

EFFULGENCE AND THE NEW RELIGIOUS MODE

I want to go back to the spiritual realm. I've said many times that I think the most creative thing we have ever done towards the dramaturgical is the chart of the Other World. The most profoundly creative thing we have ever done - of course related to it and without which the Other World Charts could never have been done - is the New Religious Mode Charts.

The time of neither of these has come, except they have come for us. But this is the crux of what our next step in the broad sense would be. Granted, our intellectual methods and our social methods - that we together have forged with the pain of our blood - are tremendous. And now I suppose most of us are bathed in the astounding power that the social methods in particular have. But they are not, in my opinion, to be compared with the New Religious Mode. I have become more clear of that as I have tried to gear into the New Religious Mode.

The dynamics of awakening, engagement and effulgence are the missional counterpart of the New Religious Mode, which was built on the categories knowing, doing and being - not only up and down but horizontally and then diagonally from all four sets of diagonals. Probably the greatest lectures we ever built together were the ones in the summer in which we dealt with the New Religious Mode. The following summer, when we were going to try to work out the interior dynamics of those, we never quite did it. Now we had some great lectures, but we never quite arrived. That job is still to be done. I suppose we would all be overwhelmed if we opened the archives and all the unfinished work would suddenly float out. I would be something more frightening than Pandora's box.

Looking at these concentric circles (see attached), you see awakening and engagement on the outer circle, and then the emptiness of the middle box of the New Religious Mode (which is pure being) is where effulgence is. Therefore, effulgence is nothing but the intensification of awakening and engagement. Then you try to get hold of what intensification means. I move in to the religious mode charts and have obedience fully on the side with engagement and meditation fully on the side of awakening. Then awakening and engagement are bridged by poverty at the north and prayer at the south.

Now, when you move in, in your concentric circles to the next (third) level of intensification, you are coming up slowly upon "raw-being" categories where you deal with transrational awakening (knowing), transrational engagement (which is cruciformity) and with contemplation and with chastity. And the Other is in the middle, which then throws one into the nothingness of being which is the joy unspeakable and full of glory, which is the hope beyond hope, which is participating in the eternality of God...all beyond description. Anyway, the basic categories that have to be chiseled out are the ones on contemplation, chastity, intensified knowing and intensified doing (cruciformity).

I begin with contemplation. This is not some exercise that you go aside and do, like you go aside and contemplate; it is a state of being. I don't know whether you are aware of it or not, but at this moment I am in that state. Though to say it out loud relatively dissipates the state, so suddenly I am not.

Now, this is neither here nor there because it is not the state of being that is important. It is the state of being in which you become intensely aware of the eternal mystery in the given overagainstness. Jesus may not have known about the trinitarian formula, but he would have been aware - in the storm and in the blazing sun and in the sunrise and in the rain, in his brothers and his sisters, and in all creatures of this world - of the presence of that strange mystery that he, in the most irrational manner, referred to as his father, and he meant it.

The North Shore Cadre was no more prepared to take that global trip of a few years ago than some two year old child, because they hadn't the slightest idea of how matter was spun in the spirit. That was what the trip was all about. I don't mean they didn't experience that, but it wasn't until it was all over that they began to grasp what it was that happened, and that this was the reality that you didn't have to go to China or India to understand, but was the most at-handedness of all realities. This has to do with a posture of care. If you don't know what I am talking about now (and I do not mean with your mind) then you will never know what it means to care, in the sense that you would throw your life down the drain, down the sewer of history, in Maliwada. I do not mean for one year or two years; I mean for all of the days of your life.

And Maliwada is here. I was overwhelmed with the work you have done the past weeks; all of it was but for the serving of suffering humanity. And so it makes it quite secondary, in one sense, whether you brouth in 48 or 52 or 60 or 130 thousand dollars. This which I am describing is what it means basically to love God, and without that you cannot care. I am very clear these days that to love God and to love your neighbor are inseparable.

