.

- Robots... *can't think, can't choose, can't love, only do as told, have no free will*
- God gave us **Free Will** ("choice"; "will" = to wish, desire, be)
  - In order that we choose to freely love him
- The problem for us:
  - That means we can <u>NOT</u> choose him
  - the existence of "good" requires the existence of evil (see CCC 309, 311-12)

III.   What is sin?

Sin is Separation from God	*"Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters"* (Mt 12:30)
Sin is an offense against God	see CCC 1871
Sin is violation of one's own conscience	"So for one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, it is a sin" (Jas 4:17)

- Jesus extends (Lk 17:10; see also Mt 18:6-7):

> *"Things that cause sin will inevitably occur, but woe to the person through whom they occur."*

- Sin definitions:
  - Sin is a personal act and is "contrary to reason" (CCC 1872)
  - To commit a sin, the act must be done knowingly and willfully (CCC 1873)
  - <u>capital sin</u>: "engender" (facilitate lead to) other sins
  - <u>mortal sin</u>: a grave (deadly) infraction of the law of God; mortal sin requires three conditions: 1) grave matter; 2) full knowledge of the evil committed; 3) consent of the will
  - <u>venial sin</u>: does not destroy divine life, but "diminishes and wounds it" (CCC 1866)
  - <u>vice</u>: behavior that leads to sin; vices are the opposite of the virtues they oppose (pride, avarice, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, and sloth (or "acedia")

IV.   Adam & Eve, Sin and the Fall

- Gn 3 "Expulsion from Eden"
  - which tree? "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Gn 2:9)
  Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; (Gn 3:7)
- Sin = separation from God = death
  - Adam and Eve sinned and became mortal (Gn 3:19)
- The sins of Adam and Eve:

"The Threefold Sins" of Adam & Eve (Gn 3:5-6)	
Sins of the eyes	Good to look at ("the tree was … pleasing to the eyes")
Sins of the flesh	Good to eat ("the tree was good for food")
Sins of pride	Will make like God ("tree was.. desirable for gaining wisdom")

- Concupiscence: our "inclination to sin" (CCC 1264)
- Pride: undue self-esteem that puts oneself in competition with God (CCC 1866)
- Idolatry: putting something ahead of God

V.   Why does God punish sin?

- It only hurts ourselves
  - God doesn't need to act, we do it because sin is its own punishment
  - extend the sin to the consequence (pick any… it's too easy)
  - God's "blessings" reward us for the right, his "curses" correct us for the wrong
- It leads to "slavery to sin"
  "By refusing God's plan of love, [man who freely sinned] deceived himself and became a slave to sin" (CCC 1739; see Rom 6:6)

VI.   If sin is separation God, then how do we get back w God?

- God loves his creation (us) & offers us ways to make our way back to Eden:
  - "Edenic Covenant" = marriage and children (Gn 1:28 & 3:20)
  - "The Law" = how to live without sin (Ten Commandments)
  - "repentance" = regret & make good
  - "atonement" = "at" + "one" = "at one" = make one with God, i.e. *forgiveness of sins*
    - how? through sacrifices:
      - = giving up something of value; the greater the value the greater the sacrifice
      - "Your lamb must be a year-old male and without blemish." (Ex 12:5)
    - the ultimate sacrifice = Jesus Christ on the Cross
    - what if there was no Jesus?
      - we'd all die in sin, all die in separation from God
      - Jesus had to die for us, so that our sins can die with him

VII.   The Cross

- "Jesus" = "God saves"
- "Christ" = the "Messiah" = "the Anointed One" = "the mission"
- We must ask ourselves:

What is the Christ's mission?	to save us
Save us from what?	from sin
Why?	because we can't save ourselves
How?	dying on the cross

[A note on "solo fide" : "faith alone" will not save us. We must believe (faith) AND act on our beliefs (works)]

- Forgiveness through the body and blood of Christ

Christ died for whose sins?	all of ours, from Adam & Eve through the end of creation
Which sins?	every sin, past, present, future
When did he suffer our sins?	now and forever
How do we relieve Jesus of the pain we cause him?	by not sinning (every sin we don't commit is one less sin paid for by Christ on the Cross)

- Why did Christ have to die?
  - Isn't he God? How does that help us?
  - Jesus had to be mortal in order to pay and die for our sins
    - The "hypostatic union" (or "God-man")
  - See Isaiah 53 (Is 53:5)

Jesus explains:

- Lk 24:26 ("Road to Emmaus")

Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer[*] these things and enter into his glory?"

- Mk 8:31-33:

He began to teach them that the Son of Man[*] must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days. He spoke this openly.
Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.
At this he turned around and, looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."

VIII. Christ on how to avoid sin
- See handout