

14. November 2019

## “Only the Son Makes You Free” (Part 8)

### **The oversized influenceability**

This is related to the theme of human fear, which arises from a general weakness and excessive receptivity to impressions. On 7 and 8 November, we have already considered some aspects of human fear.

Some people become internally dependent on others who are purely dynamically superior to them. They take on foreign views, not because they convince them purely objectively, but because they are presented with great force. One usually drops these views after a while, when the immediate contact with the dynamically superior persons has ceased. But for a certain time, the aspect that other people have of certain things displaces one's own.

It can go so far - if we have such an influencing predisposition - that we allow ourselves to be so intimidated by the firm will of another person that our own decisions are shattered before their will, that our firm intentions break with the resistance of others, indeed, even as a result of this influenceability, we temporarily adopt the views and attitudes of other persons.

Normally dependence does not go to the last depth of our being, but it may be that we allow ourselves to be forced into aspects that do not actually fit our inner principles.

We can now easily understand how important it is to become aware of this weakness and to address it. Especially in this day and age with the over-presence of the media and constant influence, it is very prudent to deal with such a weakness.

I say this also with regard to the many manipulations, half-truths, lies, distortions, etc., which we can be subjected to.

That is why it is important to fight with all our strength against this deep form of non-freedom.

Dietrich von Hildebrand gives the following advice:

*"If we have such an influencing predisposition, we must first avoid contact with people who are dynamically superior to us and who start from a false worldview, if possible. This is not cowardice, but humble self-knowledge that correctly assesses one's own strength."*

*Secondly, if contact with such people is unavoidable, we must explicitly close ourselves in advance against this influence, with which we reckon from the outset. We must not leave a moment of "rest", not a moment of the otherwise self-evident opening, to the sympathetic participation with strangers. It is necessary to distinguish the situations in which we open our souls wide, and those in which we have to completely close them, as we breathe deeply in a pure mountain air, but hold our breath in a bacilli-indented stuffy air."*

Hildebrand's advice is extremely valuable, because we must not be subject to a false self-assessment that we are strong enough to deal with people of all kinds and to listen to all sorts of opinions when we already know that they are in the wrong direction. Such disputes should only arise if we are really strong and firm enough and, best of all, have also consulted with our spiritual father - if we are lucky enough to have a good one. Here should be the motivation to help the other person to recognize his error. It would be quite wrong to act out of pride and self-overestimation or to go into a field dangerous to the soul out of unhealthy curiosity. This is, of course, all the more true if we are very easily influenced.

I also emphasize these things with regard to false prophets in our Church who no longer proclaim according to the true doctrine. One should not listen to them. We remember a word from the Lord: *"Beware of the pharisees' leaveover"* (Mc 8,15). This is a clear indication to avoid to listen to false teachings.

It becomes particularly important when we are exposed to increasing anti-christian propaganda, which can come to us from the political side. Statements that do not correspond to our morality and the truth cannot be followed. On the contrary, they must be resisted.

For the sake of the importance of this issue, we will continue to do so tomorrow.