

## (141) THE CONSEQUENCES OF STOPPING WITH THE SCAPEGOATING

What does it mean for our life and for the people around us, for the “world”, when we really stop with the scapegoating? We stop, first of all, by stopping with the scapegoating outside of culture, which only exists because of the continual scapegoating. With the very fact that we don't any longer participate in the scapegoating we become outsiders.

Jesus did not scapegoat. He himself really was in the position of a scapegoat from the very beginning of his (conscious) life on and as such he probably even could not scapegoat. He could say the truth to people, about their scapegoating, but he did not scapegoat himself. A real scapegoat, not an incidentally scapegoated person or an identified patient in a family, but a person who really is scapegoated, pushed out of culture, with in a deep sense no way back, cannot scapegoat himself. She/he just is victim, eventually devil-god of and for the scapegoaters, but not scapegoating her/himself.

To stop scapegoating means to follow Jesus. Consequently it means to come ourselves into the position of the scapegoat(s), in the same time still partaking and yet not any longer partaking in culture. It too automatically means to be a very special person, the big impossible, culturally, not to become ourselves scapegoated. Jesus, who in his very being was in the position of a scapegoat, was scapegoated by the world. He could say that those who would follow him would get everything, with persecutions, with being scapegoated (Mark 10, 30).

To stop scapegoating means that we stop to try to get rid of our responsibility by scapegoating others. We take our responsibility upon ourselves. Not only the responsibility for what we did consciously, willingly, but for everything we did and did not do, what we neglected to do.

It too means that we take our life, our destiny totally upon ourselves, without scapegoating our parents, our ancestors, those who were in the past around us and influenced us. They were not any wiser than we were and are, they did in their manner what they were able to, they did not know, as we so often don't know, what they were doing. We do not compare ourselves with them, hoping or being convinced that we are better than they were. We take our life and what came out of it upon ourselves, in our own responsibility.

That means that we necessarily know of guilt, of guilt because of what we did and what we neglected to do, that we only can live out of forgiveness which only can be freely given to us or, if that is denied to us, by carrying the guilt and its consequences.

A big question here can be what our responsibility “exactly” is. That might be a theme for another paper. We are in any case responsible for what we ourselves and for what those, to whom we in some manner belong, did or neglected to do. If what

is done is wrong we never can get rid of our responsibility by explaining it in some manner away, by scapegoating others or by denying guilt. Finally we are, because we belong to the human race, responsible for everything what humans do, although of course in many cases we can feel extremely hopeless, because we don't see any possibility to do something, to alleviate the consequences of the wrongdoings of our fellow-humans. In that sense the only possibility to live in this horrible world is to live really out of forgiveness and atonement, seeking for it, praying for it, for ourselves and for all the wrongdoers. Only when forgiveness becomes a reality, there even might be possibilities to do something or even to give in some manner our life in the service of Jesus, of real humanity.

When we stop scapegoating we stop in the same time to divide people, fundamentally or incidentally, in good and in bad ones. We stop judging people. We get along with everybody in the same manner and with the same trust, never beginning with distrust how well founded ever that distrust could be. We only are trustworthy by being trusted. Being mistrusted is a stumbling stone, a seduction into not being trustworthy. But even that looks like strategy. We trust because we are out of the romantic world in which people are divided between good and bad ones.

This trusting is not meant as being stupidly childish. Matth. 10, 16 has to do with this. Being "so cunning as serpents and yet harmless as doves" has to do with real, free wisdom, not with distrust.

Stopping the scapegoating finally means that we stop to desire. We only can stop the scapegoating if we believe that it is true that the Father will care when we stop the caring, when we accept the promise of Jesus, that we will get everything, really everything, when we follow him, be it with persecutions.

When we stop the scapegoating we leave culture and hypocrisy, on which culture and all human life is built, behind us. We become free. We become transparent, because we have nothing to hide. Everybody can look into our eyes and our eyes, in the same time, become really seeing, as Jesus' eyes were.

Stopping the scapegoating means that we meet people in another manner. We see them in another manner and we see much more than we ever saw. We know them in a manner they were not acquainted with and which, nevertheless, in the same time, does not threaten them, because they know, even if they don't know that they know, that this time there is no rivalry, no power games. They feel safe, being seen in that manner, a sense of new freedom, an impression of coming home at last.

Thus stopping the scapegoating means that we become a gift for the people to whom we belong and whom we meet. In the manner we are with them, in our very being with them we are opening up for them in a new manner of being, a new possibility of life.

Of course this is true for every single person, but it is equally true for groups of people who belong together and can try to stop, as a group, the scapegoating. If churches could make that step, in fact the step from religion into the gospel, in their relationships with each other, in their relationship with the world, they would change the world altogether. If politicians could stop the scapegoating, we would have a totally new politics with, at last, real possibilities. But life in groups only changes when members of these groups change, so in the end it always begins with single people who have the courage, the freedom to leave old certainties, the certainties of the scapegoating world behind them to risk themselves in really totally new territory.

It needs courage to stop the scapegoating. Jesus knew and predicted persecutions. Stopping the scapegoating can make us an outcast. Stopping the scapegoating means that we take risks, the consequences of which we impossibly can know or measure. We might receive wonderful experiences, which make us deeply happy, and other ones which make us distraught or even destroy us.

We never can stop the scapegoating alone. We all are deeply dipped into culture. Culture is in all our cells, directing us long before we think or acknowledge it. We never can get out of the scapegoating mechanisms without somebody who really is already out of it, who leads us, who goes ahead of us, whom we can follow. The only possibility I know of is Jesus.

Nevertheless, generally even that is not enough. When we really wish to leave scapegoating behind us, then probably we have to travel together. It is a life-encompassing learning-process, in which we certainly time and again "fall back", are cultural again. That will last till the Kingdom comes. When we talk about stopping the scapegoating, on the Way of following Jesus. On the Way we need each other, to encourage, which means to renew the hope, to console, to show the faults we make, the many occasions in which we betray ourselves and Jesus, happily scapegoating again, to repent and go on the Way anew, with new insights and new hopes.

And, although now and then we might be despondent about ourselves and about everybody, the world, we cannot stop with wishing to learn, in the school of the gospels, we cannot stop with the deep longing to stop it, the desiring, the scapegoating, the violence, the murdering, physically, emotionally and spiritually of the people around us, for whom we are responsible.

Do we change the world, by stooping to scapegoat, even if we are ourselves so often a failure? Yes, we do. It might not be observed, it might look like as if nothing ever changed, that we only made our own life hard. Nothing ever gets lost in this world. We don't know when and in what manner seeds will grow up. We might see nothing of it, the seeds, as our lives, being hidden with Christ in God. There they are safe and they will sprout in their own time.

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