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Jesus, the Mystery of Freedom in History

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Freedom as a concept defies all definitions. Like life and love it is experienced and lived rather than defined. It is obvious that it transcends all forms of articulation, be it philosophical, poetic, legal or social. This fact alone reaffirms the poverty of human language and the limitations of the human mind to give full expression to as fundamental an experience as freedom. It eludes human attempts to capture and analyse it. Freedom is a mystery in which human beings are involved, a mystery like life itself. It cannot be objectified. Rahner points out this mysterious dimension of freedom when he speaks about grace in freedom. He says, "Freedom is first of all 'freedom of being'. It is not merely a quality of an act such as it is sometimes performed, but a transcendental qualification of being human."¹ Indeed, to become human is to become free.

If freedom itself is recognised as a *sine qua non* for the authentic unfolding of a human person and if the concept of freedom itself is so free that it eludes human endeavours to define it (*definire* = to mark limits), are there other sources that reveal this mystery so that it can be lived to the maximum possibility of humans? If freedom makes humans truly humans it cannot be hidden, it needs to be revealed. It needs to be given. Christian faith affirms that it is a call to grow as humans in

relation to others and make the history of the world a history of God in the world.

The givenness of freedom belongs to the very nature of human beings as it is the dynamism that propels the unfolding of human persons. Therefore, no force can ever suppress the movement of freedom within humans although freedom movements can be ruthlessly crushed by the powers that be. The quest for freedom, indeed, is the quest for the unfolding of life. Its dynamism is its life. Life itself becomes what it is because of freedom.

The Christian understanding of life and freedom cannot be separated from the Christian experience of God in Jesus Christ. The following theological reflection is an attempt to understand the relationship between the quest for freedom and the Christian experience of freedom in and through the person of Jesus Christ. We would like to look into the meaning of the Christian faith affirmation that Jesus is liberator and the implications of this affirmation in our understanding of the person of Jesus himself. An attempt is also made to sketch a short history of Jesus' own freedom, its source and its stages of development and its consequences. Indeed, the experience of Jesus as freedom incarnate is the pre-understanding

of the affirmation that Jesus is liberator or saviour. The Christian confession that Jesus is fully human is at the same time an affirmation that he was the full actualization of freedom hitherto unknown in history.

1. Jesus Christ as Freedom Encountered

The early Christian community encountered the Risen Christ as freedom personified. Union with him was experienced as freedom from all enslavement, especially, the enslavement of sin. Sin is understood as alienation of humans from themselves, God, others and nature. According to biblical revelation it is sin that makes humans inauthentic and, therefore, unfree. If sin is alienation and consequent disintegration, in Jesus Christ the believer encountered full integration of his or her life. The Johannine and Pauline understanding of Christian Freedom, the *Libertas Christiana*, as the Fathers of the Church would call it, is the participation of the believer in the Freedom of the Son.

One of the early Christian communities' experience of Jesus as the Truth that sets every one free would give an insight into the understanding of Jesus as freedom. The community was the Johannine community. The community's unique insight into the mystery of freedom is expressed in Jesus' dialogue with the Jews. "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (Jn 8:31-32), and "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (Jn 8:36). Freedom is a gift. For

the believer Jesus is the source of true freedom which makes a person transparent before Truth and before all its manifestations whether in oneself, in others or in nature. It is spontaneously accepted and creatively expressed in his or her individual history which is made up of an integral relationship with all that is revealed to make humans authentically human.

For John the truth, *aletheia*, that sets humans free, is not the Aristotelian concept of intellectual truth, i.e., mind's conformity to reality, but the revelation of the Ultimate in Jesus Christ. John concludes his first letter with the affirmation that Jesus is the truth whom both the Father and the Spirit reveal and testify (1Jn 5:6-12). He says: "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us the understanding, to know him who is true, and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is true God and eternal life" (1Jn 5:20). So the truth that makes humans free is the freedom of the Son of God. Piet Fransen says: "Our freedom never becomes ours alone, as grace never does. Our freedom, therefore, says St. John, is the freedom of the Son, the Son of God, because by grace we partake in the obedience and love of the Son for his Father through the inspiring action of the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is the Son 'who sets us free' according to His own truth."² The life-line of this freedom is love which 'casts out fear' (1Jn 4:18) because fear destroys freedom, incapacitates love, curtails creativity and prevents growth. Therefore, the exhortation of the Truth that sets humans free is, "Fear not!" For fear destroys not only freedom but the unfolding of the human

persons. Therefore, it prevents the glory of God from shining through humans.

