

Christ in me, Christ in us

How to bring Sunday into Monday



Adriaan Bekman

Appenweier
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Introduction

This book is a personal account of a search process for how to deal with and give meaning to our lives from the force of Christ in a complex world, a demanding time. Now after 76 years of living on this earth and in this world, it is a good time to draw a balance, looking back, what has given life meaning and how I have experienced and seen the Christ force working in my own soul and the soul of others. A major change that has taken place in these years is the disenchantment with regard to the institutional frameworks in which we live. The church, the politics, the family, the company, the nationality they gave us the guidelines for our life and actions. They represented values and principles, rules and regulations by which people could and should orient themselves. Now these institutions have largely lost their all-determining power and thus governing a society. Living together, creating a personal life has become a complex and demanding task for each of us and this applies worldwide. In order to give ourselves a foothold, we can on the one hand use the material expansion to clothe ourselves in matter and on the other hand grasp spiritual truths and follow gurus who tell us how to live. Between matter and spirit are the social communities in which we live and operate. In which communities do we settle and what drives these communities to protect and determine the lives of its members? All in all, our issue is one of personal leadership in dealing with our life's questions. Both on a personal and social level, we are working every day to give form and content to the practical questions surrounding our lives and how to answer these questions. In it we can experience that when we appeal to social institutions, bureaucracy predominates and we are largely forced to call in the help of those who are close to us. An essential step that all of us must take is to trust our own "I" spirit and the "I" spirit of the other person. By 'I' I do not mean one's own ego, but one's own spirit, which we can also call the 'higher I'. An "I-to-I" encounter with the other person in dealing with our life's questions and challenges can help us to find the biographical path and give meaning to our lives. Now this gives us the basis for an encounter with the Christ power. "Where two are present in my name, there am I in the midst of them." When the "I" in the soul appears in the human encounter, we can create the foundation for a meaningful and value-filled life and coexistence. From this Christ power we can deal with the many forces and powers that want to influence us and want to control our lives. That is what we want to explore in this book.



Part 1: The Origin

The Old and New Testaments tell the story of the Divine Creation of mankind. In the Old Testament we read the origin of our existence and how we as human beings keep losing the connection with our origin. That leads to a Divine intervention to get the people back on the right path. In the New Testament, the choosing direction is placed in the hands of man himself. We have the responsibility to give shape and substance to our development as a person and as humanity. After the introduction of God's son Christ, the world of the Gods has withdrawn and is watching in suspense how humanity seeks and finds its way to a higher consciousness, a developed soul. We depend on each other, especially when we walk on the lost road and lose track. How do we save ourselves? It is there that the Christ in this world, in me, in us, is the support and strength to find the right path.

How it started

As a student of the AC, a Jesuit school in The Hague, I was invited by Father Geraets to participate in the Maria Congregation. In regular meetings we explored questions of faith. Once we went on a retreat. There I learned to meditate. In silence and in a quiet place we listened to our inner voices and explored the conversation with Christ. That made a deep impression on me. By focusing your thoughts on Christ, you entered another space, a sacred soul space, and you felt a remarkable inner strength that encouraged you to face the many challenges of daily life with confidence. Since those first experiences I have stopped at times and consciously focused on 'Christ in me'.

The fact that Christ appeared on earth in Jesus during the beginning of our era, but that many did not recognize it and even ignored it, aroused in me the desire to develop the wakefulness to recognize Christ in reality.

During my study of sociology and business administration at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam, I asked myself how what manifested itself in church on Sunday related to what guided people in their work on Monday in terms of values and principles. Later, as an employee of Shell International and responsible for organizational development at NAM in Assen and in Shell Curacao, that question became more topical and more personal. I saw the gulf between what controlled the soul on Sunday and what controlled the soul for the rest of the week. In the natural context of family, I could still experience the rituals at baptism and marriage and the working of the Christ impulse, but in the work environment, it mainly came down to personal awareness of the moral questions in dealing with the customer, each other and nature/earth. Later on, I organized meetings in De Baak, the national training center for managers, under the title 'Sunday in Monday'. How do we connect the business impulses with the spiritual impulses in our soul and how do we help each other to find our way in life? There I discovered that for one it was a welcome connection but for the other it was a wanted separation, because what the work demands and what the personal religious and spiritual convictions are that we have, these two worlds should remain separate.

The "hard" reality of organized work and the "soft" reality of faith and spiritual exploration proved to be a difficult combination for many. How to deal with that?

An article by the philosopher Jacques Ellul touched me. In it he describes the advance of technology and the system. He sees this as an autonomous force that works and cannot be reversed. It can all too easily lead to dehumanization. How can we resist this all-pervading force? He sees Christ as the only force that can save the human soul from this systemic world. Like possibly all philosophers for centuries, he searches for the perpetuation of the meaning of life and how we as humans give meaning to our lives.

Shortly before his death, Bernard Lievegoed, the pioneer of human and organizational development, referred to this as 'The salvation of the soul'. This again shows the seriousness of the situation. The human soul is possessed by forces that drive it into matter or want it to escape into spiritual ideologies. Here too it is Christ, the Christ force, that can save the soul of man from perishing in these worlds, these virtual worlds.

As the philosopher Levinas says, "When the other appears in my situation, my responsibility begins."

Martin Buber also sees it: 'Du und Ich, Ich und Du' as the decisive step towards a sustainable future for humanity and Christ also plays a decisive role in this.

I discovered that the education of the human soul is no longer so much an individual matter that we can train and strengthen in a meditative, prayerful way, but that a community road has been built on which we as people together can develop the soul towards a conscious state of being and Christ can appear in this.

Working with clients on people and organizational development questions gave me a field of perception of how the Christ force can work in the human encounter.

In an exercise 'Questioning the question' three people explore a question of one of them. The other person questions the question and the third person monitors the process and after some time asks the first person to reformulate the question, to recognize the sense and to formulate a next step that can be taken. People who meet for the first time do this exercise with each other and are surprised how deep and meaningful this dialogue works in the soul. That happens again and again and gives me a feeling that in this way this Christ force can work in the souls of people.

