

The Servant King: Graham Kendrick (1983)¹

Visualisation: Polydirectional

Analysis: Though it's good to feature the deity & humility of Jesus (glory veiled), stanza 1 sings to a baby Jesus. Besides goo gahism, the idea of praying to someone who wears Pampers undermines true faith and evangelism. God's eternal son became a human embryo and as a man died, but he is no more infant than still on the cross or in the tomb. Decontextualisation

It's good to reflect on Mk.10:45, to encourage each other to be slaves to each other under Christ, and there is something in the ideas of daily (ongoing) worship as fellowship offering. But saying that the servant king asks us to worship the servant king is soft misvisualisation—say rather that he asks us to worship *him*, not a third party *servant king*. Getting worse, it's fragmented prayer by polydirectionalism: a bad practice downgrading prayer. Hard misvisualisation

By singing the chorus without clear hint of father or spirit—“[Jesus] our god”—we fall into unitarianism on top of polytheism. Jesus as our servant, not as the father's, also fails in 'vertical' relationship.

It is good to reflect on his redemption of us corporately & individually (that we might live/my heavy load), but I think it's wrong to picture a clash of wills. The two-wills idea—the weaker rejecting the cross; the stronger accepting the cross—has had some hefty church support, though I've moved to a monothelite Christology and would exegete accordingly.² I'd wish to suppress the complication of dythelitism, though adherents might commend its assertion and admittedly we often say that we are in two minds (instead of one divided) without bother about complication.

It badly overrides our lord's humanity (hands that flung stars into space): as co-creator God's son—who became Jesus—had no hands. Anthropomorphism is fine, but those 'divine hands' (nor 'wings') didn't transfer to the babe.³

In short, it's high on servanthood but short on decent Christology, though having a concealed hint of subordinationism to an undeclared third party—not my will, but yours.

Suggestions: From heaven he came—helpless babe / Entered our world, his glory veiled / Not to be served but to serve / And gave his life that we might live // He is the lord, as servant king / He calls us now to follow him / To yield our lives, every day an offering / Of worship to, (himself/Yahweh) the king // There in the garden of tears / My heavy load he chose to bear / His heart with sorrow was torn / Yet “as you will, I will” he said // Come see his hands and his feet / The scars that speak of sacrifice / He who flung stars into space / To cruel nails surrendered // Oh let us learn now to serve / And in our lives enthrone him / Each other's needs to prefer / It will be Christ we're serving.

BAG: F/H2/J3/L = -10-70-25-10 = -15 (U4)

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Key: **A** = Mixed Themes (-5); **B** = Incompletism (-5); **C** = Archaism (-10); **D** = Blessing God (-5); **E** = Buddy or Boyfriend (-5); **F** = Polytheism (-10); **G** = Voxdeism: Soft (-25), Hard (-50); **H** = Unitarianism: Soft (-65), Hard (-70); Hyper (-75); **I** = Misdirection (-15); **J** = Misvisualisation: Soft (-15), Medium (-20), Hard (-25), Hyper (-30); **K** = Boasting (-10); **L** = Decontextualising (-10); **M** = Hermit Harakiri (-15)

¹ www.higherpraise.com/lyrics/love/love853024.htm

² Subordinationism, wrong about ontology & right about function (Grudem's Systematic Theology, 1994:245), is OK in this song. Though on a different note, just possibly one might think that the 'your will' is the will of those he came to serve.

On translation (Lk.22:42), we may wonder whether Jesus exercised two wills, a human will (opposed to anguish) being overruled by a higher divine will, or whether translation should exhibit the two meanings of the Greek: ie I *will* your will (*thelō*), even if it's not what I *wish* (*thelō*). Is it not the same as us 1# presenting our requests to God yet 2# affixing our requests with “if it be your will”?

This issue has had much cover in the church. The First Council of Chalcedon (451) preferred the hypostatic union idea to monophysitism: ie the idea that Jesus had a divine & a human nature combined rather than only one (whether divine or human) nature. Not all were convinced, and some at least wished fellow Christians to at least tolerate the idea that Jesus had one, undivided, will: dubbed *monothelitism*. The Third Council of Constantinople (680–1) rejected this plea and adopted dyothelic Christology. It may still be argued that the incarnation was the divine nature & will depotentiated to the level of human nature & will, howbeit not of Adam's line: Jesus was the Second Adam, the New Start. This latter position is thus that there are two levels, not two wills: ie the eternal son's will also exists at a human level. the sun's ray in a toolshed is severely limited but still true sunlight.

³ Poetical licence might argue that it's just a way of saying, in less & colourful words, that the co-creator who became the crucified man, voluntarily incorporated creaturely pain into his being.