

Jesus, Be The Centre: Michael Frye (1999)¹

Visualisation: Theodirectional 2 (God's son)

Analysis: This song implicitly denies the need for the father & spirit, although not explicitly denying the distinct persons of the father & spirit. Hence, soft unitarianism. In asking Jesus, it misdirects prayer. Also, in might be more sensible to see deity as asking *us* to let him be what we need—our energy, motivation, and base camp. For all its demerits, Graham Kendrick's *Do Not Strive* (1977) covered this idea—God asks, we assent, rather than us ask, God assents.

Proclaiming Jesus to be *the reason* that we *live*, implies that without him, suicide would be best option—no reason to live: have tigers & non-Christians no reason to live? Is Christianity-or-suicide a false dichotomy? I suggest that the reason why we live [mortally] is simply that we do, and lack sufficient reason to do otherwise. Ie, that we don't need a reason to live, simply a valid reason to die—altruistic suicide can be ethically justified in some situations.²

An obvious oversight is that *centre* is repeated in stanza 2. Using the threefold pattern of the stanzas, combining that with the status of the already is rather than request to be, one could have 9 elements, 3 for each Person. Eg, Yahweh is God, lord, & spirit; father, brother, & helper; destination (vision), way (path), & navigator (guide).

I feel that it is better to see Yahweh *as* these kind of things, rather than asking him to *be*[come] them, though one may defend the idea of asking him to continue to be such. Even so, him remaining our centre differs from him remaining our source—is he not the *non-optional* ultimate source of all life, whereas the *optional centrality* for ours?

When we sing *these sails*, should we flap our arms, so deity knows what we mean? Poetical expression does not always fit in well, but I like the potential of this threefold song. However, it requires substantial juggling to get 9 elements (12, counting the chorus) to rightly reflect the biblical emphases of the trinity—stanza 3 is already fine, if Jesusism is rightly replaced. Or stanza 1 for the father, 2 for the son, and 3 for the spirit.

Suggestions: Throughout replace *Jesus*, **by** *Yahweh* as God's threefold name, or simply in the chorus, and take the three stanzas (in line with the threeness in the chorus) to in turn relate to him as father, brother, and helper (as so-called economic trinity).

Chorus: Replace *be the*, **by** *you're the* (x3); *these*, **by** *my*; *live*, **by** *love*.

BAG	A	B	C	D	E	F	G ^{1,2}	H ^{1,2}	I	J ^{1,2,3}	K	L	M	Total	Grade
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	12	-	-	-	-	28	E

¹ www.worshipsonline.com/songs/songdetails/be-the-centre

² Eg a captured spy whose interrogation will expose their people to untold destruction. See John White's *Masks Of Melancholy*. Suicide can be due to mental imbalance; it can be to protect others, or sadly the project of other. The primary idea that it is always eternally damns because unforgivable (unlike normal murder), is based around the secondary ideas that 1# there is no one-off forgiveness that covers sins both before & after that act, that 2# only repentance of each individual sin obtains forgiveness of each particular sin, and that 3# suicide—as ones final act—prevents one from the act of repentance. If these secondary ideas are correct, then after a totally forgiven life one could be eternally damned for ones final sin. Besides raising the subject of forgiveness, it also raises the issue of whether God determines when we die or leaves it to chance & nature. If there is a time set by God, did suicide defeat his timing, or if it was his timing was suicide also his design?

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A = Mixed Themes (-4); B = Incompleteness (-4); C = Archaism (-8);

D = Blessing God (-4); E = Buddy or Boyfriend (-4); F = Polytheism (-8); G = Voxdeism: Soft (-24), Hard (-48);

H = Unitarianism: Soft (-60), Hard (-72); I = Misdirection (-12); J = Misvisualisation: Soft (-12), Mid (-24),

Hard (-36); K = Boasting (-8); L = Decontextualising (-8); M = Hermit Harakiri (-12)