

THERAPEUTIC CULT OR CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

A Disturbed Reflection on the Current Wholeness-Health Movement....Elliott #1594

In fact, I'm so disturbed about this that some readers of this thinksheet may think me "disturbed" and in need of "going to see someone who maybe can help" me....#1593 would be good theological background: "But HOW Does God Protect/Provide for Me/Us?"

1. What fertility deities (e.g., male-Baal, female-Astarte) were to live nature beyond the human body, health deities (e.g., male-Asklepios, female-Hygeia) were to the human body in what we loosely call biblical times. NOTE: nature-beyond are (here, familiarly) Semitic deities, and nature-within (i.e., the human body) are Greek-Roman deities. Both sets of deities were, by Jewish and then Christian living and theology, coopted by, absorbed into, grafted on our spiritual stem. YHWH-Jesus loves/cares for/heals creation/nature/the human being, outer ("body") and inner ("heart," "soul," "mind," "spirit," "psyche"). The assimilation, however, is incomplete: the old pre-Jewish, pre-Christian notions and expectations continue to work underground and sometimes surface in psyche and society. We are in a time of surfacing; and this time the old gods and goddesses are being aided and abetted by new disciplines (psychology and its hyphenates, sociology and its hyphenates, anthropology and its hyphenates, and biology hyphenates [e.g., sociobiology]). Jews and Christians should be both thankful and wary of these developments, not suckered by them into betraying the biblical faith and thus also themselves and God's future.

2. Early Christinity was in competition with a wide variety of therapeutic cults, i.e. with health-healing religions with their priestcrafts and shrines. Studying the archeological and epigraphic remains of these cults that centered in healing and health can help us understand the Early Church's tendency to present Jesus as thaumaturgic priest, the Greater Than Asklepios (or Asklepios Redivivus?)--as in catacomb paintings showing Jesus with magician's wand. To the extent that the Church yielded to this assimilationist tendency-temptation, some folks came to the Church as to the Christian shrine, expecting the Christian leader to perform as therapeutic priest. Folks still do! Ecclesiastics mock themselves up into thaumaturges and put on "healing services" for which they develop therapeutic rituals complete with incantatory building up of healing expectation. And while all this has been going on in the sanctuary, in the "profane" world (literally, "outside the sanctuary") a secular priestcraft ("doctors," i.e. physicians) has developed its own shrines ("hospitals") with hieratic attendants ("nurses") helping with the rituals (bedside manners, butcheries, injections, ingestions). (The current nurses strikes, under this homology, are anticlerical revolts.) In all this, Oral Roberts functions as double thaumaturge: healing services + hospital at ORU.

3. The Hospice movement is a spinoff of ancient and modern priestcrafts with their death-facing rituals. As such it is confusing, discouraging, exciting, embattled, hopeful. Betty Kübler-Ross shows up here and there with her nostrums and spiritism. Sally Bailey courageously and creatively introduces the arts into the care of the terminally ill. Sacred and secular claims clash, merge, separate, a dynamism to be expected because of the occupational discomforts of functionaries who were trained to perform each in a shrine peculiar to his/her priestcraft. Sociomodels for Hospice: (1) Family under patriarchy or matriarchy; (2) Circus, all animals obeying the ringmaster; (3) Ecumenical worship and service, with the director a pastor of the flock under the organic principle of discovering and releasing the gifts of each and all. #1 can be had under a tyrant, preferably benevolent; #2 requires an excellent manager; for #3, you will need a saint. #3 is best, but saints are in short supply.

4. In other thinksheets I've dealt with death (94.444.631.688.1050.1104.1278.1300.1322) and afterlife (33.444.596). Biblical religion relativizes sickness and death primarily through theocentricity: my sickness and my death are relatively unimportant to one whose center is in God rather than in self. See these categories: blessing, promise, deliverance, obedience, mediation, praise (593.JBL.Dec/80). Whitehead's three stages in experiencing God--Void, Enemy, Friend--may be applied to aging and dying (on which cf. 1Cor.15 [enemy] & 2Cor.4&5+Phil.1.21-4 [friend]).

D. → Fully Bales

Q. ...
D. ...

G } void → energy → find
D } (SOC) (IND)

Phonemod: The therapeutic act. Acolytes = nurses!
Sp. top closed, 4/14. top / spread.

Print = topic - helpless situation by the prints
Hygiene - washing

1 Cor. 15 2 Cor. 4

Heath as penult., not ult., as in

Agis - for: loss of respect, grand pit
Eph: Clarke

(pass. / the witness does not want intervention
act. / the professional
(Nemiger, De Vitae Balance) - order



Early work
with not back
(...)
at ...

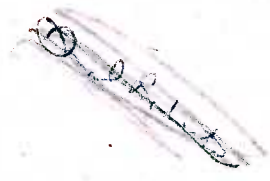
R.D. Light, The life of the self. 47: Berloggs + history are linked by "the paradigm"
d. & continuity of life essential to sustaining " " "

afterlife (3x5)

Attch. = (?) Truth: Roman, Peale's

Rep. (3x5)

BP. (JBL)



relativistic by ?
D. - preferred: Phil. 21-27

Agis, reception of: "on the way down"
{ endure
forget
forget

disarmant in the war against d. -
"Defenders' Minute" Partagon
as illusory!

Nemiger: penultimate, endurance, transcendence
D: The war will be lost, only win a little?
Grief: faster learned return to Hospice, say
Fully Bales: win a little when the war was lost
(grief as return to life)

penult. } coexistence
ult. }