The second thing is chastity. Oh, this is hard to come by. It has to do with the awareness, not of the final mystery, but of ultimate loyalty. This has to do, in a way, with what Josiah Royce spent his whole philosophical years reflecting upon. Jonathan Edwards understood this, too. This has to do with the fact that ultimately loyalty can only be a reality when the loyalty is to the ultimate - just period. You talk about being loyal to your children, loyal to this, loyal to that - all you are confessing is your sin. Nothing can command ultimate loyalty save the final mystery that is beyond all and every capacity of yours to manipulate or to blackmail or in any way what-so-ever to manifest selfishness. "Self-less-ness" is not developed; it is an incredible gift of getting your loyalty sorted out in life. This has to do, of course, with your vocation, because this is not loyalty with your mind; it is loyalty of your being, of your life. It is the key to calling, and in this sense all men are called to God. This is what it means to participate in the "hour of God." Isn't it funny that you walk around and around to try to get said what effulgence is, what the experience of undefinable being is.

The next one is intensified knowing; it is the heavenly wisdom that cometh down from above. It is the Christ event absolutely having penetrated every fiber of your being. You have probably noticed that once your mind departs from this, which is the one and only true focus of the mind, a clouding of reason takes place. Use this as a primitive illustration: when one gets caught up in "fillyism" or the "good lifeism" or the "have-to-be-somebody-ism" or "my-children-ism", a cloud immediately overtakes their reason and capacity. Of course, this becomes flagrantly obvious when one dares to take pen and to justify his posture,

but it is there whether that extreme is taken or not. How clear this is for one in development, for the day you are in the field and you have got to win because you haven't won already, your capacity to see through something begins to be dulled. Whether this happens in me or you or the one sitting next to you, it is the same process. This is the key to the intellectual factor as over against the emotional factor of creativity. The sheer key to the emotional factor is guts; without guts there is no creativity. The intellectual factor is seeing through, and to see through is to have the one simple truth that is all truth in one - your life cannot possibly be any more significant than it is at this exact second. That is to see through. This is for me the key to creativity as chastity is the creed of courage. This is what it means to defend the honor of God. I didn't put that right. Some way or another defending the honor of God has to do with my daring to be intensified knowing. (These are awkward terms.) In every situation, not just thinking but being. I think of that Burton guy. He saw through with his being and that is why he died in "Becket."

The last one is intensified doing. I need not belabor this. It is crucifixion. I am very, very sorry that most of my life I thought crucifixion was being nailed to a cross, or being a missionary in Maliwada and getting my throat slit. Or, I thought it was innocent suffering. No, no. Crucifixion is living your life in the service of God. You have got nothing to do with whether or not it goes away while you're turning over in an automobile, or whether it goes away at 92 when your heart just stops, or whether you end up in an electric chair. It is your whole life. So many things seem so moralistic to me, like laying down your life for others - my early training. But you see when you push that through that is exactly what it is.

The key to this is corporateness. This had come to me recently with the great push; I don't know if it is the key, but it is involved with it. There is no such thing as laying down your life for others alone. I told you of one of the great plays I saw in my life called, "The Crimson Road," when I was a very young man. In the concluding scene, thousands and thousands of people were on their way down the Crimson Road. This is the key. This is service of God, the love of God, the honor of God, the hour of God. I don't know how this sounds to you, but if someone should ask me now and I were going to level with him and I was going to take the time to try to communicate what it means to really live, I would go around this smaller circle and then I would go around this second one, in order to get to this, which is simple in a way - awakening and engagement.

Some people say they don't know what we are about; that's not true. The next time you have to make one of those god-awful calls and you try to find six reasons why you shouldn't, I recommend to you that you think on these things, for that is what you're finally all about. That will enable you to come in with your head up at the end of the week no matter how cold your soul is with despair. And on Monday morning, symbolically speaking, again with the shoulders back, march forth again...and then the next week and then the next week and then the next week, until... You remember that poem "The Last Leaf." One morning the old man with his cane was not on the hill. And so is the fate of us all. But until that hour, we have tomorrow; we have many moons from now. So we march, with those who have marched before and will march after, on the Crimson Road. Think on these things to get ready for tomorrow so that we are not caught, when the moment comes, with our lamps empty of oil.