Inspirational Spirits

The Christ force is a universal force that works in human encounter. It is not dependent on religion, nationality, culture, but works universally between people. She also works in dealing with other living beings and with the earth nature. After all, these also originate from a meeting of spiritual and evolutionary forces and live embedded within their own soul and own consciousness with each other on earth and in connection with the cosmos.

If we want to deal with the Christ force in a focused way, we can trace in the history of mankind those sources through which the Christ force works. Prior to Christ's coming, during Christ's incarnation in Jesus, and post-Christ's resurrection, individualities made this power visible to us.

We will here characterize some of those individualities and their core ideas that appeal to me from this perspective.

Plato

Based on the Socratic dialogues, Plato concludes that it is the active ideas that make the difference. Does man strive for pleasure and the satisfaction of his needs or does man strive for knowledge and on that basis to "do good". We actually live in the cave and see only the shadows of what works. When we step into the light, we can first perceive the real contours of what is and what appears. That light can be seen as the Christ light that allows us to perceive the essential.

Aristotle

Based on our own observations, we can investigate and learn. We can let our actions be guided by the virtues, those are the good forces that make us do the right thing. The good is that which creates meaning and fulfilment, which produces inspiration. In

a world of evil and good, we can turn to the good and "starve" the evil. In this the Christ power is there to lead us.

Buddha

Buddha gives us "The Eightfold Path".

This path preserves the soul of man from evil in its pursuit of good.

The eightfold path takes us to higher consciousness and allows us to experience the Christ power.

Buddha expressed the eightfold path as follows:

1. Right views

Understand what suffering is

2. Right thoughts and right intentions

Relinquish selfishness

3. Correct speech

Abstinence from telling lies

4. Right action

Abstinence from taking what is not given

5. Right way of life

No arms trade

6. Proper Effort

Generating and developing good business and good thoughts

7. Right attention, awareness, concentration

Awareness of the body, of feelings, of the mind

8. Right concentration

From receiving Wisdom transform to the Wisdom from experience and then transform to Wisdom from self-understanding.

Practicing the path of Buddha opens up our soul to receive the Christ force.

St. Paul

Paul says in his letters: 'Thus I find in me a law which, while I want to accomplish good, constrains me to do evil. My inner man joyfully unites with the law of God; but I perceive in my legs and arms another law warring against the law recognized by my mind, and imprisoning me under the law of sin which is at work in my legs and arms. I wretched man! Who will save me from this body that is in the power of death? Thank God! It is through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

He also says: "To each other you have no other obligation than mutual love. Whoever loves another has fulfilled the law. Love does no harm to the neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law." In mutual love the Christ power can unfold.

Augustine

Augustine deals with the question of free will. He says, "For if man is good and could not act well unless he wants to, then he must have free will." This means, says Augustine: "Do not marvel, therefore, if we make use of the rest of things by means

of free will, we can also use free will itself by means of itself. Memory also remembers itself in a certain way. That means: "For as you strengthen that original will to exist, you become more steadfast and you build yourself up to that which is the highest form of existence."

It is the Christ force that resides in the free will that strives for the good. It is the Christ force that allows our soul to develop in freedom, can bring it to a higher consciousness.

Cusanus

Cardinal Cusanus does not place man under God but next to God. He says, "Man is the measure of things. Hence man finds in himself, as in a measuring ground of being, all created things. He refers to Trismegistus: "Man is a second God. For as God is the creator of real beings and natural forms, so man is the creator of the mind being and the artificial forms which are but parables of reason. Therefore, man has reason, which in creation has a resemblance to divine reason."

Christ has incarnated in man as God's son and has bound man inseparably to God through his own being. The fact that we are seldom aware of this does not mean that the Christ force cannot be active in each one of good will.

Kierkegaard

Kierkegaard says: 'The outward appearance may be unremarkable, but it is only when I look through it that I perceive the inner image, which is the image I want to show, an inner image too fine to be seen outwardly there. It is woven from the tenderest moods of the soul'. Kierkegaard also says: 'When one looks long and attentively at a face, one sometimes discovers, as it were, another face in what one sees. This is usually an unmistakable sign that the soul harbors an emigrant, who has withdrawn from the outward appearance to guard a hidden treasure, and the way the observation has to go is indicated by one face being as it were, within the other, which implies that in order to discover something, one must strive to penetrate'.

Now this all shows us that in the soul of man, in the heart, there can be a space in which the essential resides and can be addressed. That is the place where Christ can dwell in us and where we can address each other as unique personalities and speak to each other in an "I" encounter. The "I" appears in the soul.

Buber

Me and you. With a prophetic force, Buber shows how man seeks his way of life between moral nihilism and social commitment, between God and the other, between 'I' and 'You'.

The message of "I and You" can perhaps be summed up in Buber's own words: "All real life is meeting." It is in this encounter that Christ can be present and that the meaning of the conversation and the encounter can become a lasting meaning. With the loss of meaning of many institutional organs that man has created over the course of time, this personal meeting is more and more important. We can help each other to take our steps and move forward with our questions.

Levinas

Levinas says: How can the human being absorb the demand for an almost vertiginous freedom in its desire for transcendence? Because it experiences the presence of God in and through the relationship with man. And Levinas also says: "We have sought the non-tyrannical yet imperishable relationship in the radiance of the countenance. We have tried to posit the externality — the other — as the pre-eminently non-tyrannical, which makes freedom possible and which opposes us by turning towards us; beyond brute force, but also beyond enchantment, ecstasy and love. Levinas sees "the face of the other" as the beginning of philosophy. The soul appears in the face of the other, expressing everything that meaningfully resides in this other person. Where the soul of man has developed over centuries into an independent and unique soul, we have lost the connection with the other. It is now up to each of us to meet the other. There the Christ can work.

Arendt

Finally, Hannah Arendt. In her latest book "On the Spirit" she shows us how the soul first developed into a free thinking, then into a free will and now and in the future can come to a free judgment. It is precisely in this free judgment, the last unfinished part of her last book, that the task lies, because after all, this can be done together.

Hannah Arendt formulates our task: 'Life in community with others has created its own language, it leads to the formation of a 'second self, covering the first'. The task, as she says, is "to return this social self to the concrete and living self, for this force is a spontaneity of which we all have a direct feeling on the basis of innumerable perceptions."

