

FRANK BUCHMAN - A LIFE

by Garth Lean

NOTES FOR STUDY

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

"A movement should be the outcome of changed lives, not the means of changing them. From now on I am going to ask God to make me into a great life-changer." (313)

It is now 25 years since Frank Buchman's death. Garth Lean's excellent biography is an inducement to review the past, learn the lessons which his life can teach and evaluate aims for the future.

There can be no better way of doing this than to make a close study of the book. We have prepared these brief notes to encourage those who have already appreciated its broad sweep to seek out in it for themselves, either in groups or as individuals, the basic truths of Buchman's life and teaching. The notes are by no means comprehensive and the reader is encouraged to study other themes with the help of the index at the back of the book. The themes we have covered are by no means uniform; some may be dealt with in one session, others might take longer.

Congratulating the author on his book, Bishop George Appleton said that as problem after problem comes up - hooliganism, terrorism, pollution, industrial failure, international discord, etc. - people are stating more and more openly the need for a heightened moral tone world-wide, but they never suggest how this can come about; Moral Re-Armament with its absolutes has at this moment its greatest opportunity.

In a statement to the author Cardinal König writes of Buchman: "His great idea was to show that the teaching of Jesus Christ is not just a private affair but has the great force to change the whole structure of the social orders of economics, of political ideas, if we combine the changing of structures with a change of heart. In that sense he opened a completely new approach to religion, to the teachings of Jesus Christ, and to the life of modern man."
(532)

Seeing himself as an ordinary man, Buchman believed that anyone who was willing could equally 'tap the great creative sources in the mind of God'. Such is the purpose of these notes.

Michael Hutchinson, Hugh Nowell
Francis Smith, Bill Stallybrass

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EXTREME OF EVIL - EXTREME OF GOOD

"At the beginning of the 1920s," as one historian relates, "the belief began to circulate, for the first time at a popular level, that there were no longer any absolutes: of time and space, of good and evil, of knowledge, above all of value." (82)

Did Einstein believe in moral relativism? (83)

To what philosophy did many intellectuals turn in the 1930s? (154-5)

What was Buchman's response? (155, 525)

Where did he find the concept of the four absolute moral standards? (76)

What advantages has the idea of absolute standards? (77, 523)

What does 'living by the Cross' and not by rules mean to you? (77)

How did he deal with dishonesty? (52, 63)

How did he deal with sexual impurity? (79-81, 121)

What other forms of impurity did he tackle? (468-470)

What did he think purity was? (121-2)

(Continued)

EXTREME OF EVIL - EXTREME OF GOOD
(Continued)

What are the fruits of purity? (292-3)

What drastic step did Buchman take on absolute unselfishness? (394-5)

In what ways was his interpretation of absolute love unusual? (169, 293, 353, 467-8)

How can absolute moral standards affect a nation? (141-143, 192-202)

FROM THE MIND OF GOD TO THE MIND OF MAN

How did Frank Buchman begin to experience
'two-way prayer'? (35, 74-6)

What did he find to be the tests of divine
guidance? (76-7)

What made him attentive and sensitive to
the Holy Spirit? (170-172, 404-5)

What happened when he listened?

Foresight (75, 162, 326, 392, 488)

Healing (305)

Strategy (36, 335, 510, 512)

Assurance (414-5, 423)

Vision and expectancy (86, 93, 409, 416,
423-425, 455)

What do you expect to happen when you listen?

Have you decided to let God run every part
of your life?

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A LIFE-CHANGER

"To recreate men requires no less than consummate tact, resolute courage, infinite love and supreme physical sacrifice. Power must go out from us. This work is dependent on right living ... There is a definite connection between purity of life and spiritual power."

(Henry Wright)

How did Buchman define personal work?
If it is not a technique, what is it? (79)

What lessons are there in the story of George?
(24-5)

Why should we know up-to-date stories of
miracles? (44, 94)

What did Buchman say were the great needs in
India? (46-7, 419)

Do we judge and discuss the difficult person
or help them change? (47-8)

Are we reluctant to 'untie the bandages' of
the people around us? (63-4)
What makes us so?

What is the true basis of team life? (52-3)

What sort of people did Buchman fight for?
(73-4, 99-100)

How did he involve people who were beginning to change? (36-7)

What did he aim to do through plays and theatre?

What challenge did he put to those taking part? (309, 343, 371-2, 499)

"I have been wonderfully led to those who were ready." (534)

Is that your experience?

What may stand in the way of our being so led?

THE CHURCH AFLAME, ON FIRE WITH REVOLUTION

What did Frank Buchman really want for the Church?
(84, 176, 179, 181)

"Can any of the new wine," asked a canon, "be put
into our old bottles without a general bust-up?"
(177)

How did events answer this question? (183-4, 225-8)

What lessons can be learnt from Buchman's dealing
with:

- i. a gifted and ambitious young clergyman?
(55-57, 75, 88-9, 165-6)
- ii. a bishop? (179-180, 420-1)
- iii. divided church leaders? (222-224)
- iv. people of other faiths? (387-8, 457, 513)
- v. a man trained in Marxism? (363-4, 367, 461)

What for him are the features of a normal Christian
life? (92, 520)

BY EVIL REPORT AND GOOD REPORT

How did Buchman respond to acclaim, praise, success? (43, 285, 384, 393, 533-4)