The Pauline understanding of freedom is not essentially different from that of Johannine. Paul's own experience of liberation from the painful experience of the law of sin finds articulation in his theology of freedom and especially in the letters to the Romans and to the Galatians. The law of God in which he delights (Rom 7:22) and which he assiduously practised laid bare the inner contradictions he experienced in their practice (Rom 7:13-20, 23-24). Therefore, the experience of liberation is needed even from what is supposed to be good, i.e., the zealous practice of law. The fulfilling of law was enslaving as it led to self-righteousness and boasting. Recalling his life before his liberative encounter with the Risen Lord on the road to Damascus Paul acknowledges his inner struggle. There was a war going on within him between the law of God and the law of sin and he cried out "Who will set me free from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 7:24b). Paul encountered liberation in Jesus Christ. He confesses, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom 8:2).

From his own experience of unfreedom in spite of the strict observance of law (Phil 3:4-6) Paul concludes that the whole world is in need of liberation as "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23). If the glory of God is human beings fully alive by the unfolding of themselves in freedom it is the experience of Paul and the early community that it is possible only

by one's surrender in faith to the person of Jesus, freedom incarnate.

The same theology of freedom is affirmed in the letter to the Galatians even more strongly in the confession that the Risen Lord, the source of their freedom, is the one who was crucified, the historical Jesus, God's freedom made visible in history. "But when time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, so that we receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba! Father!' So through God you are no longer slave but a son, and if a son then an heir" (Gal 4:4-6). Paul's idea of freedom flows from his understanding of God's justice and love which make human beings just, lovable and free. "It is the saving activity of God in Christ that has set man free: any freedom before or apart from Christ is an illusion."³ So Paul affirms strongly "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1).

In the Pauline theology true freedom, God himself, becoming human is to set free humans in Christ that they may live in the glorious liberty of the children of God. Johannine and Pauline articulation of the early Church's experience of Jesus Christ as freedom has tremendous consequences for the Church's mission of liberation. Commenting on the NT witness of John and Paul on the Christian experience of liberation Ignacio Ellacuria says:

John and Paul amplify the concept of liberation greatly, stressing the goal

towards which it leads. That goal is the freedom of the Children of God in the fellowship of all human beings, who are brought together in and by one salvation process that is operative in history. They also stress the central place of the whole Christ, the creating Logos and Redeemer in the flesh, as the root source and principle of liberty; and the need for complete liberation from sin so that the glory of God may shine resplendently in those who have been justified by faith....Liberation is absolutely essential to the gospel message. Today, more than ever before, it is essential to the mission of the Church as well.⁴

The early communities experienced an existential transformation of their lives from unfreedom to freedom through their faith in Jesus Christ. If faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ is 'existence *in* freedom' as Schubert Ogden affirms,⁵ can we say that Jesus' own faith in his Father is his existence in freedom? If Jesus is the truth that sets humans free can we rightly conclude that this truth is faith itself, i.e., being totally grounded in the ultimate Other? The NT presents Jesus as the one who was so totally free that he could make others free. His own way of life and ministry reveals that he experienced freedom to its fullest degree, in a way hitherto unparalleled in history. What is the source of such freedom? What are its consequences?

2. Jesus' Freedom and Its Source

In the biblical understanding authentic freedom flows from one's intimate relationship with God. It empowers humans to have right relationship with other humans and the world.