It is the Christ force that stands and works behind this soul development. It is up to man to direct this development from his own spirit, as Hannah Arendt says, in dialogue with the other.

With Nietzsche:

'The reverence for God is the reverence for the coherence of all things and the conviction of the existence of higher beings than man is'.

The natural cosmic coherence of all things of which man is a part has been broken and the human soul has ended up in a diaspora, detached from God. The meaning of things is no longer given for granted. We will have to create that meaning together again. To this end, the Christ appeared on earth to show man and humanity the way to a higher spiritual existence. In it, freedom and love, being and becoming, me and the other play a leading role.

Christ and the human soul

Bernard Lievegoed once told me that the struggle for man becomes primarily an inner struggle. The soul is occupied, he says, all kinds of forces want to control the soul. This makes it difficult for man's own mind to hold the wheel. What powers are those?

First of all, the power of the technology and the artificial intelligence and systems connected to it. The life and work processes are controlled by technology and artificial intelligence systems. As humans, we can experience that we use technology and these systems all day long. An autonomous development is noticeable in this. My computer screen here regularly shows a statistic about how many hours a day I spend behind the computer. The internet is a striking example of this development. You only have to type in a title or question and a list of internet addresses will appear where you can find the information. Due to social crises such as the financial crisis or the corona crisis, the use of technology and systems is being stimulated enormously. We sit on our own behind the device and the meeting with the other people suffers. The soul becomes isolated and closed in on itself. That gives us an inner struggle and raises the question of the meaning of life. Young and old people are most often confronted with this question about the meaning of life.

A second force is the power of consumption. There is an abundance of resources that we can acquire for a comfortable life. Drugs play an important role in this. We can use medicines, stimulants and drugs to soothe our inner self and look for a permanent intoxication. It weakens our inner strength to face life's challenges and take creative and meaningful steps toward a fulfilling life.

A third force is the force of organized life that withdraws from spirit and nature. We are constantly in organized contexts that are man-made, controlled and managed by men. Unlike nature and cosmos, these contexts are imperfect. They cause problems all the time and we make great efforts to stay in control. These organized contexts decouple us from the natural and spiritual sources of nourishment and thus the meaning of existence becomes an issue. Not only do we have to constantly take care of and renew what we have made, we also have to add a sense if it is to keep its meaning.

A fourth force that occupies the soul is the force of the biographical crisis in conjunction with the social crisis in which we find ourselves. Where we as people may have been guided by heredity in the past and blood and soil were our foothold for who we are and where we belong, today a global movement is underway where people are being pulled out of these hereditary contexts and are looking for a new destination in another place on earth. The language and culture, the moral values in which we as young people end up and which give us something to hold on to, are soon lost or weakened by the confrontation with the bad, imperfect and perspectiveless existence. Who do I belong to and who do I go out with? We have become searching souls for ourselves and for the other.

A fifth force are the institutional bodies such as church, politics and business that offer us an infrastructure within which we can work on our own issues and issues together. These institutional bodies once emerged from innovative impulses in society, have become existing and determining structures, but lose their determining power in this complex global world. Frustration arises among those who expect their salvation from these institutions, that they are no longer able to give security and meaning to individual existence. Religion, art and science as sources of existence and meaning creation, which can open and inspire the soul of man, have become caught up in the rational protocols and business mechanisms and have thus become distant for the individual human soul.

All this now puts us as humans and humanity in the position that we increasingly enter the field of tension between individual becoming, individual soul development and social community power. We are dependent on ourselves and yet completely dependent on others. It is our human spirit that must be able to give us the strength to handle this field of tension in the soul. This now requires a supporting force in our soul, which I call the Christ force. Such is the power of human initiative born of watchful consideration. In dialogue with the other, we create a process in which we render a service to the other human being, lend a helping hand in dealing with the biographical issues that come our way.

In my work as an organizational development and leadership consultant, I regularly do an exercise with my clients. In a group of three, an issue that person A entails is dialogued upon. Person B asks questions to A, not to understand himself better, but to invite A to tell further and visually about his issue - Person C monitors the process and after 5 minutes asks A to reformulate the issue. Then the dialogue continues and again after 5 minutes C asks A to reformulate the question. Then C gives what he/she thinks is the essence of A's story and asks A to formulate the next irreversible step. Then the roles change and everyone experiences being A, B and C once. Not only does this give the participants a new grip on how to enter into an in-depth dialogue with each other. "How is it possible that we can gain such profound insight in such a short time and find a new surprising step that we can take to help the issue further", is usually the reaction of the participants.

After doing this exercise for so many years, in so many countries with so many people, I can say that here the soul of the participating human being opens, the "I" appears in the soul and meeting takes place and the Christ power works healing and encouraging.

The core questions about the meaning of life

My interest in the human soul led me to consult philosophers who have dealt with the question of the soul for thousands of years. From Plato and Aristotle to Foucault and Arendt, I always chose a work in which they explored the soul. In the end, this turned out to be a fruitful exploration of the human soul.

First of all, I had the idea that philosophers are looking for the truth, but I discovered in the 33 philosophers I studied that they all tried to understand in dialogue with others the issue through practical life questions of people who crossed their path and specially to discover the meaning of how to deal with the issue. Philosophers are meaning-creating and inquisitive people who involve the communities they belong to in this research and try to arrive at certain insights in dialogue with others. Essentially, they also develop and transfer knowledge. Questioning the issue is also the methodology to which they turn.

Finally, in my philosophical quest, I discovered three fundamental questions that keep coming up and to which no definitive answers can be given.

The first question is about our origins as humans and humanity. Are we a Divine creation, an evolutionary being, an intelligent animal or a spirit soul being? We

contrast the paradise story with the big bang, reincarnation with the singular life, the gate of birth with the gate of death. Is there life before conception and life after death?

The second question is that of the human soul. Does a soul exist? Is the soul the all-encompassing existence or is the soul an illusion, a fantasy, a man-made concept that has acquired meaning. We see the soul appearing in the religious contexts, we see the soul disappearing in scientific views. The soul has to do with meaning and especially with inspiration. We can imagine something about an inspired person, but the soul itself remains vague and indefinable.

