Real Liberty of Spirit

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WCCM October 30, 2026

From *Moment of Christ*, by John Main

One of the things that I suppose everybody strives for in their life is to discover a real liberty of spirit. We are constrained by so many things – by fear and by trying to project the image of ourselves that we feel others expect. I think people suffer a great deal of frustration because they cannot be themselves and cannot make contact with themselves.

James Joyce once described one of his characters as 'always living at a certain distance from himself. Now what Jesus came to proclaim was precisely this liberty. The liberty to be ourselves and the liberty to find ourselves in him, through him and with him. Meditation is simply the way to that liberty. It is the way to your own heart. It is the way to the depth of your own being where you can simply be – not having to justify yourself or to apologize for yourself but simply rejoicing in the gift of your own being.

Freedom is not just freedom from things. Christian liberty is not just freedom from desire, from sin. We are free for intimate union with God, which is another way of saying we are free for infinite expansion of Spirit in God. Meditation is entering into that experience of being free for God, transcending desire, sin, leaving it behind; transcending ego, leaving it behind, so that the whole of our being is utterly available to God. It is in that profound availability that we become ourselves.

Gitanjali 35, by Rabindranath Tagore

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.