Hence, unfreedom is understood as a consequence of sin. Another term used to explain one's intimate relationship with God is faith. The OT understood *emet* as 'leaning on' Yahweh as the support of one's existence. Indeed, faith constitutes the total existence of a person before God. The NT testimony about Jesus' own faith is his complete trust in the Father as the source of his existence and mission. If faith is understood as being rooted and grounded in God or 'as an existence in utter trust in God's love and utter loyalty to his cause' ⁶ Jesus' freedom was the expression of his faith. This faith historically lived by Jesus made the early Christian community proclaim that he is the truth that makes humans free. He is truth because it is in his faithfulness, in his *emet* that he reveals who God is and what humans can become. Therefore, freedom, faith and truth are not three abstract concepts in relation to Jesus but the concrete life and the historical actions of Jesus that liberate and empower humans to become what they are called to become in a God-given pattern of humanization. Therefore, rootedness in his Father and commitment to the cause of his Father defines Jesus' faith and explains his freedom.

Jesus' rootedness in the Father is so total that his whole existence can be defined only in his relationship to the Father. H. Urs von Balthasar commenting on Jesus' faith says: "Son of Man offers total fidelity to the Father. It is given once and for all, yet fleshed out anew at every moment in time. He shows absolute preference for the Father - the Father's nature, love, will and commands - over his own desires and

inclinations. He sticks to that will, come what may. Above all, he lets the Father arrange and direct everything.”⁷ This is, indeed, the total expression of Jesus’ faith as well as his freedom. Jesus faith and freedom can be understood, therefore, only in his intimate and unique relationship to his Father whom he addressed tenderly yet confidently as *abba*.

The classical NT text which expresses both Jesus’ faith and his freedom is Mark 14:36. “Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt.” His freedom wells up from an intimate relationship with his Father which is expressed in the way he addresses his Father as *abba*. The faith that everything is possible to the Father and the freedom to surrender to the same Father come what may, flow from Jesus’ experience of God as *Abba*. To address God as *abba* is disrespectful for the Jewish mind and therefore not used in Jewish prayers. Jesus did it with such spontaneity and freedom that the NT writers preserved this term without translating it to show the originality of this way of relating to God. J.Jeremias who made an important study on the use of the term *abba* by Jesus affirms: “For Jesus to venture to take this step was something new and unheard of. He spoke to God like a Child to its father, simply, inwardly, confidently. Jesus’ use of *abba* in addressing God reveals the heart of his relationship with God.”⁸ Jesus’ *abba*-consciousness revealed in his over familiar and scandalously intimate way of addressing God with the freedom of a child, gives an insight into his own self-aware-

ness. He was himself before his Father, in the total nakedness of his being, clothed only in the awareness that he was loved to the maximum of love and trusted to the fullness of trust.

J.D.G.Dunn, commenting on Jesus’ religious experience of God as Father, says, “The fact that Jesus used *abba* in addressing God enables us to say with some confidence that Jesus experienced God as Father in a very personal, intimate way:...”⁹ Implied in this way of addressing God in his habitual prayer with such spontaneity and openness is a special relationship with his Father. This intimate relationship was the source of his freedom. If freedom is the unlimited openness and transparency before God, the source and end of one’s being, and consequent unconditional surrender to God, Jesus was totally free. If freedom is the capacity of a human person to unfold himself or herself to the maximum possibility of being human, Jesus was fully human. The NT presents Jesus as the one who was so free and so human that those who believed in him experienced true freedom and wholeness, and they could be themselves in his presence. Jesus was not only freedom incarnate but as a human being, he experienced freedom to its fullness and lived a life of dangerous freedom.

3. The History of Jesus’ Freedom and His Historical Freedom

Jesus’ life was the continuous enfleshment of his faith in freedom. His faith and the exercise of his freedom cannot be limited to his intimate relationship with his Father alone. Equally

important is his relationship to the kingdom of his Father and his commitment to the realization of the kingdom in the concrete historical situation of his life. It means that his freedom grows in his dynamic relationship with his Father and in his liberating activity as the actualization of the kingdom he proclaimed. According to S. Kappen, in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus announces that God will come to eradicate whatever prevents humans to become fully humans and affirm and fulfil whatever is truly human. "The Kingdom of God therefore is, on the one hand, the liberation of man from every alienation, i.e., from everything that renders him other than what he ought to be, and on the other, the full flowering of the human on our planet. In other words, it is not only freedom *from* but also freedom *for* – freedom for creativity, community and love."¹⁰ Jesus' mission of freeing people from all types of alienation and securing meaning for their lives by their free response to God in and through the human community and the world sprang from his *abba*-consciousness and his commitment to the kingdom.