The third question is that of freedom. Are we destined beings or are we free beings? Is our destiny determined or can we be self-creating? What about the world of 'being' and the world of 'becoming'? Does man develop consciousness and a fulfilling existence out of freedom, or is fate determined by other forces and do we live out what was previously destined?

It is Christ who shows man and humanity a way to deal with these questions. Always and everywhere these questions arise in our lives and we are asked to answer them ourselves by the way in which we give meaning and content to life. That way is described in the New Testament. In the Old Testament we read how humanity keeps getting stuck in earthly existence because it loses the connection with the creative and meaningful forces and ends up in the diaspora. Again, and again it is God who has to get humanity out of trouble and that is done by whispering to the community leaders the next steps for the community. Ultimately, God gives his Son Christ to humanity to show us the way we can go in our lives from our own and our common responsibility.

The core values for a dignified life

When we observe the Earth and the Cosmos in its evolving existence, we can discover all kinds of creatures in nature and cosmos. Stones, plants, animals, people, angels, gods. They are all embedded in an original existence, a universal unity, an all-encompassing spirit, a Divine creation. As humans we have these other beings in our bodily homes, they inhabit the human soul and influence this soul. This all-encompassing creation is built on two axes, one vertical and one horizontal. The vertical axis manifests itself as a functional hierarchy that gives form and the horizontal axis manifests itself as a dialogical value creation that gives movement. As a result, we live in a structured 'system' on the one hand and we live in dynamic processes on the other hand.

The vertical and horizontal axes are an objective given in the natural cosmic context, a law, a being. In human creation, our own organized life, this is different. There it is a permanently changing reality, an intersubjective existence, in which time and space work and we lead an evolving existence. The human soul is in this sense stretched in two realities, unlike all other beings, namely an objective and an intersubjective reality.

For this intersubjective reality, a between-people reality, three human powers have been made available to us with which we can house in this intersubjective reality.

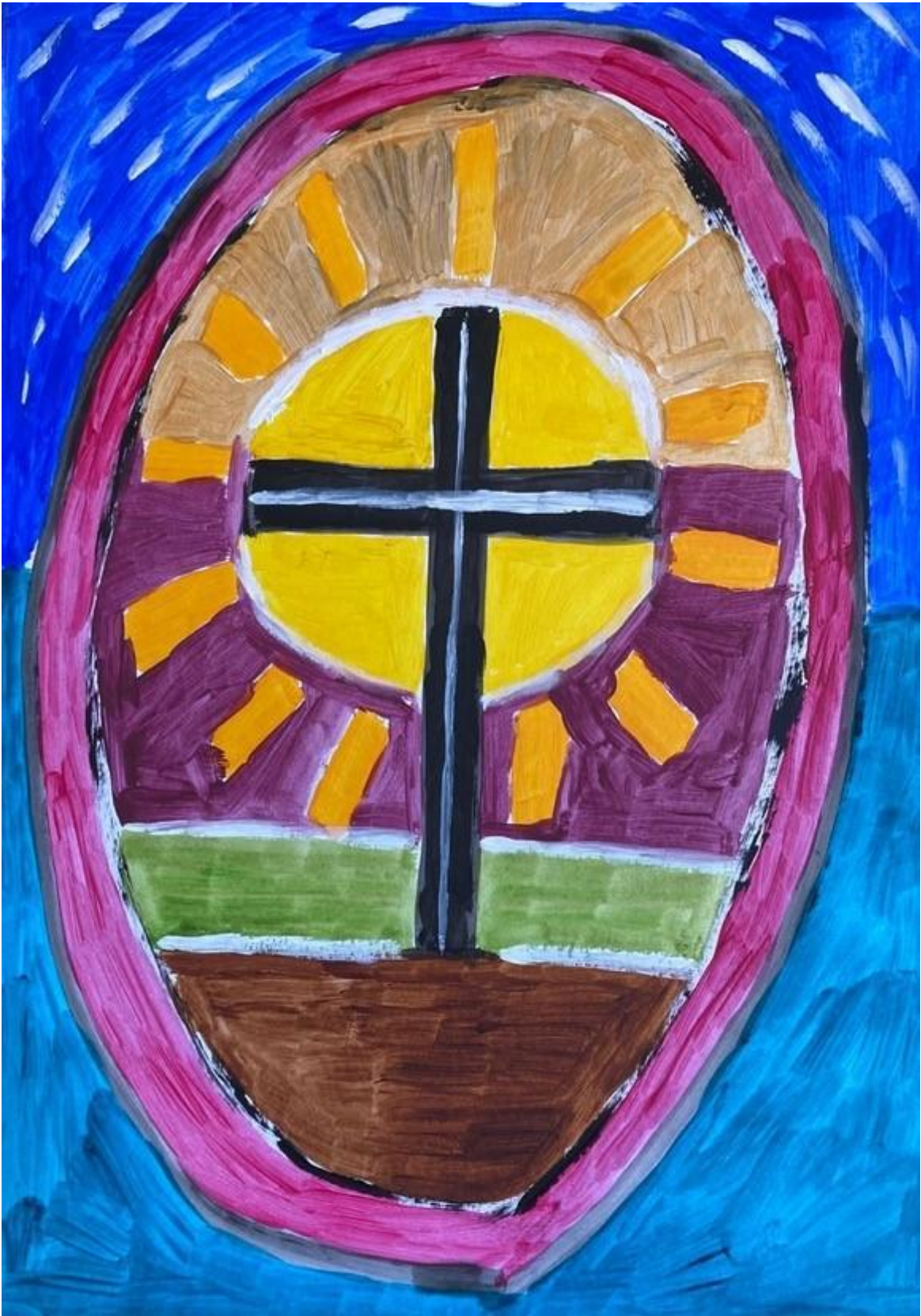
The first force is 'Freedom'. Hannah Arendt has described this beautifully in her latest book 'On the Spirit'. First of all, the human soul conquered freedom of thought, later freedom of will, and now freedom of judgment. Now this makes possible for us what the philosopher Arnold Cornelis calls so beautiful, the interactive self-steering of the soul. Cornelis describes how, first of all, a natural order arose in the human community in families and larger associations. We belong to something and we receive that as a gift from birth. In addition, we as people built our own infrastructure, a web of principles and rules and agreements with which we can deal with each other without having to kill each other. For example, "Right comes first in traffic". Now we all practice interactive self-steering together. We deal with the differences and learn to bridge them.

