

Spiritual Freedom

Spiritual freedom is a spiritual transformation that, through inner confrontation and a sincere approach, stimulates the heart to change and liberates the soul from dependence on negative elements and leads it to the true self. This state heals harmful thoughts and intentions and offers an enlightened mind and a comprehensive perspective that encompasses all areas of life.

Spiritual freedom is not only about freeing oneself from external attachments, but also about healing and expanding the heart and mind and gaining a broader perspective by letting go of the burdens of the past. This is a process. It is about re-evaluating toxic thoughts and negative attitudes and reframing them in the light of compassion and wisdom. This state, which leads to inner enlightenment, balances the individual's relationship with self and others and makes the mind clearer and more inclusive.

The path to spiritual freedom is to be in harmony with reality in the outer world and at peace with truth in the inner world. Christ, who entrusted us with this fundamental teaching, said: **"You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free"** (John 8:32). He also emphasised the importance of this teaching, which places moral responsibility and consistency at the forefront:

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its flavour, how can it be made salty again? It is good for nothing except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men" (Matthew 5:13).

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same

way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34-35).

On the other hand, when Christ says: **"I am the way, the truth and the life"** (John 14:6), he speaks of a system. He has given the Church the responsibility of teaching this divine system - the truth, the way and the life -. Therefore, the main task of the Church is to elevate the dignity of man by uniting the individual and society with the spirit of the way, the truth and the life. According to the Church Fathers, the Church is not only a place of worship, but also the body of Christ. It is a spiritual institution that embodies God's justice, mercy, forgiveness and redemption.

From this perspective, the church is God's light in the world and has the task of spreading this light. This divine light reflects God's love and righteousness. Christ's words, **"You are the light of the world"** (Matthew 5:14), emphasise the church's responsibility to carry God's light into the dark (carnal) areas of the world. In doing so, it emphasises the teachings and support of Christ.

Through this mission, the church serves as a beacon pointing people to divine truth, fostering compassion and encouraging personal and communal growth in line with God's love and justice¹. It emphasises the teaching and relief provided by Christ.

¹ The essence of the way, the truth and the life that Christ has entrusted to the Church is filled with God's mercy and love. The role of the Church is not just a place of worship, but a living body that carries God's love, justice and light into the world. In this context, the Church sees its role as nourishing the soul of individuals and society with divine values, honouring them and accompanying them on this journey. In the writings of the Church Fathers, this responsibility is defined as endeavouring to offer God's mercy, forgiveness and salvation. Christ's words **"You are the light of the world"** emphasise the Church's calling to bring divine light into a darkened world. This light helps people to overcome the **"carnal"** aspects of

However, if Christ's life-giving teaching cannot melt away the flawed impulses and negative attitudes of our ego like snow, that teaching is unfortunately doomed to dissolve in the passionate desires of our ego. In these times, marked by the pain caused by such dissolution, the path to self-knowledge, self-awareness, and self-governance arises from this awareness. Based on this level of awareness, the inner light within a person emerges. Yet, if this light remains at a low level of awareness, it does not illuminate the inner world, as it is veiled by a selfish and envious possessiveness. This condition leads to a dependency that drains the soul, full of doubts and anxieties.

Only at a high level of awareness can this light illuminate both the inner and outer worlds. At this level of awareness, which requires participation in life and taking responsibility, decency becomes the crown and adornment of love, knowledge the foundation of morality, and virtue the jewel of conscience. For this awareness is the first step in transforming a negative situation into a positive one. Intention and action then follow, and these three steps require knowledge, discipline, and refinement.

So, how can we understand the meaning of light, salt, and awareness, their qualities, and, moreover, the way, the life, and the truth? How can we comprehend the life system that Christ spoke of? How can we achieve the desired spiritual freedom?

It must be understood that without reaching spiritual enlightenment, without freeing oneself from inner conflicts and negative dependencies, without understanding the way, the life, and the truth, it is impossible to grasp the divine system. Until the spark of compassionate awareness

themselves and leads them to divine truth. In this way, through its loyalty to the Body of Christ, the Church helps to promote justice, love and human dignity in the world.

ignites in the mind, one faces the danger of drowning in the dark waters of the ego. However, if the mind is illuminated by divine light, it not only comprehends the way, the life, and the truth but also attains inner peace, anchoring in the calm harbor of serenity. At this point, one's attitudes and behaviors transform from a negative to a positive image.

At this stage, sincerity disregards the ego's false smiles, seeing them as artificial. Yet, without virtue and morality, sincerity also disappears. A person who is not sincere does not know themselves; they are trapped within their ego, unable to discover their essence -the divine energy and spirit within them. Such a person remains in constant conflict with themselves in the darkness of the ego. Without reaching the light of the soul, they cannot escape this inner conflict, discover, or know themselves. For the light of the soul is divine light. When the mind is illuminated by this light, it gains consciousness, attaining inner peace, tranquility, and spiritual freedom. Otherwise, one's attitudes and behaviors remain under the influence of darkness, and as the inner void remains unfilled, restlessness continues. Some of the events and phenomena we encounter today are manifestations of this unrest.

There is no life in darkness; there is always imbalance and suffering. Life is a struggle between darkness and light. In this struggle, those who can learn from the maturing power of pain emerge victorious and find light more easily.

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