

The struggle with the Passions. The only path to freedom. The World does not understand. Psalm 18:18-20

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“They overtook me in the day of mine affliction, and the Lord became my firm support. (19) And He led me forth into a spacious place; He will deliver me, because He desired me. ` And the Lord will recompense me according to my righteousness, and according to the purity of my hands will He recompense me.” Psalm 17:18-20, Septuagint

The Psalter describes the spiritual life, and details the revelation of God to man. This Psalm describes the struggle with the passions with its ups and downs, its defeats and its victories, and also the eventual victory, which is a *“spacious place”*, which is *perfect freedom* of the soul.

The Christian understanding of freedom is the only understanding that is life. All other understandings of freedom are death.

Our understanding of freedom is that the soul is perfectly free to choose what is good, without difficulty, without struggle, every time. We understand that freedom is only possible if we struggle to do what is good, that is what is according to the commandments. We who choose to do what is good, many times must choose it with great effort, and after an initial fall. Perfect freedom is to be able to choose what is good without any fall and without effort. I'm not speaking of the effort in dealing with the troubles of life. They will always will be there. Our Lord Jesus Christ clearly made great physical and psychological efforts in his earthly life. The one thing that He did not need to do was to struggle against was sin, because He had none, because He had perfect freedom.

The psalter mentions this, when Christ speaks in Hades, saying He is *“free among the dead”* (Psalm 87:5). He was free among the dead because although He was dead, that is, His human body was dead and His soul was in Hades, He was free to leave because He had no sin or even the desire to sin or the weakness towards sin.

The world's definition of freedom is to do what they want, and they do not know that this supposed *“freedom”* leads them to slavery. We have an example of this worldly definition of freedom in a recent acceptance speech¹ from an actress who won an inconsequential award and a piece of metal, and in her acceptance speech made it into a political speech where she admitted with pride that she was able to have the part because she had the freedom to choose, and chose not to have a child at a particular time that she was getting this part. In other words, she proclaimed her sin (aborting her child because that child conflicted with her desires at the time), not calling it sin, but calling it freedom, and the entire auditorium clapped. This is the world's definition of freedom. That woman is actually a slave. She is a slave to her ego and her desires, and she does not even know it.



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¹ Golden Globe Awards, January 5, 2020. Of course, I did not waste a moment of my life by watching it. I learned of this actress, who proclaimed her slavery to great applause, from a news report.