If Jesus' faith and freedom are the two dimensions of his intimate relationship with his Father, what J. Sobrino considers important for the history of Jesus' faith can be applied also to his freedom. According to Sobrino every positive human action in history is guided by some values which need to be concretized in actual life situation which may lead to conflict. In the conflicting situation of the dialectic interplay between the values one believes in and the negative forces that oppose the values real-

ity is fashioned as well as the agent. At the final stage of this positive human action or in the final stage of faith in a conflicting situation one decides to give up values or give up life. The history of Jesus' faith culminated in his surrender in freedom to the will of the Father offering to give up life rather the values he believed in. This is also the history of Jesus' freedom.

Jesus' spontaneous relation with his Father, his consciousness of being rooted in the Ground of being, was the source of his knowledge and conviction that true freedom made humans truly humans. It means that humans have to experience the infinite love of God, actualize what one ought to do and search for what is good and true and beautiful. It is true freedom when humans recognize the sovereignty of God's love and actualize the values of justice, love, peace, forgiveness and fellowship. Jesus called this the 'Kingdom of God' or God's reign. In his freedom Jesus also recognized the source of unfreedom. Unfreedom begins with the vulnerability of freedom itself. Though called to become free by following what makes humans truly human, the tendency to become unfree by everything that makes them inhuman looms large on the horizon of the humans' pilgrimage to freedom. In spite of the desire to do good humans sometimes do evil and become unfree (Rom 7:15). They feel not only alienated from themselves and others but also from the very Ground of their being. This is sin that kills freedom. Compounded by the oppressive interpretation of social, cultural and religious laws and regulations the guilt of sin committed deepens and indeed leads to a

slow death of what makes humans authentically human, i.e., freedom. There is no self-emancipation. Humans need to be gifted with the forgiving and reconciling love of God. In the warmth of God's forgiving love humans become truly human and free. Therefore, 'the gospel within the gospel' which Jesus proclaims is the forgiving love of God the Father (Lk 15).

In the history of Jesus' own freedom one can detect the strength of conviction with which he pulls down the Jewish religion's concept of God that prevents humans from experiencing the forgiving love of God. The God of Jewish religion is only interested in law, temple and status quo. Therefore, the Sabbath is more important than the human being. For this God, ritual purity plays an important role in human relationship with him that one must guard against anything impure which is polluting, whether persons or things. Bound by the letter of the law religion interprets the will of God in terms of what is forbidden and what is permitted. Thus, the God of religion becomes a stern law-enforcing authority whom humans must fear. Where there is fear, there is no freedom. Thus he is not a liberating God but an enslaving God. E. Kaesemann has rightly pointed out, "There is no God who ceases to be a creator, and who can therefore be played of against what has been created; there is no such thing as God-pleasing religion that absolves us from everyday duties; and there is no Holy Scripture that allows man to sin and relieves us of our absolute responsibility towards our neighbour. For this reason, the commandments about Sabbath and purification are understood in

a foolish way if they may be broken only in case of danger to life, and allow love to be disregarded".¹¹

It was Jesus' 'royal freedom' that he rejected such an enslaving interpretation of the revelation of God because the creator who can be manipulated against the creature is a false god, a false god who would rob people of their freedom and humanity.¹² Already by the human acts that go against one's own growth one experiences the bondage of sin. This tragic bondage of sin is further worsened by the false interpretation of the laws whether social, moral or cultic. Jesus' insistence on the primacy of love both divine and human before all types of laws, no matter how cultically important and traditionally followed, and his authoritative proclamation of the forgiving love of God cut the roots of sin. With an authority unknown to his predecessors, with a freedom that scandalized even his disciples he revealed that his Father's love touches the hearts of humans and liberates them from the shackles of sin. Those who are open to the invitation of this forgiving love experience true freedom because love liberates. The sinners, real or so called because they are social outcasts, ritually impure, physically and psychologically afflicted and economically poor, could experience healing and reintegration into the society when they repented and encountered divine forgiveness through Jesus. It convinced Jesus that he was sent "to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Lk 4: 18) and that he "came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mk 2: 17b).