The second power is the power of respect. We can look each other and all other beings in the eye. We don't need to make ourselves superior or inferior. We respect the other: 'You are so beautifully different'. Here applies to us as people the equality and giving space to each other and other beings to be able to live their lives.

The third force is that of love. The power of love is the power with which we can connect with the existing, with each other, with our tasks and responsibilities. Acting out of love, carrying each other in love, the love of fate and the surprise of life.

In society, these forces were once termed liberty, equality, and fraternity. Freedom in thinking, equality in feeling, fraternity in doing, acting. Freedom in culture, in spiritual life, equality in social life, in legal life, and fraternity in economic life.

The Divine evolutionary creation and the human constructed creation must always find a relationship with each other. This requires a moral responsibility from everyone. We can support each other in this. Allowing the Christ force to unfold its activity and this gives us a powerful basis to hand this over to future generations.



Part 2: The Story

At the beginning of our era, the Christ incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth. After 30 years of education of a pure soul, Christ incarnated in Jesus at the baptism in the Jordan and walked the road together with his apostles for three years. That road ended in death and continued in resurrection. For two thousand years this has inspired many of us as we seek and shape life and especially when we have lost our way. When studying the New Testament in 4 variations, we can discover that an archetype has been lived and described here of the free human initiative to do good on a path paved by Christ. The dead souls had been lost in an existence disconnected from God, and through Christ they were redeemed and returned to that which nourishes and sustains the soul and spirit of man.

Let's look at the New Testament as the archetype of free human initiative to do good.

The New Testament as an archetype

The New Testament begins with a characterization of the issue. Humanity has not taken up and accepted the Divine word and has lost its way. How can the connection with the spiritual-divine world be restored? God sends his son Christ to mankind, becomes man and takes up the problem in the community in which he can become active. The human soul is the issue, and the issue here is the salvation of the human soul.

Christ appears in Jesus during the baptism in the Jordan. That was announced by John the Baptist and it happened. That is the will of the father and is an action of the holy spirit. Here we see the introduction of the Holy Trinity: Father – Son – Holy Spirit. The Father represents the origin and purpose of the development of the human soul, the soul of humanity. The Son represents the process of development that can take place in the soul of man. The Holy Spirit stands for a human future in which man can co-determine his own destiny in freedom. This makes it clear that it is all about the soul and that it has a threefold nature: It has an origin: father. She lands in a process of developing consciousness and doing good: Son. She herself creates in inspiration a sense out of freedom: Holy Spirit. The first step in the three-year process is to seek and call the apostles. It has always fascinated me that a divine being like Christ calls apostles to help carry out the process together. It is an archetypal gesture that philosophers and initiates also perform. Forming a supporting community of people who want to carry this impulse, this idea further and realize it in the earthly reality. The search and calling of the apostles do not take place on the basis of functional criteria, on the basis of existing expertise, but takes place from the perception of the personality, that this soul is destined to co-realize this impulse. If we want to realize something new in society, in a team or organization or society, it is important that a supporting group of people is formed who, based on their personal leadership, their own motive and inspiration, connect with this new impulse in this life step by step, thinking and doing combined, and realizing it. They make something possible that can then be done by others worldwide. They have paved the way.

When the supporting group of apostles has been formed around Christ, the process can begin. This will be a process in which the new confronts the existing. The sick and the wounded are healed. Stories are shared in which the new can be told and heard. Practices are being confronted where meaning has disappeared and people have gone astray. There is a battle with seductive evil.

The process begins with the Sermon on the Mount. There Jesus Christ tells the community what He stands for. He gives people the principles with which they can realize a good and meaningful life as a person and community. He thereby touches the human heart, the human soul.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit
For to them the kingdom of heaven opens.
Blessed are those who suffer
For they will be comforted

Blessed are the gentle people
For they will inherit the earth
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness
Because their wish will be fulfilled
Blessed are the merciful
For they will be forgiven
Blessed are those who have a pure heart
For they will see God
Blessed are the peacemakers
For they shall be called children of God
Blessed are those who are persecuted for their right pursuit For to
them has been given the kingdom of heaven.

Thou art the salt of the earth
Thou art the light of the world
I have not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill it."

This makes it clear that Christ calls man to take care of his own soul and that of others.

How are we going to do that? In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "You have heard that it is said, 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. I say to you, do not turn away from evil, and if your right cheek is struck, turn your left cheek to the other. You were told: Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who condemn you.

Jesus stated the meaning of this Sermon on the Mount as follows:

"Whoever hears these words and acts upon them may be likened to a wise man who builds his house upon the rock. When it came to rain and storm and the tidal wave came, the house stood, because it was built on a rock. And those who hear these words and do not appreciate them can be likened to a stupid man who built his house on the sand. When the rain came and the tidal wave came and the storm increased, the house was besieged from all sides, and it broke apart, leaving only a ruin."

Rejected by the community, Christ fulfilled his mission for the salvation of the soul. This was done through suffering, destruction, death and resurrection. Taking personal leadership and initiative means taking the liberty of bringing good to people and confronting evil.

Today every human being can go this way and show personal leadership in the development and preservation of the soul.

In imitation of Christ we can follow this opened way to the preservation and development of the soul itself. To this end, a number of ground gestures are indicated in the New Testament.

First of all, healing. Earlier I described the exercise 'questioning the question' and how in this exercise people come to themselves, see the issue better and find the

next step to take the issue further: the healing dialogue. Being there for the other person, seeing the second person in the first person, encouraging and supporting and vice versa; allowing the other person, giving the second person in yourself the chance to take the wheel, to be encouraged and supported.

Second, reflection on inspiring stories such as Christ told the apostles and the people he met. For example, the story of the prodigal son. The eldest son who faithfully works in the father's house. The youngest son who gets out and loses his share of the capital. The youngest son returns penniless and is embraced and received by the father who sees him coming from afar. This disturbs the eldest son and he complains to the father. The Father says to him: Rejoice that your brother has found his way back and has come to understanding.

