

JESUS' "CONSCIOUSNESS" (interiority of life-style) as seen by one disciple (Willis E. Elliott) here and now (spring '71.)

1. The lapidary, centric, coherent quality of the literary remains of our Lord's teaching shouts of an inner togetherness, a psychic integration, a spiritual integrity unexplainable as a subdominical creation: Jesus is history's purest instance of the life of providential trust.

2. As the rest of the Lord's Prayer hangs on the Our Father, the rest of Jesus' consciousness-and-teaching depends on his conviction-experience of God's daily providence, his perpetual-faithful paternal concern for the person, who--because the Concerned has all power, love, wisdom, and justice--is to respond with a daily trust of the same quality, viz. childlike-faithful ((as God's is parentlike-faithful)), a profound-intense-real trust-commitment yielding peace, joy, and power.

3. As Kierkegaard could say "Truth is subjectivity," Jesus could have said "Trust is identity-individuality": owning set each at a unique angle to his society (Jesus' being owned by God in personal election, over against the elect people of God ((but within)), and SK's owning his subjectivity within God, over against the Danish church-society as an elect people of God): Jesus' life was an exposition of the doctrine of providence, and SK's an exposition of one effect of the providence-belief, viz. ((what appears vis-a-vis all nonbiblical cultures as)) hyperindividuality. What most offended the authorities was our Lord's thoroughgoing living out ((existent.)) of his individuation-identity as providenced ((essent.)): relentlessly he drove the implicates, personal and communal, of his God-intoxication, guilelessly and unguardedly (though occasionally he withdrew from immediate danger).

4. Since all hangs on obedient responsiveness to providential guidance, prayer is the fundamental act for receiving and renewing the ((religious)) consciousness. This operational fact determines the fundamental meaning of prayer as that illumination-fellowship with God which has as its primary goal the saint's fitting for holy living; tion-guidance; the submissive will; disciplined obedience to Truth and truth; nurture of the joyous-painful longing for the enlarged Rule-Realm of God; openness to the Event ((all postprayer circumstances, unto the Eschaton)); quietistic-activistic readiness for divine service, for which God will supply our needs, which he knows better than we and therefore should be petitioned proleptically ((i.e., not "give us what we want," but "give us what we need in your service")); the humble assurance that God is eager for fellowship and collaboration with us.

5. This sort of prayer was both complementary to and competitive with Torah-as-understood-by-the-Jewish-authorities, for whom God was more Guide-through-Torah than direct, personal, daily Guide. The two positions are identical in dailiness: Torah

study is to be daily (leading toward the scribal extreme, legalism), so is prayer (so Jesus' frequent and lengthy prayer-periods; but he avoided the correlative extreme, mysticism, by grounding himself in daily Torah-meditation). The Jewish authorities felt and understood the subversive consequences: in Jesus' religious praxis, the locus of religious authority shifts from "the authorities" to "the heart," from an elitist to an egalitarian base, leveling all men as individuals under divine judgment and thus depotentiating (desacralizing and thus desanctioning) religiosociopoliticoeconomicultural status--revalorizing the whole rewards-punishments nexus here and hereafter: nothing as radical as Jesus, for there and then, is conceivable. ((Since Jesus-praying is revolution, Jung is right: prayerlessness= spiritual anemia; cp. Frankl's existential vacuum, Nietzsche's the death of God, etc.)).

6. The prayer-consequent trust in God can be unconditional because the trusted God is Creator-without-remainder: the heart, nature, and history are, though all contested, his and his alone. In the agon (struggle) of prayer, the pray-er adumbrates his postprayer experience as victim-victor ((as in Jesus' "Temptations")), of which Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection are the archetypes as they are also the "events" ((i.e., consequences)) of his praying.

