

AN EPIPHANY GIFT

FROM THE HANDWRITTEN NOTES OF JOSEPH W. MATHEWS:

NECESSITY OF STYLE

The common sense of our times points to the necessity for everyone to come to terms not only with the accumulation of all of the knowledge of our time, not only all the social revolutions of our time, but it points to the necessity to come to terms with the whole style of life as we now experience it around the globe. In every culture, individual style, corporate relationships and the symbolic dimension of being are called into question. In any major city of the world, we are confronted by a hundred different styles, yet there are few symbols of humanness that illuminate the mystery, depth and greatness of our lives, that reveal to us who we are, how we are essentially related to one another, and bring us to attend to our particular role in history.

The key symbol of all humanness is style, and style is of signal importance for the man of faith. Style is a form that one gives to life – it's like a piece of dough that you mold, season, form; it is like creating the face of God, like making visible the love of God for all of creation. Style is like a montage, for it is concerned with all relationships in life. It is your gift of life to life, an art form, a way of celebrating your life – all of it, the pain, the struggle, the joy, the death, the heritage, the mystery, the history of mankind. Style is

love. Style is a particular way of life for the man of faith, for it proclaims his view of history, it designates his relations to his neighbor and it signifies who he has decided to be, his understanding of the Word in Jesus Christ, in the context of his time.

Everyone embodies a style, whether they be self-conscious about it or not, that defines their life. The spirit of the times demands that the man of faith decided his style self-consciously and intentionally, and that he do so on behalf of all men. In our time, to decide to live on behalf of all is to decide to be the solitary one, the dead one, who also dares to be the first. In our time, it is to dare to order your time and space in terms of the demand of history; it is to dare to decide and appropriate the style of the new universal religious. Today, when the religious is of necessity secular, this means that in his everyday life, in his business, in the family and in his recreation, he stands as one who is the new style. Today, when the style is of necessity corporate, this means that he covenants with others to forge the new life style, in the knowledge that he is held accountable in that relation to them and to the Lord of history.

NEW RELIGIOUS MODE

A style creator loves the ancient style carried in the church, for the sake of all. It seeks to recover the power, the vitality of the spirit forms so that everyone can live his life fully in all dimensions. In order to be the embodiment of a religious way of life in post civilization, the guru must:

1. **HOW TO GURU:** Become the spirit of the times - he feels himself to be in tune with all of humanity in all its diverse expressions. He contemplates that which is new and foreign to him and incorporates it into himself - the slow unanalytical survey. It knows the mystery, depth and greatness of the objects of meditation and thus is enabled to know his own mystery, depth and greatness.

2. **LIFE STYLE:** He is thus able to know and to communicate to people their mystery, depth and greatness. Further, he exemplifies the manner of living, the religious exercises, which make it possible for all to see clearly what it is to live in the religious dimension. In him, one finds the courage to act out what we know to be godliness. Life in style creation can be clearly seen as poetic, as being more than a conglomeration of facts, but as a story each tells the other.

3. **ESSENCE OF NRM:** The expression of the mode is ecstasy. And ecstasy is knowing the essential in life situations; that which is the heart of the matter, the center of the storm taking place, the spirit problem.

GROUNDING

The new religious captures the scientific age of miracle for humanity by applying the scientific method and cybernetics to self-conscious control of the mind in knowing all of the mapped universe, and thus yielding the freedom to go beyond. The universe of the past and future is known in the present by rational structured contemplation. All of mankind is experienced through the re-tribalizing media.

Each movement of creative activity is a spirit war of pure decision against the mockery of a world seeking absolute values by attacking every manifestation of authentic style.

The decision to be the new being, or to die a new death, not captive to past deaths, is enabled by structured prayer which holds up the frailty of ancient virtue to the search light of the universal necessary deed.

NEW SOCIAL VEHICLE

The New Social Vehicle is the form life takes when all people are honored and all people are cared for. The New Social Vehicle gives to people symbols of love for life, of respect for every fat lady.

1. **HOW TO BE A SOCIAL ENGINEER:** In order to formulate social structures to accomplish his purposes, the social engineer must know how people are, what their most basic needs are. He involves himself in men's affairs to know men but is distant in order to help men. He is mercurial in his ability to assume new roles. He meditates upon what he sees, asking what is it saying: on deeper and deeper levels. He allows his own life to be addressed.

2. **LIFE STYLE:** His own life style is that of deliberateness, first of intentionality. He gives himself completely to the moment because every moment must be lived. Humanity must be saved from suicide.

3. **ESSENCE:** Dedication to action is the hallmark of the social engineer. He knows that he is in charge. He is also visionary in his compassion for future generations, which keeps him from sacrificing the future hope to the present need. He funnels his energies into life. He does not dissipate himself. His decisions are final, but, of course, he is always evaluating himself.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is only for the sake of the mission, that which allows the last man in the outbush huddled before the last dying ember of life to create the face of GOD, which established his pre-existent primal right to knead and mold the essential bare bread of the universe, and to give to the last of the future to feed on, to live therefore, and to finally die.

Thus it is that without discipline no person every would have accomplished anything and that his death would have been for naught. Discipline holds people to the task that they have chosen, and it is in seeking that, that discipline is THE way.

I. PRACTICALITY OF CORPORATENESS

Corporateness is the utter, absolute, practical element that holds self to the task, the only validity will be found in the mission of rebuilding the church and the earth.

It must of necessity include intentional constructs, be entirely functional, and manifest itself in missional poverty, paradoxical obedience, and loyal singleness.

II. QUALITY OF RECEPTIVITY, THE CONCRETE NOT-ME MUST BE TOTALLY RECEIVED.

a. The consensual participation of every member that is honored and obeyed in the time union that frees every member.

b. It's that corporate movement that is deposited in every vitreous receptacle across the planet and is flushed down the drains of history.

c. That thrust to all-encompassing that never becomes wanton rape, and that all-embracing that never become discriminate prostitution so that the emerging new life never becomes a bastard monster.

III. RELEVANCY TO THE PRESENT TIME AND PLACE

a. Scientific image - The atomic pile which has the perfect balance of elements in a rational construction so that the fire burns but does not explode.

b. Industrial image - Being the eschatological crucible, the industrial furnace that receives the crude ore and the technical expertise, and in the white-hot heat turns the polarities into molten steel that flows out into a new form, realizing that every new product needs different ores and technical tools.

c. Urban image - The universal city that will greet the eastern urs and celestial bodies of the galaxy with open readiness and emerge into brotherhood in final expression that will never again have to be subjectively dealt with because it will have become the never ending ring in the trinitarian spirit.

That discipline that will be the one objective reality before which every form that is viable can act out its dreams of the joyousness of death.

DISCIPLINE is the style, that says - easy, is always preceded by not, if what follows is significant.

NEW UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS

EPILOGUE

The style of the new universal secular religious is comprehensive, easily recognized by others because it is for all others. It is consciously affected by the stylers, yet springs forth effortlessly from the self. No part of the body is withheld from involvement; nevertheless, the universal religious ways knows who is essential to the situation, and closes itself to the extraneous.

The new secular religious lives in grace. The corporate body holds itself ready to have access to itself, others, and to its ground of being. It therefore is life illuminated by its own mystery, depth and

greatness. It is the inexplicable insight, intuitive knowledge of what is really going on within the hearts of men and within the stream of history.

Thus, does the new corporate religious embody the Spirit of the times, push deep into the possibilities for creating a new civilization, and decide the direction that history will take.

Thus, does the new corporate religious be the sign of God's love in the world, secure the promise for the future of mankind, and be an invitation for others to "Come, taste and see that the Lord is good."