

best speaks to this thinksheet's theme in its yearning simplicity and intellectual complexity.

Till yesterday (28 Mar 83), I hadn't "taken to my bed" for years: I've been at least ambulatory, dragging myself around, when not on the top of the world. This thinksheet tries to capture one of the gifts God offers us when, time and again in life, "can do" turns to "can't do."

1. Note my assumption: When something says "no" to some "yes" I am saying, I am being offered some transcendent "yes" (1) by God, who in love (2) intends this experience of constriction to be (a) an intensification of my self-consciousness, (b) a gate of grateful new life for me, and (c) an advance in my ability to be good news to my fellows and the good earth. The whole assumptional world here displayed is fragile to fact. Not contrary to fact, but fragile to fact. As all assumptional worlds are fragile to fact. I think this one the toughest to fact, least fragile to fact. I am a Christian.

2. The Marxian notion of "false consciousness" has at least the value of signaling the need for perpetual "critical" awareness in dialectic with one's assumptional world (=, in my terms, "normal" consciousness). When physical debility forces horizontality of body, interior reflection is nudged to match the 90° shift in physical perspective. When/if I am again standing two-legged on the earth, will I feel/think/do anything different from when I last so stood? And if so, why? What have I discovered on my bed?

3. The widest stage for viewing debility/ability as a dialectic of self-consciousness is the Jesus story, "the Christ Event." Being nailed to a cross cannot be beat as reality and symbol of physical debility, and nothing can be compared to the Resurrection as reality and symbol of ability. Easter is the effective divine defiance of all debilities. In the Crucifixion/Resurrection we Christians see, through the human, the divine dialectic of self-consciousness. So central to this is our Faith that all great Christian hymns are, in spirit when not also in explicit theme, Easter hymns.

4. What am I / are we to do about the gap between my/our wanting and my/our having? Nowhere else does life more sharply call us to critical consciousness. The Bible's second book speaks of a people's wanting deliverance-liberation and land: they got both, and we got Passover-Easter. From that, can we generalize that all people yearning for deliverance-liberation and land (e.g., the so-called "Palestinians," and the Latin Americans under feudal heel) should get both, and now, and with our religious and political aid? All people want the dignity of being respected: from that, what can we infer as to our action vis-a-vis sexism, racism, classism, nationalism? Given the ironies of history (viz., that "good" efforts oft have less than good, and sometimes evil, consequences), how can I/we be "faithful to the heavenly vision" of Shalom (total prosperity for the whole person in a whold world) in my/feelings/ideas/behavior? Certainly not by surrendering political ("out there in the world") action; equally certainly not by sacrificing solitude to society, inner world to outer world, private sphere to public sphere.

5. Of the three classics of the Middle Ages (the others being THE DIVINE COMEDY and THE CANTERBURY TALES), THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE