

Part 29: Our Worldview

A party!

Next week or sometime soon have an evening of champagne, fun and favourite treats to share and eat, all with chosen music playing in the background. Or if you are meeting in the morning, a special breakfast could be just what is needed. If this sounds good to you, decide who will bring what to make the time enjoyable and memorable. (If possible, enable each person to choose their 'best' treats and music to share as a gift with the others.) See if you can be as good at laughing as you can be at reflecting.

Our experience of freedom

Exploring freedom, as we saw last week, means looking at what we need to be freed from and what we are being freed for.

Ignatius, in his *Spiritual Exercises*, begins with the 'Principle and Foundation' which says:

'I was created freely out of love by God who desires to share his life forever with me, if I will freely love him in return. My whole world which has been created by God, is given over to me to help me to grow in my love response and so fill my world with the order of his love between me and others, and me and creation.'

'I should readily make use of all God's gifts of creation in so far as they help me to develop more as a loving person, but where some gifts stifle such a growth in love or cause it to be lost, I must turn away from them and let myself be free from them. As a result, in practice I must be free before all that has been created. For example, as far as I am concerned, I should hold in balance health and sickness, riches and poverty, honour and dishonour, a long life and a short life, and so on.'

'The only thing which moves me and the one choice which matters is the single notion of why I am created – to be able to respond more fully in love to the love of God and to be ever able to grow more fully in that response.'

In the light of this, reflect on the concept of freedom and write a definition with which you can identify. Include in your comment what the purpose of life is for you. Take 20 minutes for this and then share in the group. (No commenting from others at this stage.)

Now read Matthew 6:22–34 and see if a definition of freedom emerges from here. How does this compare with your earlier idea? Freedom means different things to different people. Will your idea of freedom apply to you only, or is it good for everyone? Discuss in the group what freedom encompasses by allowing each person to make a contribution first and then letting anyone speak. End the meeting as usual.

Reflection for the week

Each day, reflect on the Principle and Foundation, as well as your comments on freedom. How do they apply to your daily experience? Am I experiencing this freedom or not?

Meditate on Galatians 5:1–6 and reflect on your lifestyle and life experience. Where are you free and where are you perhaps not free?



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