7. The goal of prayer is not ((as in Eastern religions)) the merging of the soul with God but rather a person's cooperation with the creation-project, viz. the praise of God through the joyful condition ((shalom)) of the whole creation, symbolized by Jesus as "the Kingdom-kingship-rule-realm of God-Heaven," analogized by conjunctions of heart-nature-history. Thus nature provides not inspiration ((as in all romanticism, including our current poetic naturalism)) but homologies ((ontic analogies)) and an I-It distance analogous to the I-Thou distance of Providence and pray-er, who in prayer discovers, in receptivity and pledged activity, the world's order and meaning in beauty and duty--because Love lies at the world's root and fount.

8. Though embattled, nature's purity and theocentricity model for man in his disobedient, idolatrous wondering: a coincidence of nature and the Torah Word (Bath Qol), both theopetal against theofugal man ((against whom his own child (and child-of-the-past-within) witnesses)).

9. The life-and-thought centrality of providence for Jesus entailed psychic as well as social implicates, and the two merged as historical-futuric implicates. The all-of-a-pieceness of these three implicative modes reveals the radically central nature of providence for him. (a) Relax, beloved, for your Lover is not limited in patience or power in the agon of the heart, society, history, nature! While this

radical monotheism is insustainable rationally and on an enemy, prayer-poor religious life, and is embarrassingly childlike, it is indubitably Jesus' life-style, which Christians boldly proclaim the most mature! but find too crazy and frightening to practice much, but something beautiful to have a bad ~~conscience~~ about lots. We tend to translate his wild unconcern about needs (one's own) into bourgeois preachments against overconcern about possessions--and tend to miss his note of freedom from anxiety, which is to be expelled by (b) expectant waiting on God for the needs necessary for service ((this quality, and implicate, being his "patience")). (c) Providential trust frees also from the fears of nature, the psyche, circumstance, and society and thus releases the passionate believer (ecstatic? fanatic? saint?) to take bold initiatives from the baseline of believing prayer--the praying and the in-being the transrational proofs of faith. Thus is courage fortified for faith's agon against "the Prince of the power of the air." (d) Since one's security is, ideally, detached from creation and attached only to the Creator, the nonCreator loci of personal confidence are one's own spirit and the future, which is thus seen in "spiritual" terms as spirit-victory-in-and-beyond-history, i.e. as victory of "justice," the Event soon, sudden, violent, and wholly divine in dynamic and inauguration, in which Event the saint (i.e., the person obedient to "the Holy One") will participate on the same terms as his present experience of providence (though the details are hidden in God, the saint is freed from survival-anxiety as he has been learning a transtemporal trust).

10. Consequently, the truster's Aktionsart (kind, quality, style of action) is presentist-aorist: the here and now, "daily bread," the cup of cold water with eternal consequences, the good cause that cannot become a lost cause (faith-trust granting victory over anxiety-doubt-abyss), the radical addressing of the moment as one's eternity (in the sense that the divine judgment is one dimension of each providential opportunity). ((Cp. the here-and-nowness of some alternative cultures and of the reality-and-responsibility-therapies now in the ascendant.)) Instead of the fear of death, the fear of unworthiness for Kingdom-citizenship, the fear of being late to the Wedding (the messianic banquet, the marriage-supper of the Lamb, etc.) --and accordingly the watchful, cocked-ear stance for "Do it now unto me!"

11. This Aktionsart frustrates most of the social sanctions and therefore frightens the authorities (Jewish, Roman, American, etc.). For what frightens the Kingdom citizen is that he may mistreat the lost, last, and least, before whose dignity and worth he stands as before God--rather than that he may be mistreated by those who see themselves as farthest from lost, last, and least. Jesus does not

save us from horror, but rather points elsewhere for its onset, viz. to the God in whose compassion we may fail to participate, on pain of failing to enter his Kingdom, the Kingdom he is pleased to give "little ones."

12. The joyful consciousness from moment-obedience projects as the feel (Gefuehl) of the future: joy is the connotation of the Kingdom as praise is its denotation.