This story beautifully expresses that it only goes well for me if the other goes well too. My responsibility begins when the other appears in my situation. This is the task of the soul: Learning to look through the eyes of the other and to see his/her problem. Connecting with the other that the other one can make his / her step, find the way.

Third is the confrontation with wrong and harmful practices. Don't lie, don't cheat, don't judge, don't exclude and reject. This is the confrontation with yourself and with the other. That takes courage and integrity. In giving feedback, Christ shows the other the blockage and where the opportunity can be found. If the temple has become a trading place, it must be cleared out. If the soul is occupied with false practices, it must be cleansed and trained to do what is right. Again, and again we show fear and weakness and dare not connect with what we know deep down to be right. We are too eager to respond to what others think and what they want, although we know and experience that this is not right and does not lead to something good.

Fourth, to try courage and raise the dead. When the apostle Peter is sailing on the lake with Christ and others and a storm breaks out, he is surprised to see Christ coming towards him across the water. He wants to meet Christ, but when courage falters, he sinks into the water. Walking on water is the task of making the impossible possible. One succeeds when one has absolute confidence not to sink, but to be able to move over moving and open grounds. Christ raises Lazarus from the dead and Lazarus experiences this as an initiation. He will carry and make manifest the mystery of Christ. The impossible becomes possible. Taking initiatives requires courage from us to face the unknown and to bring into being what was considered impossible. We can concentrate with attention on the essential and connect with each other in it. This creates confidence that we can bring this initiative to a good result.

Fifth, Christ sees through the fate of the person he meets and can free this person from the oppressive bonds that life until then has constricted on this fate. A liberating word and gesture of Christ that is absorbed into the soul by the other gives the other the chance and possibility to turn freely to the essential and good. Man can choose to live in imitation of Christ.

The initiatives we take give us a new space to take our fate into our own hands and to further develop into a conscious soul in dialogue with others.

Sixth, Christ always addresses the other about his unique self and makes this self appear in their soul. There is always an intimate appearance and there is always a biographical twist. It is an irreversible step that man takes in the encounter with Christ.

We take conscious steps in initiative processes. Thinking and doing go together. We create a new reality.

Seventh, Christ encounters profound resistance from the ruling establishment. The new is thwarted with all might and preferably made to vanish. A process of life and death. The new impulse must disappear in order to be able to arise elsewhere.

This is a process of suffering that one goes through in solitude. In the souls of men this impulse can be born once it has appeared on earth and made itself known. So, it is in the souls of the apostles and those who move on this path. Just like with the disciples at Emmaus, who suddenly recognize the third in their reflective dialogue.

From the beginning of our era, this free process of initiative has continued over and over until the present day. The development of the human soul, the only thing that survives time, takes place in these processes. In life, in work, in learning, we can go this path of soul development. That requires us to commit to it.

We can divide the three years in which Christ accomplished his mission into three periods.

The first period is to pose the issue, form a supporting group of people, state the vision in the Sermon on the Mount and set out to bring this impulse to the people step by step.

The second period is the period of expansion in which the stories, the healing interventions, the confrontations take place. The old culture that occupies the soul and has become institutional and decadent is being addressed from a new impulse in which the relationship between self and community is given a new footing.

The third period is the period of destruction and resurrection. The renewing impulse is fought and if possible destroyed, it dies and perishes, yet it rises elsewhere and continues on its way and becomes part of the community. After these three years, we see for centuries how this impulse arises in the souls of people and becomes part of the life of the community.

Then again institutionalization and dogmatization arise and the impulse loses its power because it can no longer be experienced and done by people out of freedom.

The time has come to renew this Christian impulse, to free it from its chains, and for that purpose the Christ-force is again available, now in the soul of man and in the soul of the community.

Christ again among us

We can view reality here on earth with a material substance view or with a spiritual view. With the material substance view we can distinguish four qualities and they are earth, water, air and fire. Everything is made up from this and formed from this. Our body is also a composition of earth, water, air and fire. The spiritual gaze shows us that we have four bodies in which we move and they are a physical body, an etheric body, an astral body and an "I" body. This means a fourfold existence of everyone here on earth. In addition to the body, we reside in a soul, and it is described threefold as thinking, feeling, willing. From this fourfold physicality and threefold soul-being we can build a field of experience and a field of consciousness. We have the power of perception and we have the power of consciousness available. We can develop those abilities and thus connect the observable and invisible worlds. We do this by connecting an outer world and an inner world. In this way we can perceive, experience, see and meet Christ in us and Christ between us.

Christ is accessible from our own unique personal "I". The 'I' is our autonomous spirit that is connected to a spiritual world in which the higher beings and we as a higher 'I' reside.

Traditionally there is a meditative way through which we can come into contact with these higher beings. Then we must be willing to leave our ego and turn completely from our higher "I" to that spiritual world. This road is also called the Moon road. But there is also another way we can go and that is the way through the community together with the other. That is a road that takes us into the Solar Sphere where we can meet Christ. The moon reflects the spiritual world to us, the sun illuminates the spiritual world to us.

We enter the planetary spheres with this; earth, moon, sun.

Christ is described as the solar being who warms our hearts and enlightens our gaze. Being a sun being, it is very near to us and can dwell in our soul. To get a glimpse of it, we have to go into the invisible dimensions of our lives. Invisible but real and those are the process we are in, the dialogue we conduct with others and the biographical course of life that unfolds in our lives.

The entire natural cosmic world is a world of processes. We live in processes and processes have a triple quality: a beat, a rhythm and a melody (Bernard Lievegoed). In processes we move, they flow, have rhythm, but can also stagnate, become chaotic and get stuck.

In the natural cosmic world laws, fixed patterns work and everything is in dialogue with everything. Dialogue is the creative principle from which everything arises.

In the natural cosmic world everything has a life course, all beings are embedded in a life principle of being born, consummating life in time and space and dying. When we look at our own creations, we can see that they are not embedded in natural harmony, but that they are paradoxical and questioning. Everything we create requires our constant care and meaning, otherwise it cannot exist. This refers to the existence of the human soul that has fallen from the natural - cosmic and is condemned to build and inhabit a world of its own. In it we learn in freedom to handle the essential dimensions of life itself. We make processes, we live in dialogue with each other and we complete a life biography in which our soul can develop. Our processes are imperfect, the dialogue can stagnate and the biography can fail. In

space and time forsaken by God, it is Christ who accompanies us in this life if we ask for it.



