

ON SYMBOLIC ACCOUNTABILITY														
EVERYMAN'S FINAL ACCOUNTABILITY			THE INDIVIDUAL'S ACCOUNTING					THE ORDER'S ACCOUNTING						
REGULAR ACCOUNTING: GROUNDED IN HUMANNESS			SYMBOLIC IS REAL		YOUR NAME BEFORE GOD			FOR FOR- GIVE NESS		ORDER DYN- AMIC		GLOBAL DYNAMICS		NORTH AMERICAN DYNAMICS
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		

1. As I have reflected recently on what a historical secular-religious order is, I have become most passionately convinced that whatever else you can or must say about such an entity you have to say that it is a body in history which undergoes on a regular timetable, symbolic accountability. Without that you do not have, I think, a historical order. The accountability has to be regular-it cannot be haphazard. It is almost as if you know the month and the year, the week and the quadrennial, the day and the decade, the hour and the century, when you must account.
2. Increasingly I have admiration for those unknown human beings who saw for the first time particular depths in the human soul. I admire the one who first saw Satan and I admire the one who first saw the final judgement. For without that poetry or the equivalent thereof, there is one dark and glorious cavern of humanness that is cut off. If you do not know, not with your mind but your being, that cavern, you may die your death and never be fully human. There is a last judgement in which you and I shall account and what an accounting that will be. I envy the one who painted that great classical piece--"The Last Judgement."
3. Accountability is unavoidable for those who deem themselves to be called to manifest however brokenly, however feebly, however fragmentedly, what it means to be a human being. Without that final accountability there is no role of humanness. Those who do not know that they must finally account for their lives ought not participate in accountability once a week in house church. They are violating the deep integrity of themselves if accountability is not grounded for them in humanness itself.
4. That accountability must be symbolic. It took me long years to understand that, for I was trapped in what we call actual accountability. Can you imagine? As if anybody cares finally, God or your awakened colleagues, whether you get up in the morning. Not finally. And not finally relative to the relativity of the historical secular-religious order. For who finally cares whether you get there on time or whether you built that battle plan, who finally cares whether you actualized that task, who finally cares in the relativity--who finally cares?

5. The symbolic is the reality, for only in the symbolic will the well springs of my being or your being be touched. You only have me finally on the line, in terms of the symbols. And in terms of the final symbols, reality is there. I suppose from time to time that accountability in house church comes to us as a game--a serious little game. But there are times when I am struck with awe, not due to any externalities, but because the symbolic accountability puts my being on the line. It is then, when I do not care about my own integrity that my being is exposed.
6. I get tremendously upset with the people who spell out three different names like George Washington Henry Mathews. The name you give is the name that the Lord calls, and that name has not one thing to do with what someone named you at the time he sprinkled water on your head. I mean, the name, your name, is the name God calls you by.
7. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred--when God wants to deal with me he calls me Joe. Now when he gets rough he calls me Joseph and then, I mean, I salute. I never remember his calling me Joseph Wesley--he always seems to be too serious and too much in a hurry. He usually says Joe. That is a nudge. When he says Joseph that is something else. That is why as we go around the room in house church accountability, I do not care a bit whether we can hear you say yes or no. You can mumble that in your whiskers, but I get irritated when it is your turn and you do not reply aloud JOSEPH. Then you can mumble your answer, I do not care, it is that JOSEPH or that MARY that I want to hear.
8. But I suspect, though I may be wrong, that when you mumble your name that is a time when accountability is still a game for you. Even if it is a serious game--it is still a game for you. The awe in the accountability in house church only comes after the final accountability that is, it trades on the final accountability. You see when some silly person in the order asks me if I have been faithful to the order, my first response is, "Who does he think he is? Why I can outdo him." You must trade on that final accountability and that is not out in the community, it is down here within your being.
9. And when the awe comes it is not some mumbled Joseph, it is JOSEPH. The Lord accepts no other noise, I believe. Then he does not even listen to your yes and no, for you see he knows before you ever mutter out what you mutter, that you are a forgiven man. Forgiveness means that when God looks at me he sees the glory of what he shaped. That is what forgiveness means. You and I had to invent the category of sin, not God, he did not invent it. When you and I look at ourselves, we see the crumminess and brokenness that we have to define as rebellion to God. God does not see that--he sees the glory of the unrepeatable Joseph that he made. He may take me to pieces tomorrow and rearrange me. But I mean, he made me! What he wants to hear is JOSEPH. The rest of that response is for man, the yes and no and no and yes. I am convinced more than ever before that accountability has to be on the level of the unique unrepeatable individual.
10. The triangular dynamic of relationships of our order is the individual, the family and the order. In house church each Sunday we celebrate the uniqueness of individuals in their birthdays/ we celebrate the family covenants in their anniversaries/ and at least once a year we celebrate the birthday of the order on July first. Yet this order celebration has somehow not been enough.

1. It became clear to me on the recent global trip as never before that one particular dynamic in the order has to be accountable to the other dynamics because it does not exist without those other dynamics. The glow in my face these days has to do with what your colleagues are doing overseas. Compared to what they were doing three months ago or a year ago it is fantastic. I mean those souls are moving on your behalf and on behalf of the church and the world. But I am convinced that that movement is only possible when the dynamic that they represent becomes accountable symbolically to the other dynamics of the order.

12. That was the purpose and the power of our trip, though we did not see it fully until after the trip. When we visited the religious houses overseas, on behalf of the other dynamics of the order we held them accountable for their mission; we held them accountable for the care of the movement; we held them accountable for the interior life of the order; and we held them accountable for their financial self-determination. That was important--but who cares? We held them symbolically accountable on behalf of the other religious houses of the world, and the base centrum with its interior complex. That was the part which was the important glue relative to the historical secular-religious order. The symbolism of the other dynamics of the order is that without which these dynamics around the globe do not exist.

13. Similarly, we will hold the religious houses of North America accountable before the dynamics of the religious houses in the other continents of the world and before the base centrum. The question of accountability will be asked by calling the dynamical name of the house which is the name of the city. But in order that we grasp that it is for the whole house, the response will be the dynamical name and the number of souls in the house and then the answer yes and no, or no and yes. In this way we will recognize the fact that the accountability is for the total house. And this accounting is the reality because it is symbolic.

...Joseph Mathews