

REFLECTION

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WE often ask these questions. How should our freedom be?

What law governs it? Where can we find a model or pattern for it?

Many people, of course, have their own ideas of freedom.

But if we really want to know what it is, where it can be found, how it should be exercised, etc., we have nothing to do other than to look at God who is the source and end of freedom—and God in relation to us.

Without referring to God, our idea of freedom can be anything but the right one.

And what can we see in God with respect to freedom? The direct answer is that God did everything for us completely free, without any special reason, without any pressure. We can say that he did all those wonderful things for us because he just wants to. In our local lingo, he did them because “trip ko lang!”

What he did and continues to do to us can only be characterized as being completely free. It was pure grace, unadulterated gratuitousness. That in the end is what freedom is all about.

He created us freely. There was no necessity on his part to create us. But he did it just the same. He endowed us with the best things, such that we became his image and likeness,

adopted children of his. There was no need for him to do that to us. But again he did it just the same.

And even if we spoiled his original design for us by falling into sin, by going against his will which can only be good for us, he did not leave us and, instead, promised to redeem us. He would have lost nothing nor gained anything if he would have just allowed us to get lost. But, no, he preferred to save us.

There was no necessity for him to send his son who became man to redeem us. But he did it—completely freely. The son, Christ, did not have to offer his life on the cross to save us. There are many other ways to do that. But he chose it freely because it was the best way to save us, respecting our human nature that needs also to be responsible for our salvation.

He is willing to assume all our sins without committing sin. He offers us boundless mercy for the taking. He did all these completely freely, completely gratuitously. He actually gains nothing, but we gain everything if we follow him in living that kind of freedom.

We need to process these considerations of freedom slowly so as to reflect them little by little in our lives. It will take time and a lot of effort to imbibe this kind of freedom which can only be the genuine one. Outside of this, our idea of freedom can never be right. It can have some aspects of freedom, but not the whole, true one.

We cannot deny that this freedom as shown by God is not easy to learn. But we have to reassure ourselves that God actually has also given us all the graces and means for us to learn and live it. We just have to be humble enough to defer to this kind of freedom, the only true freedom, rather than subscribing to our own ideas of it.

This is the freedom of the children of God, not the freedom of the children of the world.

This is the freedom that leads us to the truth and to our eternal destination and heaven. It knows how to cope with all the situations of our earthly life. It does not give us false hopes nor lead us to fantasies.