Part 3: The Meaning

In this final section, we wish to explore the significance of the Christ force in our lives. When we can get a clear picture of what this Christ force can mean in our lives, we can connect with this force in confidence. We can experience that this force keeps our soul 'open and clean' and that we can parry other forces that want to occupy the soul. To allow this force to reside in our souls, we can strengthen our faith, hope, and love. They form the basic conditions for receiving and housing the Christ in our lives. With faith we focus our attention on the good and live expectantly on what life brings us. With hope, we can connect with the challenges of our lives and make the most of them. With love we create trust in ourselves and in the other and we can live a meaningful and fulfilled life.

Christ in my life

After 76 years I can look back on a life in which Christ has played and continues to play an essential role. Born into a family as the third of 5 children, a family of which the father was once a student of the priesthood and the mother of a Limburg Catholic family was a school teacher, faith played an important role in our upbringing. As an altar boy and later an acolyte, I actively participated in many church services. At a Jesuit school I was made to think about life values and moral behavior. As a member of the church council and participant in a pastoral council, I was involved in questions about the future of the church and its believers. My studies in sociology stimulated me to focus on social issues. Thus, the question arose of how Sunday and Monday relate to each other. Working in Shell companies and active in the Catholic Church I experienced that there is a gap between work and the church. I tried to connect something of the religious impulse with the tasks in progress to realize organizational development in a humanistic way. In the church the word Christ could be uttered frequently. Christ was not mentioned in the work. The language of the work and the language of the church were completely different and building bridges proved difficult. That changed when, after 8 years of Shell, I transferred to the NPI, the Netherlands Pedagogical Institute, founded by Bernard Lievegoed and colleagues. There, active working with customers was linked to an intensive reflective development process between and with colleagues. When asked what I wanted to contribute to this institute, I replied: 'Taking initiatives in situations that actually do not allow it to happen'. I decided to deepen this theme by studying the New Testament as an archetype of a free human initiative process, a renewal process with a view to doing good. A strong anthroposophical impulse was at work in the NPI. The image of man as a soul- being played an important role in the development of concepts, methods and exercises that we could share with our customers. Essentially an esoteric Christian impulse was lived and shared. Here it became clear to me that the salvation of the soul was a task that I wanted to commit myself to and thereby fully build on the Christ force in man and between people. This now became the explicit basis at the start of IMO, Institute for human and organizational development. A group of colleagues from different countries soon was formed who wanted to take this impulse further together. I described in several books what gradually developed. First of all, the book "Language of the Soul". In it I described 21 different threefold parts of the soul. For example, Father – Son – Spirit as the image of origin – inspiration – meaning. Everything has an origin impulse that wants to be realized. From inspiration we let that happen and the impulse appears. We give this impulse a meaning in our lives and it can feed our existence. Another triad was attention - connection - trust. When we pay attention to something together, concentrate on it, a connection can arise between us, a common task is realized. That creates trust between us. Then the book "Bezieling (inspiration)– philosophy of an organized existence". In it I describe the work of 33 philosophers on the soul and how some core issues emerge, being the question of the origin of man, the question of the soul of man and whether or not man is free. These issues are all the more relevant now that we live an organized life in which natural cosmic existence has become remote. I published the

book “The Soul” from the question of how the soul appears in our lives and has meaning.

The image of the neglected soul became more and more apparent. In the book “the Neglected Soul” I described the personal struggles in my life such as going through a marital divorce but also dealing with the death of loved ones. I also published the book “Little Guide to a fulfilled life”. In it I described 52 initiatives for a fulfilled life based on my own life experience.

In all these reflections and initiations, the Christ-force formed the basis for this effort to give new meaning to the soul of man in this turbulent and complex time and community.

It is the soul in which the natural cosmic life task and the organized life task come together. On the one hand we are supported by a sublime creation and on the other hand we live in confusion and ask ourselves questions. Body and spirit experience that carrying capacity, the soul seeks that carrying capacity. It is Christ who has built the bridge and has shown us how to merge those two worlds in the soul.

Christ in my work

In the natural cosmic world, we are embedded and destined. This is mainly a hereditary thing. We are not embedded in the organized world, but must create that sense for ourselves. The organized world becomes more and more dominant working in the soul and more or less obscures our natural cosmic existence as a soul. We can experience this to the maximum at work. We are part of an organization, fulfill a function within it, have a task and are paid for it. This leads to a functional existence in a hierarchical context.

In the natural cosmic world that shows itself in the family context, for example, we are inwardly focused. The others are out there. In the organized work context, we are outward-looking and the outsider, the customer or supplier should be involved in the process. This means that people with completely different origins can work well together where they would not in the natural cosmic context.

It is precisely in an organized context that we can develop because the human values of freedom, respect and love can be practiced there with the unknown other human being.

In my lifetime I have been in the position where I have been able to guide other people in organizational development processes. Both they and their organization go through change processes and can grow and flourish in it. Gradually a methodology has developed which I have described in my dissertation “Bewogen Organisaties” and in the book “Beziëld Veranderen”. It focuses on the three concepts of process, dialogue and biography. How do you create a good change process, how do you work together dialogically and how is this connected to your own biography and that of the organization. These are key points of attention! Renewal processes go through several phases. I have described this as: Phase 1: orientation on the issue, research of the issue, experimenting with new approaches: Phase 2: forming an opinion and decisionmaking about the change, confrontation with the decision-makers: Phase 3: Changing vision, work processes and constellations of people and learning new skills in a process of implementation.

This picture of the three phases arose from a fusion of practical experiences and observations with the archetypal process that Jesus Christ and his community go through in his process of renewal. The impulse is brought to life in the community, confrontation with the existing and the decision-makers follows, the new is integrated step by step into the existing and gives it a new dimension.

Phase 1: Orientation,
Research and
Experimenting with
the constellation of people
The question



Phase 3: Changing the vision
the process and

Phase 2: Judgement building
And decision making
Confrontation with
The existing

This Christian methodology can be experienced in a 7-step process with 7 connected exercises.

