

Our first night back from Hawaii U. (2 Sept 73) I dreamed that somebody was asking me something about religion and healing, and I was discomfited because (1) the question was unclear, (2) its unclarity surfaced, at the ready, many images and ideas in my consciousness, and (3) the experience made me feel insecure as answer man, which is one of the things the religious leader is whether he likes it or not (and me with a 1940 ordination and all). The following dream-sequence is illogical (as dream-sequences should be!), and may not bless you real good:

1. We're in a crisis of low expectation vis-a-vis clergy: people don't expect much from them, and (like the ad says, in reverse) they don't get much. They're like the unbelievers in Job 21: "What profit...?" Not like our old family doc, "Dr. Stedem," who made you feel you were almost well, even though dog-sick, by just walking through the front door.
2. Therapeutic cults are more and more in, and the clergyman/woman who only explains sickness (in any of its six modes: theological, sociological, psychic-imaginal, biological, spiritual-decisional-existential, ideational-ratiocinative), instead of curing (or, more modestly, channeling health), is shelved: people are health-oriented, which is to say future-oriented when ill (whereas disease-explanation looks toward the past even when concerned to move into the future).
3. Rejecting the supernatural and dramatic, main-line clergy are opting for predictable cures, such as the instant-joy experience engineerable through human-potential techniques. Two limitations here: (1) nothing particularly Christian about this, or even religious, and (2) nothing ordinational: clergy may do it but are not necessarily more gifted at it than laity, and it therefore has no patent value in energizing the cleric/laic distinction [which is only one value in the human complex, but an essential one, else "Isn't anything sacred anymore...?"]. (In society, the category of the sacred exists, over and over than a brief ecstatic period, only in and through a sacred class practicing priestcraft. This class, in the now dying period of ecstatic devotion to "the secular," has been in ill repute--which means that the traditional practitioners (rabbis, priests, ministers) are still in ill-repute. But the class is essential in society, and therefore other practitioners (at University of Hawaii, e.g., every conceivable type of guru) are taking their place. In the ensuing priest-squabbling, East/West and high/low, Christian clergy should advertize themselves as the best, penitently and modestly: Billy Graham (e.g.) manages "the best" but fails on the adverbs; main-line clergy manage only the adverbs, and the general public agrees with their self-depreciation as healers, etc.)
4. Accept no substitutes for the gospel. Loree and I, just before leaving Hawaii, palled around with Howard and Charlotte Clinebell (who have the best marriage-book, INTIMATE MARRIAGE, and are a beautiful Christian couple)--and even were in on a sermon Charlotte preached, without ever mentioning Jesus, and a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -hour church-clinic, which they did without ever mentioning either God or Jesus. Imagine Krsna Consciousness folk doing anything for five minutes without mentioning Krsna! The Christian magician (and magicanship is an essential element of priestcraft) mentions the magic word "Jesus" in theonomous context day by day, almost hour by hour. When I pointed this out to the Clinebells, as well as their human-potential manipulation and entrapments (though, their language being nonsymmetrical with their behavior, they publicly denied this), they were extremely discomfited. Like so many Christian leaders, they have gone amnesiac about the Christian language and accepted more respectable substitutes therefor, as well as predictable outcomes not involving trust in God.
5. Three days on my back with flu last week in Nebraska, as well as my father's dying from energy-loss (the medics curing him of six diseases, but unable to restore energy)--I was thinking about the source of energy, and God-through-priest as source of energy. Ti, mana, kahuna, shaman, the medical-industrial-political complex, the guru mystique, "secular" healing [a misnomer, since energy, including healing energy, is mysterious], mana by intention, mana by attention, astral healing (Castor/Pollux in my dream), space/Magi, Taoist flow, Shaloha [Shalom (health/wealth/joy/praise) + Aloha (good will)], "the Kingdom of God,"....