

## **I AM SO SMALL, SO UNIMPORTANT, AND THE WORLD IS THAT BIG (II)**

### **4.0**

1. Time and again we meet people in our work, amongst our friends, who say to us: Oh yes, I would like very much to change things, but it is impossible. When I see all the havoc around me, all these interests, all this laziness, all this cowardice and pusillanimity, all these hopeless situations, it is clear to me that I can't do anything. And of course we ourselves, we are saying it too, to ourselves, to others, experiencing ourselves the same feelings. And again of course anyway on first sight, this is true or at least a real problem.

2. It stays a real problem, even if we realize that we constantly run the risk that we seek very good reasons, just to do nothing. This world is not that wonderful, but nevertheless it is our world. We know the way, the ways in it. Most of the hardness of this world is for other people, not for us. We know what we have; we never know what we will get when we change.

3. In the same time, undeniable, there is this feeling of helplessness. This feeling might be a new one. In times past, when there still existed structures, when the world was still overseeable and understandable, it was less difficult to see how "things" had to be changed. You could more easily find a path to go. And, in fact, it was "things" which had to be changed. Now, in our times, structures are disappearing more and more. We ourselves are disappearing into the chaos and become, in the same time, more and more chaotic. It is not any longer possible to see clearly what has to be changed to make things better. And, worse still, it becomes perfectly clear that they are not things in the first place that have to be changed. We, the human beings, who are responsible for the world, for culture, have to change ourselves. If we don't change, everything will become worse. The chaos will deepen, even when we mean and wish well. So the reality is much more complicated. The task is much bigger. And, just because structures are disappearing, we can, at best, only see one step forward.

4. There is still another reason why it is so difficult to have the freedom to go forward. We are just leaving a time in which we all are indoctrinated that one single person can't do anything. Structures, it is said to us again and again, need to be changed and this has to happen by mass-movements. Individuals (I am using the language of that ideology) are, in every sense worth nothing. They can't do anything good and so you can dispose of them. It is not about the men and women, living now. Everything is about the new, coming time, the golden age of justice. Those who live now are manure for this future. Although we are leaving this form of social philosophy behind in us, both "macro", in politics, and "micro", in science, it is still in us and eventually makes us weak, without confidence in ourselves and in our possibilities.

5. Now that we have provoked and entered the chaos we are living in, renewal of the world always means recreation. We can't renew the old world. It is not any longer possible to change structures which are disappearing. Even if it would still be more or less possible, changing these structures would mean to try to change the world with

the presuppositions, which are known. That means that there comes nothing new. Changing structures means to stay in the same chaos. More and more the French are right with their proverb: The more things change, the more they stay the same. The only result is that chaos deepens.

6. The world can only change, we can only escape our own chaos, life can only become more human and less inhuman, when newness comes into this chaos. Not only new viewpoints, new goals, but new realities. New realities, which expand, which are contagious, so making it impossible for the environment, all around us, to stay the same.

7. This newness can only be brought into the world by human beings. Real newness can only be born in the hearts, the life of human beings and so, in a sense automatically, in the world, amongst people. This newness is born amidst of the chaos, obliterating it, doing it away by its very presence. The chaos is still around us, we are amidst of it, but in the chaos there is space which is not any longer chaos, it is a space in which new “things” happen and in which new “things” can be done, in which reality is recreated. This newness is an immediate consequence of freedom. The freedom in which human beings can live, in which they see the world in a new manner, seeing new possibilities, new ways to go, going them already and so inviting others to come with them.

8. So the central reality is freedom, which is given to us in meeting freedom, in other people, in Jesus, in which manner ever. The big risk is that we are afraid of our freedom, that we are shying away, because we are so small and the world is so big, so complicated, so violent. That we are afraid, because everything becomes uncertain. How will our world look like, tomorrow, when we take a step in freedom? That we are afraid of people, because they don't any longer understand us. So it may be important to think a little bit about the situation:

8.1 It is very clear that all real changes in this world can be human beings who had the freedom to be courageous, who simply were free. Jesus is the big example, but there are, on another scale, many, many others. Florence Nightingale, Henri Dunant, etc.

8.2 They are, following them, not rivaling with them, people who can lead us into greater freedom. And of course, time and again, there are, in this world, many people, who take these steps. They stay invisible. Only they around them know about it and maybe they don't even know what they know, being in the same time in the neighbourhood, the influence of the freedom. Without these steps of so many people life would be (even much more) unbearable.

8.3 The big examples, the big “leading stars”, Jesus, for many Florence Nightingale, for many others Mother Teresa a.s.o., always come when the times are “ripe”, when they, in the language of the new Testament, are fulfilled. They don't come out of the blue, although possibly it looks like. And the reverse: When the times are ripe for it, these people come. Times that are so chaotic that they are ripe for freedom, are in the same time times full of promises, for newness, a new world.

8.4 And again, this is the same for everyone of us. We are all living in a chaotic time, full of promises. The chaos is around us, in our world, our work, our family, our heart. Amidst of the chaos are the possibilities, the open spaces in which we have only to step and in which, by stepping into them, freedom is a reality. So new beginnings are created, “points”, aspects of our life recreated. So, by taking a step, the steps, we get “the first fruits of the spirit”. (Rom. 8.23).

8.5 We can try to say a little bit more about this step. When we are on the point that we can or have to do such a step, the only reality that counts is, that we know: I just have to do this. There is not the possibility to explain why we take the step. We can't tell either what we hope to achieve. We simply have to do it. We don't have another choice but to do. Not doing it means betraying ourselves, losing our human dignity. Of course, to be honest, we lose this dignity all too often. And, nevertheless, there comes that moment that we can't do anything else than to take the step and the (existential) risk.

Having done the step, there is no really human way back. We may come into uncertainties. People may tell us that we are fools. Our only possibility, when we become uncertain, is to find back to the moment we took the step, we did the small or big thing out of the normal. Finding back to that moment we find back to our security and our freedom.

8.6 So, although we very often have such impressions, when we act in freedom, we are never alone. All over the world there are such people, as we are, longing for another life, another world, seeing and receiving freedom, trying to make steps, and taking them. There is a deep community, a spiritual community all over the world, of people who don't know each other and who belong to each other, going in so different manners the same Way and still in another manner we are never alone. As soon as we do steps, others see. Even when they deny it, their hearts are already going with us. When they fight against us, in fact they fight against the longing of their own heart.

9. Jesus knew about the predicament this paper is about. Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God (Matt. 5,9 Jer. Bible). There are risks, of course. There are anxieties, eventually even suffering. And, by going the Way, living in, obedient to the freedom, which is given, you belong to God, to the future.

10. It is a risk. Amidst of chaos you can't find lines for the future. You can only do one step. From the here and now, doing the step, into the new here and now. And see again.