13. The believer is "saved" in the sense of "made whole" in the existential moment of obedience, and this "deliverance" ("salvation") is already a participation in the denouement of salvation-history: "now" is already, yet not the whole of, "not yet." The obedience-moment has thus the dual quality of singing/longing for the Fulfilment, and thus the confluence of heart, society, history, future, and nature.

14. As the obedience-moment is, consciously, also the decision point (die Entscheidungspunkt), the mental process ("reflection") between challenges ("action") of prayer-meditation is dominated by the after/fore-image of the obedience-moment: the process is a circumambulation ((incidentally, Jung's favorite word for his mental process)) Thus Jesus Guttungen ((forms of utterance)) are meditation-al, parabolic, pictorial-imaginal, rather than argumentative-rational-lineal-calculative-nominalistic-"Western"--with the only exception, viz. projections from God's character-being-will, being only an apparent exception, since also centric rather than lineal. High demands, as for his disciples he himself models the theocentricity of the Kingdom.

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You may remember me; you taught me how to evaluate OK-ness a few years ago, at Chappaqua.

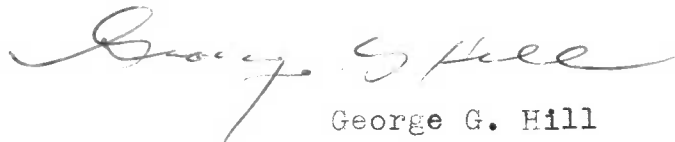
Now the Lord has laid it on me to do something to bring the earthly life of Jesus into the words and lives of Christian churches and preachers, particularly the "successful" ones. Preliminary exploration leads me to suspect that Old Testament, Paul, and misinterpretations of Jesus are much more prevalent than is a faithful challenge of Our Lord's challenge to our way of life.

The current "Holy Spirit" kick seems to ignore almost totally the Trinitarian doctrine that Jesus is our clue to what the Spirit does -- so we've got the Holy spirit helping people have better orgasms so they can work more happily and productively in the napalm factory.

I have leafed through the best-known works of Peale, Graham, Schuller, and Marjory Holmes and find no description of Jesus. Watched Schuller, ditto. In our Methodist hymnal, only 28 of 552 hymns describe the nature of Jesus in any way.

Sat through a fundamentalist church service where everyone was saying Lord Lord -- he did this for me, I love him so much, happy am I etc. -- but not one whisper concerning what this Lord is like.

As you see, I'm into this project already. But I feel it would help to have some scholarly framework in which to pursue it. Is there any way NYTS can help me with this? I'd love to go down and discuss it with you.


George G. Hill

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JESUS' "CONSCIOUSNESS" (interiority of life-style) as seen by one disciple
(Willis E. Elliott) here and now (spring '71)

—as understood by ~~Pat Palmer~~, here and now (spring '73) MidCareer NYTS

1. The hard, enduring, central, coherent quality of the written remains of our Lord's teaching shouts of an inner togetherness, a psychic integration, a spiritual integrity unexplainable as anything other than a creation of God: Jesus is history's purest instance of the life of providential trust.

2. As the rest of the Lord's Prayer proceeds from the Our Father, the rest of Jesus' consciousness and teaching depends upon his conviction of and experience of God's daily providence. God's perpetually faithful paternal concern for the person requires a response of daily trust of the same quality. Because the Concerned (God) has all power, love, wisdom and justice, the person must be childlike-faithful, as God is parentlike-faithful. This commitment must be profound, intense, real and trusting in order to yield peace, joy and power.

