

THE CONTENTS OF FREEDOM

1. We are free to choose who we follow (Enchiridion, p.68). Choosing to following Jesus means to come in his freedom. In the freedom, he gives us when we decide, with our very being, “existentially”, to belong to him

2. We cannot make ourselves free. This is the endless tragedy of so many lives. Fighting for freedom, which is rivaling in fact against everybody and everything, makes all more and more unfree. We can only choose to belong to somebody who is free. In choosing to belong to him, he gives us his freedom. What does that mean.

3. The freedom we get, when freedom is given to us, has two sides:

3.1 Jesus’ freedom is the freedom to be out of desiring and so of rivaling. he is the man he is so characteristically, being totally “himself, because he is totally with himself. He is not living “exocentric”, as all human beings are living, who desire, who, with their desires, by desiring, are in the others, as the others are in them. And, more important still, he is not in metaphysical desire. He does not try to get his being by desiring the being of those around him.

In the end it is all metaphysical desire that destroys us. He is free of all that. He can move around amidst of people, never threatened by own desires or by desires of others, just doing what he is doing. This is the “negative side” of freedom. We have, in the sense that we don’t desire, nothing to do with the others. We partake in this freedom because when we choose to follow Jesus, he frees us of desire.

3.2 We are all very complicated beings. The endless lines of temporal mimesis, the heritage we got from our ancestors, and in our own life, bring about an existential reality with literally endless possibilities, different possibilities, to be human. This bundle of personal, existential possibilities is, in spatial mimesis, again always in contact with endless possibilities, being around us. When we are free, when we are given freedom, all these endless possibilities, which come into existence when we meet, with whoever and whichever, get their chance, just because we are free. When we are unfree, most of our possibilities we never discover and most of the possibilities coming from the outside we never see, because all our attention is directed, if we know it or not, to the rivalry. Only freedom, the possibilities we “have” and those who come to us get shape in realities. And life becomes abundance.

4. We freedom means in fact, that we, at last, have the human possibilities we have and which we did not have as long as we were unfree. And so life is unfolding in a different and unexpected manner. It too means, because freedom is, exactly as unfreedom is, contagious, that people whom we meet, with whom we make a little bit or more of our life-travel together, become free with us. This again raises the question how this happens. Is it possible to say more about that? Or is it just something like a miracle? I suppose there is something like recognition. Deep in all of us there is this longing for freedom, this knowing from we don’t know where to be free at last, to have peace at last. All the dreams of all the nations of all times are seeking that and in the same time always was the experience, the outcome of the trying, that in the end there only was more violence, more unfreedom.

It also is an experience of the ages that freedom came nearer when it was “simply” waited for, if, in a sense nothing was done. So Jesus coming to “the world”, consciously and mostly unconsciously waiting, filled and fills a gap. He is the end of the waiting, the fulfillment. Besides this very general recognition there is a far more particular one, which, as far as I understand, is necessary to make the recognition general. Aspects of this are enumerated e.g. Matth. 11, 5. The freedom that comes shows itself in healing. What was broken by the endless desiring and rivalry, is healed when freedom comes.

The same happens when freedom is contagious between us. The man, the woman who is free, to whom freedom was given, is given, coming into our world, our life, heals. That healing has many aspects. Maybe only tensions, which are introverted rivalries, slow down or disappear. Maybe we begin to see, coming into the orbit of this freedom, ways forward in our lives, ways of reconciliation. Maybe we stop to worry and we forget our fears. From there on much more can happen, because so much in our body changes. Our immunological system catches up and we heal, unexpectedly. Anyway, in meeting freedom our life changes. And we recognise, however dimly, that something is happening in this meeting, something in the end miraculous.

5. There are two aspects of freedom, which are very important:

5.1 Freedom gives space. Reality, the reality inside of us, and that outside of us is not any longer oppressing us. This space has two sides:

5.1.1 It is space geographically. We have more room to look around. We have already clearer eyes, because they are not any longer troubled by mimesis, by desire and rivaling. And there is more space to look around. Things, realities, persons, they are not any longer muddled up. They become distinct, everybody, everything with its own characteristics, its own being.

5.1.2 It is space in time. We are saved from the “time is money” syndrome. We are in fact saved from chronological time. We need not any longer do everything necessary to have our place in life, in the world. With freedom this place is given. We migrate from chronological time to existential time. We are able to do things, which do not seem important at all with a happy heart. And we need not any longer do things, which seemed extremely important. In fact, there is a curious paradox here. Because we get more space, both around us and in time, those who are near to us come nearer, become more distinct, more important. And those far away are in fact far away. Without space, in time and geographically, there is no structure. Everybody and everything is totally on our skin. The space gives, as space, order. We need not any longer frantically think what is the most important in this moment to do. What we have to do, as soon as there is space, is given to us, in our hearts in our hands.

5.2 Freedom changes the learning process

Freedom changes the learning process in several manners:

5.2.1 Freedom leads out of the rivalry. Most learning processes, nowadays, takes place in a rivalrous atmosphere. This means that much of the vital and creative possibilities are used in this rivalry. So the possibilities really to learn are much smaller than would be possible without this rivalry.

5.2.2 Because the rivalry it is very difficult to make the right choices, what and how to learn, what not. The rivalry blinds us and instead of choosing for our life and our future, our choices are functions of the rivalry.

5.2.3 Another side of this is that because of the rivalry we have a skewed vision and knowledge of the reality we live in and of the possibilities which are open for us. So we have taken the optimal decisions.

5.2.4 The other way round, when we are in freedom, we can apply all our human possibilities in the learning, both in the choosing what and how to learn and in the way of learning itself.

5.2.5 Learning in this manner we become the persons we can be, both with and for the others around us and for ourselves. Learning in rivalry diminishes the human possibilities of everybody involved.

6. Although we know about freedom, this freedom never is a possession. We only are in freedom because we are in the mimesis with a free person. The reality around us, in its unfreedom, is quite overwhelming. It is extremely easy to become and be unfree again. It is wisdom of the ages and that if we don't go back, together, to the origin of freedom, we will lose it certainly. Our times are extremely fit to lose freedom and so we are losing it all the time. Only when we know that we have to seek the way back, together, alone, to the origin of freedom, we know that freedom in our life means and we can give if further.