At the first stage in the history of Jesus' freedom we can see how he shared the liberating love of God to an extent that was even found blasphemous by his contemporaries. In the light of the liberating love of God for whom humans were infinitely more important than the religious and social structures and systems which claimed to fulfil the will of God yet oppressed humans, Jesus stood for love, justice, peace, reconciliation and fellowship, come what may.

The freedom with which Jesus reached out to anyone who sought to experience God's forgiving love and be free brought Jesus to a situation of conflict with the powers that opposed the realization of God's liberating love in a situation of sin. Like his faith, the situation of conflict made Jesus' freedom a dangerous freedom because he was exercising it in the concrete situation which sought to destroy the liberator in him. When the exercise of his freedom assumed meaning by the concretization of the values of the Kingdom which he proclaimed, the history of Jesus' freedom entered into its second stage.

Jesus' freedom finds dangerous expression in his denunciation of not only the religious structures but also the social power structure which oppressed humans in the name of God, social and economic order and national security. If love is the soul of freedom, justice and fellowship form its body. Love must be expressed in freedom to love all. However, this universal love must be translated into concrete forms. "In Jesus' case his universal love was translated into a decision to be 'with' the oppressed

and to be 'against' the oppressors, precisely so that his love could be 'for' all of them." ¹³

Jesus associated freely with the poor and the outcasts. He so shocked the Scribes and the Pharisees when he broke social and religious barriers and had table-fellowship with the tax collectors and sinners that they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (Mk 2:16), Kappen says, "No less revolutionary than Jesus' table-fellowship with publicans and sinners was his rejection of the social taboos surrounding relations between the sexes. Nothing, perhaps, was more shocking for his contemporaries than the freedom with which he associated himself with women, considering the inferior position of women in the Jewish society."¹⁴ Freedom cannot but break those artificially created barriers of social discrimination because they are structures of inhumanity and unfreedom.

The poor in Jesus' time were socially marginalized as well as economically oppressed. Jesus believed that the poor are poor because they happened to be the part of an unjust social structure where the power wielded by a few kept the poor in abject misery. He was also convinced that fight against injustice was the way to bring about the kingdom. "He condemns wealth that makes people poor and praises poverty that points an accusing finger at the malignant reality of wealth."¹⁵ He condemns wealth because it produces poverty and creates classes of the oppressors and the oppressed. Above all, it undermines the sovereignty of God when mammon

becomes the master of one's life (Lk 16:13). "The Pharisees who loved money heard all this and scoffed at him" (Lk 16:14). Such outright condemnation of the values of society lands him in conflict with the powers that be.

With prophetic freedom and courage he denounces the religious and the social power structures because they deny the poor the possibility to lead a life worthy of their human vocation. The cleansing of the temple (Mk 11:28) is, perhaps, the best expression of Jesus' freedom as well as of everything he stood for and stood against. He stood for a cleansed temple where one can enter into communion with God in spirit and in truth, where God's forgiving love can be experienced not through elaborate rituals prescribed by man-made traditions but through loving table-fellowship. He stood against everything that is symbolized by the desecrated temple because it was the expression of the unholy alliance between the oppressive religious, social and economic power structures. Jesus turns the tables of economic exploitation over as they create, divide and separate human beings into classes and groups preventing genuine table-fellowship. "In all likelihood the cleansing of the temple was the immediate provocation that led to Jesus' arrest and trial before Sanhedrin".¹⁶

The situation in which Jesus' true freedom faced conflicts with those forces of unfreedom leads him to the third or final stage of the history of his freedom. At this stage of freedom Jesus had to make a choice between all that he stood for or his own life. The garden of Gethsemane provides the back-

drop of this struggle towards the final leap of his freedom. His glorious freedom faces its own vulnerability. He is so greatly distressed and troubled that he told his disciples that his soul was sorrowful even unto death (Mk 14:33-34; Matt 26: 37-38).