3. As Kierkegaard could say "Truth is subjectivity," Jesus could have said "Trust is individuality from secure identity." "Owning" sets each at a unique angle to his society (Jesus knew his being to be owned by God in personal election, within, but over against the elect people of God. SK owned his subjectivity within God, over against --but not within--the Danish church society as an elect people of God). Jesus' life was an exposition of the doctrine of providence, and SK's an exposition of one effect of the providence belief, viz. that which is seen by all nonbiblical cultures as hyperindividuality. What most offended the authorities was our Lord's thoroughgoing living out (existential) of his individual identity as a given of providence (essential). Relentlessly he pushed forward the implications, personal and communal, of his God-intoxication, guilelessly and unguardedly (though occasionally he withdrew from immediate danger.)

4. Since everything depends on obedient responsiveness to providential guidance, prayer is the fundamental act for receiving and renewing the (religious) consciousness. This operational fact determines the fundamental meaning of prayer

as that fellowship with God which has as its primary goal the saint's fitting for holy living. Elements of this are illumination and guidance; the submissive will; disciplined obedience to Truth and truth; nurture of the joyous yet painful longing for the enlarged Rule (realm) of God; openness to the Event—(all postprayer circumstances, unto the ultimate); both a being and doing readiness for divine service, for which God will supply our needs, which he knows better than we and therefore should be petitioned not "give us what we want", but "give us what we need in your service;" and the humble assurance that God is eager for fellowship and collaboration with us.

5. This sort of prayer was complementary to but also competitive with Torah (as it was understood by the Jewish authorities), for whom God was more Guide through the Torah than direct, personal, daily Guide. The two positions are identical in dailiness. Torah study is to be daily (leading toward the scribal extreme—legalism), so is prayer (Jesus' frequent and lengthy prayer periods), but Jesus avoided the correlative extreme, mysticism, by grounding himself in daily Torah meditation. The Jewish authorities felt and understood the subversive consequences: in Jesus' purposeful discipline, the locus of religious authority shifts from "the authorities" to "the heart"; from an elitist to an egalitarian base, leveling all men as individuals under divine judgment. This leveling had the potential to destroy very complex religious structures carefully built on law, which encompassed and dominated all areas of life—religious, social, political, economic and cultural. Thus Jesus appeared as the personification of the most radical religious viewpoint imaginable at that time. (Since praying as Jesus understood and used it is truly revolutionary, Jung is right—prayerlessness does equal spiritual anemia (or Frankl's existential vacuum, or Nietzsche's the death of God, etc.).

6. The trust in God resulting from (or following) prayer can be unconditional because the trusted God is all-inclusive Creator: the heart, nature and history are, though all contested, his and his alone. In the agon (struggle) of prayer, the pray-er foreshadows his postprayer experience as victim-victor (as in Jesus'

"Temptations") of which Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection are the archetypes as they are also the "events" (i.e. consequences) of his praying).

7. The goal of prayer is not (as in Eastern religions) the merging of the soul with God but rather a person's cooperation with the creation project, viz. the praise of God through the joyful condition (shalom) of the whole creation, symbolized by Jesus as "the Kingdom of God" (or kingship, rule, realm of Heaven) analogized by conjunctions of heart, nature and history. Thus nature provides not inspiration (as in all romanticism, including our current poetic naturalism) but homologies (analogies of real being) and an I-It distance analogous to the I-Thou distance of Providence and Pray-er, who in prayer discovers, in receptivity and pledged activity, the world's order and meaning in beauty and duty—because Love lies at the world's root and fount.

8. Though embattled, nature's purity and God centeredness provide a model for man in his disobedient, idolatrous wondering: a coincidence of nature and the Torah Word (Bath Qol—I have no idea what this term refers to) which are both theopetal (God pulled, God directed) against theofugal (pulled away from God) man. The theofugal man (non God centered) is witnessed against by his own "child" (child of the past within).

9. The fact that providence was the life and thought center for Jesus entailed psychic as well as social implications. The two merged as the historic orientation and future orientation became one implication. The total integration of these three implicative modes reveals the radically central nature of providence for him.