How did he learn to respond to opposition, misunderstanding, persecutions? (27-8, 30, 50, 72, 81, 125, 130, 132, 315-6)

Why was he both loved and hated? (121, 149-50, 164-5, 167, 270-1)

How did he change his ways of treating opponents and critics? (31-32, 70, 198, 524 cf 445)

"Persecution is the fire that forges prophets - and quitters." (81)

What prophets did it forge? (137, 259-60, 266, 434-5)

How did apparent failure lead to real advance? (32)

How was this pattern repeated? (72, and chapter 9)
(130-1, and chapter 13)
(241-243, and chapter 32)

IDEOLOGY

"The more he pondered the matter, the more it seemed clear to him that any idea with a world-wide outlook and programme, and which made a total demand on a person, could properly be called an ideology." (320)

Read Frank Buchman's speech at Visby
("Remaking the World" 53-58)

How did he see the programme of Christianity?

What were the three stages? (265-6)

What are the personal implications?

Why did Buchman think ideology important?
(320-322, 336)

Does his concept of an ideology lessen or
increase our dependence on God? (79, 322)

What choice did Admiral Standley see for America
in 1959?

To what was he referring? (515)

Is it true today?

Considering the Communist ideology,

How did Borodin capture China? (71 and note)

How do we match and win such men?

(362-368, 431-2)

How does an ideology affect our attitudes and
decisions over what goes on in the world? (351)

MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

"Where God guides He provides."

What was Buchman's experience over money while he was still earning a salary? (42)

What did he give to those who gave to his work? (97-8, 106, 109, 118-9, 122, 325, 425-6)

How did a team of 85 manage in 'one of the largest and poorest parishes in England'? (187-8)

What was Buchman's response to being informed of the rumour that someone had given him £50,000? (188-9)

Why did he sometimes refuse the gifts he was offered? (168, 197)

How did he encourage his team to have faith over money? (197-8, 494)

What did he usually do on receiving gifts of money? (398)

What were the chief sources of his money? (87, 425-427)

What were the terms of his will? (530-1)
How do we use our resources?

THE COST OF MAKING PEACE

How far did Buchman's experience in Keswick (30-32) help in paving the way for reconciliation between people he met later in industrial and national conflicts?

What did John Riffe, U.S. Labour leader, learn? (295-6)

What were Buchman's ideas on industrial relations and the class war, and some results? (429-431)
 What uniting theme did 'The Forgotten Factor' give to industry? (192-3)

What happened in Atlanta, Georgia, around 1958, and in Little Rock, Arkansas? (498-501)

What are the main elements in the story of Madame Irène Laure? (352-3). What effect did her action have on Pøter Petersen and his friends? (353),
 How did she use her experience in France (354-6) and in Germany? (360).
 (For more detail see the video 'For the Love of Tomorrow' and Jacqueline Piguet's book - same title).

What did German leaders say about the post-war accord between France and Germany? (381-383)
 What is the author's assessment of Buchman's contribution? (383)

'You made peace with Japan before we did.'
 (Schuman to Buchman). How? (Chapter 34).
 What reconciliations took place in Japan? (489-491); between Japan and her neighbours? (496-498).

(Continued)

THE COST OF MAKING PEACE (Continued)

In Morocco how did personal reconciliation contribute to national reconciliation, and what else?

Did it mean the abandoning of deep-felt convictions and ideals? (446-454)

How do these events compare with the teachings of your faith about getting reconciled, loving your enemies, forgiving one another and being forgiven?

"A LAKE WHERE THE ELEPHANT CAN SWIM AND THE
LAMB CAN WADE" (475)

What was Buchman's idea of Moral Re-Armament?

How did he get the idea? (261-2)

What had he been looking for?
(199-201, 261, 269)

Was this development a further step in Christian
discipleship? (264-266, 269-270, 279)
What is its 'primary expression'? (492, see
also 488)

'God's property': (263 - Tod Sloan,
278 - Buchman, 406 - Buchman ten years later,
531 - the author)
What did they mean by this and what consequences
flow from it?

What are the limitations of being 'movement-
minded'? (512) (30 - para. 5, 313, 511-2, 526)

What 'further disclosures' (406) was Buchman
looking for towards the end of his life?
(525-6, 529, 533)

What further disclosures should we look forward
to now?

REMAKING THE WORLD

"This is the story of a man who set out to remake the world."

Is this the only possible way of understanding Buchman?

How far is success a criterion of a life? (1)

What is the world waiting to see? (77-8)

What thought struck him in Cambridge in 1921?

What 'specific mission'? (92-3, 254)

How does personal change relate to national change? (195, 217-224, 267-8, 271-2, 275-6)

What development in humanity did Dr. Paul Tournier consider Buchman launched? (270)

What did Cardinal König mean in describing him as 'a turning-point in the history of the modern world'? (532)

What needs remaking in your own country?

What is God's way of doing it?

What world tasks lie ahead?

Do we dare to dream of tackling them under God's direction?

FRANK BUCHMAN - A LIFE

"To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often."

J. H. Newman

In this continuing process what for Frank Buchman were the most important steps? (17, 18, 30-32, 35-36, 49, 52, 64, 73-4, 77-8, 87, 92-3, 96, 313-315, 321-2, 406, 520)

At these turning-points, what were the choices and challenges with which he was faced?

What similar choices or challenges do we face today?