

OTHER THINKSHEETS ON "JEWISH/CHRISTIAN": #458 [Holocaust as component of J/C dialog], #473 [antisemitism and values: worth/dignity], #567 [right/true religion?], #617 ["prophecy"/prediction?], #698 [worship: integration], #738 [authentic/inauthentic rhetoric], #737 [root of antisemitism].

In nothing am I more Jewish than the fire in my bones--the pressure to cry out--when truth is victimized. Some former thinksheets* do this in relation to victimizations of truth vis-a-vis the complex reality I signal with the word "Jewish/Christian," viz. the awkward existence of two Israels, one called "the Jews" [and "Israel" as the Jewish state, if indeed this should not be called a third Israel] and the other "the Church" ["the Israel of God," Gal.6.16]. As one who as Christian has preached in a number of synagogues and temples and had a number of rabbis both as friends and as students, I reflect faithfully the best Jewish and Christian conviction when I say that the victimization of truth is an act, conscious or unconscious, in defiance of the God of Truth and constitutes God as enemy of the victimizer as truly as this biblical-prophetic God is enemy of the oppressors of the poor.

1. What occasions this thinksheet is the fact that, in the slushing of peoples over the earth's surface, my town, since I moved into it fourteen years ago, has changed from less than 1% Jewish to about 25% Jewish. Homes owned by people of our church are apt, when the people move away, to be sold to Jews: our membership declines as the temple's membership increases, and there's talk of building an additional synagogue. As a member of the United Church of Christ, I'm not yet an endangered species in Chappaqua; but I'm worried for our town because the Jewish "threat"--no different from any other in-movement of a population anywhere on earth--is apt to arise latent antisemitism in the goy population, churched and unchurchd. The great Catholic teacher, Jean McGowan, has just begun a course as one Christian effort to head off this monster. The God-given weapons of our warfare on this are truth and love: this thinksheet has to say some things about truth.

2. Prevarication, distortion, omission are enemies of truth (1) no matter who is the guilty party and (2) no matter how worthy one may think the cause. [A high-drama case would be an American president lying to save the country: yes, Watergate!] On the issue this thinksheet's dealing with--viz., honoring the truth in Jewish/Christian relations--there're several classes of liars: (1) Jew-haters ["antisemites," better "antijews"], (2) Jew-lovers ["philosemites," better "philojews" or "projews"--of whom I am one], (3) anthropologists [which term I use here tongue-in-cheek for sophisticates who see themselves as above the battle, objective in their views--not just people in this academic discipline, and by no means all of them!]. When I speak of class-#2 liars, I'm in danger of being called antisemitic--a fact which throws many otherwise honest folk into class #4, viz. those who would speak out for truths violated by class #2 if they weren't too afraid of being called antisemitic! Currently, the efforts of Jews and Christians to attack antisemitism is ironically feeding its flames: truth repressed is anger repressed, building toward explosion: Jews, worse than Christians, attacking antisemitism is, potentially, bad news for Jews.

3. The rest of this thinksheet is on class-#2 lying, which class #3 is more and more buying. Books in this class are almost all very recent; I take only one example, Paul J. Kirsch's WE CHRISTIANS AND JEWS [Fortress/75]. By "lying" I do not mean, narrowly, prevarication--rather, broadly, not telling--whether consciously or not--the whole truth as far as grasped and known. Here are some "lies" in this sense: (1) Christianity is not necessarily evangelistic, at least in the case of the Jews. A paper version of an evangelism-of-Jews-excepting Christianity is created by academics, who then proof-text as outrageously as fundamentalists. (2) One is left with the impression that Christians invented antisemitism; so in such literature of distortion you'll not discover that the Jews were expelled from Rome almost before the first Christian arrived [AD40]! (3) Holocaust should lead Christians to repentance [nothing said about Jews, though the biblical prophets would have used the event to call Jews to repentance]. (4) Church-education materials are to be scrutinized for antisemitism [nothing said about the need to scrutinize synagogue-education materials for antichristianism]. (5) Nothing said about the needs of human communities to have both positive and negative images of themselves and each other: Christians are supposed to clean up the NT and eliminate from themselves all negative images of Jews--dangerous, romantic, psychosocial nonsense. [Otherwise, a good book.]