(a) Relax, beloved, for your Lover is not limited in patience or power in the agon of the heart, society, history, or nature! While this radical monotheism is unsustainable rationally in a hostile, prayer-poor religious life, and is embarrassingly childlike, it is indubitably Jesus' life style—which Christians boldly proclaim the most mature, but find too crazy and frightening to practice much, but something beautiful to have a bad conscience about. We tend to translate his wild

unconcern about needs (one's own) into bourgeois preachments against overconcern about possessions—and tend to miss his note of freedom from anxiety, which is to be expelled (the anxiety) by (b) expectant waiting on God for the needs necessary for service (this quality and implication being his "patience"). (c) Providential trust frees also from the fears of nature, the psyche, circumstance, and society and thus releases the passionate believer (ecstatic? fanatic? saint?) to take bold initiatives from the baseline of believing prayer—the praying and the being-in-God become the transrational proofs of faith. Thus is courage fortified for the faith's life and death struggle against "the Prince of the power of the air." (d) Since one's security is, ideally, detached from creation and attached only to the Creator, the nonCreator points of personal confidence are one's own spirit and the future which is thus seen in "spiritual" terms as victory of the spirit in (but at the same time beyond) history, i.e. as victory of "justice", the Event (I'm not sure what you mean by this usage) soon, sudden, violent, and wholly divine in dynamic and inauguration, in which Event the saint (i.e. the person obedient to "the Holy One") will participate on the same terms as his present experience of providence (though the details are hidden in God, the saint is freed from survival anxiety as he has been learning a transtemporal trust).

10. Consequently, the truster's modus operandi (kind, quality, style of action) is built on a continuance of past into future, but functioning in the eternal of now: the here and now, "daily bread," the cup of cold water with eternal consequences, the good cause that cannot become a lost cause (a trusting faith which grants victory over anxiety, doubt, and danger of abyss), the radical addressing of the moment as one's eternity (in the sense that the divine judgment is one dimension of each providential opportunity). (Cp. the here-and-nowness of some alternative cultures and of the reality-and-responsibility-therapies as a current trend.) Instead of the fear of death, the fear of unworthiness for citizenship in the Kingdom, the fear of being late to the Wedding (the messianic banquet, the marriage supper of the Lamb, etc.)—and accordingly the watchful, cocked-car stance for "Do it now unto me!"

11. This style of action frustrates most of the social sanctions and therefore frightens the authorities (Jewish, Roman, American, etc.). For what frightens the Kingdom citizen is that he may mistreat the lost, last, and least before whose dignity and worth he stands as before God--rather than that he may be mistreated by those who see themselves as farthest from lost, last, and least. Jesus does not save us from horror, but rather points elsewhere for its onset, viz. to the God in whose compassion we may fail to participate, on pain of failing to enter his Kingdom, the Kingdom he is pleased to give "little ones".

12. The joyful consciousness from this moment to moment obedience projects as the feel of the future: joy is the connotation of the Kingdom as praise is its denotation.

13. The believer is "saved" in the sense of "made whole" in the existential moment of obedience, and this "deliverance" ("salvation") is already a participation in the final outcome of history (or of salvation): "now" is already, yet not the whole of, "not yet." The moments of obedience thus have the dual quality of singing and longing (singing for the present joy, and longing for the final Fulfillment), and thus becomes the confluence of heart, society, history, future and nature.

14. As the obedience-moment is, consciously, also the decision point, the mental process ("reflection") between challenges ("action") of prayer ((meditation)) is dominated by the image of the obedience-moment (a recollection of the moment, of its process leading into it, and the action resulting from it): the process is a circumambulation (incidentally, Jung's favorite word for his mental process)--thus Jesus' forms of utterance are meditational, parabolic, pictorial, imaginal, rather than argumentative, rational, lineal, calculative, nominalistic, "Western"--with the only exception, viz. projections from God's character (being, will), being only an apparent exception, since these are also centric rather than lineal. He poses high demands, as for his disciples he himself models the God centeredness of the Kingdom.