

My friend Francis Whiting (DMin in PC), lecturing to a seminary (MDiv students) on PC, said "We often sing, 'Just as I am.' But there's another hymn we need to write and sing and apply: 'Just as you are.'" This thinksheet toys with that possibility and comments on interpersonalism [the 5th Way of Being Religious] withal.

1. My first effort to write that hymn came out feeling to me a bit blasphemous, too concessive to the interpersonal salvationism that pervades the human potential movement and takes many pop forms, such as "co-counseling." Here it is:

["What function is so noble, as to be
Embassadour [for] God and destinie?"
--Jn. Donne, The Divine Poems]

Just as I am, without one plea
But that your heart is set toward me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O counselor, I come! I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within, and fears without,
O counselor, I come! I come!

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, list'n, affirm, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O counselor, I stay! I stay!

Just as I am, thy waiting love
Has broken ev'ry barrier down;
I can be free because of thee,
O counselor, I go! I go!

2. COMMENTARY:

(1) The first three stanzas, without the final stanza, would be a whopping transference in the sense of energy-misdirection, a short circuit screwed down tight as a permanent connection! Some of the spiritual hesitance I experience in my PC version of this old evangelical hymn comes from the sense of the numinous [i.e., blasphemy proper, the creature--in this case, the counselor--short-circuiting energy that is properly directly only to the Creator], but some is from the awesome burden of becoming so open-listening-attentive-alert-aware vis-a-vis another soul [in the old sense, the entire person] that one experiences the Atlas effect.

(2) "Counselor" is capitalized, for Holy Spirit, four times in RSV Jn.14-16: 14.16; 26; 15.26; 16.7. Tom Oden in GAMES FREE and TRANSACTIONAL AWARENESS GAME avoids the easy ego-slide in self-divinization [as well as the traditional Hindu self-Self identification]: Christian-biblical interpersonal psychology, keeping God god [i.e., central and controlling], stands over against the tendency to make a religion of the interpersonal (the religion I call "interpersonalism"). But we should not turn away from our *in loco Dei* role, fulfilling it with fear and trembling and trust that the Holy Spirit will energize the countertransference to the glory of God.

(3) The first expression in the title of this thinksheet is from Fred. Streng et al, WAYS OF BEING RELIGIOUS, the section presenting and critiquing the interpersonal salvific schemes, which at heart are romantic (assuming the goodness of the human heart and the problem-solving competence of the human head/body). Through the years I've watched the customer-shaping here. A "patient" or "client" or "counselee" comes for therapy, stays for education, then sticks for worship--one set of needs flowing into the next. E.g., Progoff. Or Carl Rogers, who reaches stage three in his PERSONAL POWER (Delacorte/77).

(4) As a "Jesus [only] saves" evangelical, I rejoice at all signs of salvation, including old and new cults. As a theologian, I am bound to criticize as well.