In the garden of Gethsemane Jesus faces the greatest crisis of his life. He is tempted. The painful struggle is either to use power or to rely on authority. Power has no authority and authority is powerless. Power as received from external sources can make one inhuman and unfree. The use of power which could dominate and control others and manipulate situations for his own advantage might save his life but would kill his freedom and all what he stood for. But the temptation to preserve one's life before the impending threat to life is natural and strong. His authority which came from his intimate relation with his Father seemed to be powerless to stop the powers that were determined to destroy him. His freedom faces supreme trial. Luke presents the gravity of this situation and the excruciating pain he suffers in deciding whether to give up the values of the kingdom he embodied or to give up his life by narrating that "being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground" (Lk 22:44). Finally, Jesus decides in freedom for freedom. He lets the source of his freedom, the Father himself, take control also of the rest of his history. His supreme freedom is expressed in his prayer, "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mk 14:36). Authority

triumphs over power. True freedom overcomes the temptations of false freedom and its various expressions which may appear to be normal and reasonable. Letting go when the future is bleak reveals the strength of faith and the depth of authentic freedom.

The cross of Jesus is the concretization of his specific surrender to his Father in freedom which he had already made in the Garden of Gethsamene. The cross of Jesus is a process which began at the incarnation when God's freedom was enfleshed in a situation of unfreedom which seeks to destroy that freedom. In this process of the cross Gethsamene symbolizes the highest peak of freedom as well as the lowest depth of frustration, confusion, fear and intolerable pain and agony. Therefore, the agony on the cross seems to lose its intensity in comparison with the agony in the garden where Jesus' freedom faced its ultimate trial.

If the cross is the consequence of Jesus' dangerous freedom, the resurrection reveals that God's freedom ultimately triumphs and can overcome whatever be the power of unfreedom. At his resurrection Jesus' freedom reaches its fullness, and thus he becomes the source of the Spirit of freedom to those who encounter him. Therefore, Paul affirms, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (II Cor 3:17). Indeed, the Jesus of history was encountered as freedom enfleshed by his disciples. Now as the risen Lord, he is encountered as the one who effects a radical transformation of their lives through his Spirit so that they realize

themselves as authentically human and free. This experience of freedom makes them agents of freedom for others because they recognized their freedom as a gift and a task. They realized that they become more and more liberated to the extent that they set others free by continuing the mission of the Truth that sets everyone free.

Conclusion

Freedom that defies all definitions found its historical expression and trans-historical realization in Jesus Christ. The early Christian community encountered him as the one who was alive and liberating even after his death. They knew that he was crucified for living out his freedom dangerously in a situation that opposed his freedom. The powers of unfreedom found him inconvenient and threatening as he stood against their religious, social and economic systems and structures that made them victims of unfreedom and condemned the majority to dehumanization. The source of Jesus' freedom was his intimate union with his Father whom he called *abba* with the spontaneity of a child. This intimate relationship was also the source of his mission of liberation. He proclaimed with such clarity and authority that humans could truly become humans if they would encounter the forgiving love of God and live by the values of the kingdom. With a freedom that was shocking to his hearers he interpreted religious laws, broke down social barriers and violated dehumanizing regulations and denounced oppression and the exploitation of the poor and the marginalized, Kaesemann says: "Whatever else Jesus may have been, he was

a 'liberal'. ...He was a liberal because in the name of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit he interpreted and appraised Moses, the Scriptures, and dogmatics from the point of view of love, and thereby allowed devout people to remain human and even reasonable".¹⁷ But Jesus had to pay heavily for his life and expression of authentic freedom. Gethsemane symbolizes the ultimate trial of his freedom and there in the garden, true to his freedom, he decided to

give up life rather than the values he believed in and practised dangerously.

So irrepressible was the freedom that was made manifest in Jesus that the powers that were opposed to Jesus could only destroy his earthly life but not his freedom. The liberator continues to live challenging the structures of unfreedom as before through his Spirit who is present in all those who encounter him and commit themselves to his cause of liberation.

Notes

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