

Forty Weeks ~ Sacred Story



Week Forty Encouragements & Wisdom

E & W reflections are additional helps for your Sacred Story prayer journey. Reflect on them ahead of your prayer exercises for the week or outside of your fifteen-minute prayer windows during the week.

God is Perfect Relationship and Everything Not of God is Anti-Relationship—Anti-Christ

Last week we started our reflections by stating that spiritual discernment is challenging for one major reason: due to original sin, we lost our capacity to readily distinguish truth from falsehood. This week, we affirm a simple truth: God is perfect relationship. Everything not of God is anti-relationship, the spirit of anti-Christ.

God is Love. God is a Trinity of perfect relationship—three totally distinct, unique persons with no boundaries to their giving and receiving love. And “God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Gen. 1:27).¹ God freely created the cosmos and God created human persons, incarnate spirits, in God’s own image to share in the Love that is God. Eden shows that God’s beloved creatures were truly a *perfect relationship* of body and spirit. The gift of Love freely given by God was to expand in time in space. This was to be accomplished with the cooperation of the incarnate spirits made in God’s image and likeness.

Eden’s paradise portrays a perfect relationship between the woman and the man. They are distinct persons with unique and complimentary natures. Eden’s paradise portrays the perfect relationship between these creatures and the Creator. Because they are innocent and radically transparent to their Creator, they can treat each other as truly sacred. As incarnate spirits they share intimate knowledge, respect, trust, complementarity, uniqueness, separateness and transcendent love.

Eden's paradise portrays a perfect relationship between the beloved creatures (humans) and the creation. God gifts the human persons with the *power to name* the plants and animals. We understand that this *gift of naming* includes the knowledge of creation's rhythms. They would understand how creation works to their benefit and their delight. God is Love. God is perfect relationship. God creates perfect relationship.

The tragedy of original sin severs the perfect relationship between the incarnate spirits and the Creator: "When they heard the sound of the Lord God walking about in the garden at the breezy time of the day, the man and his wife hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden." (Gen 3:8) The perfect relationship they had enjoyed now becomes filled with blame and grief. They will fight each other and their offspring will fight them. Their perfect relationship with creation too is now cursed (Gen. 3:17-19) and they lose immortality. Free will, essential for love, also allows persons to sever their relationship with Love, with God. . Severed relationship is the true face of sin in time and space.

But God's work in creation cannot be undone by sin. The *original* unity is lost forever but out of this tragedy God creates an even more astonishing good. God would not create such beauty without a way to rectify even this tragedy with something more glorious. Our ability to join with Christ in his grand work of Reconciliation is the mission we are now invited to accept. We do this by opening to life as *Sacred Story*.

Your discernment is made easier if you can see everything in light of the *paradigm of perfect relationship*:

- 1) Perfect relationship of incarnate spirits in their unity of body and spirit
- 2) Perfect relationship of created, incarnate spirits with the Creator God
- 3) Perfect relationship of incarnate spirits with each other as unique individuals
- 4) Perfect relationship between incarnate spirits as male and female called to fruitful, respectful, loving mutuality
- 5) Perfect relationship between created, incarnate spirits with the earth given for our delight, refreshment and our sustenance
- 6) Perfect relationship with the Church, the *Body of Christ*, as the community formed by Him for the work of Reconciliation leading to a new the heavens and a new earth.

Every thought, word and deed that seeks to *affirm the meaning* of perfect relationship and heal damaged relationship is a work of the Divine-inspirer. Every thought, word and deed that moves to *alter the meaning* of perfect relationship and further undermine damaged relationships is a work of the counter-inspirer.





ⁱ New American Bible, Revised Edition