7. Step process

1. Discovering the question

2. Questioning the question

3. Developing and sharing

4. Change the work process



6. To lead the inner voices

5. Change the steering conviction

7. Design Future scenario's
To take the next step

7 Exercises

Exercise 1: discovering the innovation issue in the triangle “customer – impulse – community”: where do I see a disproportion that calls for an innovative initiative. For example, the customer wants things differently or the impulse is weakened or the community is not working together.

Exercise 2: Questioning the issue. In dialogue we explore the issue and the issue changes and becomes more and more meaningful: the will is awakened for the next step.

Exercise 3: Developing and presenting an innovative vision. The new vision inspires us to take up the issue further.

Exercise 4: The issue appears in work processes that are not running properly. We make an intervention by mapping out the process, identifying the bottlenecks and making innovative interventions there.

Exercise 5: It is our own guiding beliefs with which we do the things that need to be highlighted and changed. We say goodbye to beloved steering convictions and experiment with new views that we like.

Exercise 6: Renewing and changing especially applies to our own inner world. What voices sound within us when dealing with the issue? We discover dominant voices but also soft voices that actually ask for more attention to participate. Which team of voices dominates and do we want other inner voices to participate.

Exercise 7: We create three scenarios for the future. It goes like this: in scenario 1. We continue doing things as we have been. In scenario 2. We realize a dream. In scenario 3. We create the impossible. These scenarios give us an idea of what decision about the future we have to make now.

With these steps and exercises we strengthen our entrepreneurial leadership and we give space to the soul to become receptive and to allow the supporting Christ force to guide ourselves in this searching, exploratory, initiative-rich process. This allows the human soul to develop to a higher level of consciousness and thereby render humanity a service.

Christ and my development

Where it is misleading with God to represent the father as a person, it is not so with Christ. Christ walked on earth and confronted humanity with the question of its soul development. Humanity has lost connection with the Divine over time.

In an earlier phase we were still fully part of the Divine creation and fully embedded in its nature and being, now we have gradually ended up in a godless world after a world of revelation and divine workings. It is precisely Christ who can be the bridge to

the divine world for us. In imitation of Christ, we can establish the connection. This is also how I experienced my own soul development. At times in my biography, I awakened to the Christian impulse again and turned to Christ as a counselor in shaping my life and work. It was much more a process of experiencing than of believing. The main questions that this raised were the how and why questions in life. How am I going to do that and why would I want to do this? How do we deal with issues and why do we care? In the end my life has become a big surprise. It went as I could never have imagined. As a boy, the history teacher asked us to think about our future. What would it look like? The answer was conventional and unsurprising. You can say having a house, a family, an animal. Looking back, I can say that I have lived a life full of surprises, steps I could never have imagined, encounters with people completely unknown. But it also becomes clear that I had a strong impulse in my life that I have followed all my life. All kinds of choices and all kinds of steps brought me to the same theme again and again: people and organization development and with that the soul development of people and organization. That red thread has emerged as a guiding thread and it is and was intertwined with the Christian impulse. In essence, it comes down to the fact that you yourself as a spiritual soul being bear responsibility that things go well for the other and the world and that you too can lead a fulfilled life. Consciousness arises in your own soul which is your impulse that you want to realize in this life and also you wake up to your weaknesses, your failures. You will see that they do not push you backwards as you strive to improve yourself. For example, I still find it difficult to remain calm in traffic jams, queues, congestion. I like flow and fear stagnation. I admire others who can sit back and wait when something blocks you. However, you also appreciate when things run smoothly, you are served quickly and nicely in the restaurant, you don't have to wait in the shop, a seat is reserved for you in a packed train. I have gone through life as a privileged person and my fixed orientation point "Christ in me, Christ in us" has kept me on the right track.

Christ and community

Renewal takes place in the community and is supported by a small circle of people, apostles, and I call those people process owners of the renewal. The smallest community is the one on one conversation. In it we can express ourselves personally, interact with each other, understand each other and help each other further. "Where two men are present in my name, there I am in the midst of them". If it concerns intimate matters, then the dialogue is intended for that purpose. The three persons involved talk is ideal for practicing new skills. Two are in dialogue and one is in charge of the conversation process. We start with a question and we end with the next irreversible step. The four persons involved talk is good for the game, good for trying something out, the so-called quartets. The five persons conversation is the team conversation. Here we discuss how we can work together and improve. A certain size of the community has an effect on what is possible and what is not possible in the conversation. Christ is between us and with us when in community every individual can appear in the soul and we meet.

The strength of a community is the common goal and the way we involve each other in the process of goal achievement. Dealing with differences is an important

dimension of community building. The community can shut itself off completely and exclude the unknown. A community can also open up and welcome the unknown into its midst. This is a community issue that plays a role all over the world. Do we close or do we open? Do we include or do we exclude? It is Christ who associates with the excluded, the poor, the sick, the strangers, the lost, the suffering. He connects with the opening soul and brings light and warmth that remains when it is accepted. The "I" of man is addressed, she can appear and take the responsibility to take a step and do the right thing. Material prosperity, power and influence can stand in the way here as well as using the other for your own interest. "Through the eye of the needle". Christ related: "Guests were invited to the wedding. But they all had much to do and no time. The host sent his servants to the corners of the streets, and they invited those who passed by to listen. Those who are called but do not come, delay the future, their future".

Christ and humanity

Ultimately, we are humanity and our being human is part of this humanity. Christ is for everyone. The Christ force works for anyone who offers access to this force in their life and work. This is independent of origin, religion, social status. Everyone can confess to Christ who can experience how we as human beings can help and support each other. We are one humanity and yet so different from each other. From an isolated individual we can emancipate into a global citizen. I'm not done when another human being suffers. Christ in us and Christ between us is the only sure foundation on which we can come together and live and develop in peace with each other.

St. Patrick

*I arise today Through the strength of Christ's birth with His baptism,
Through the strength of His crucifixion with His burial, Through the
strength of His resurrection with His ascension, Through the strength
of His descent for the judgment of doom.*

*Christ with me,
Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.*

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