

Chronicles of Diversity

Your leadership weekly



1970's operating concentrating table

Beyond the gold

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Fox Sports airs a program called "Beyond the Glory" which portrays the lives of various famous athletes as they struggle with wealth, fame, and personal glory. While I have only watched brief portions of some of these episodes, I doubt any of the athletes have said, "I love this sport so much, I am going to lead my team to the championship, and do it all for no monetary compensation."

This athlete probably would be quickly cut from the team, not because of their athletic abilities, but because they would have been deemed crazy. No one would work that hard for just the satisfaction of well done praise.

How about you, would you do your job with any kind of gusto if you knew you might never be paid your weekly pittance? Of course some homemakers do this, but someone in the family must have a "real job."

The whole thing seems very bizarre to us, to choose your life's work without the sight of any compensation. But through out history, a few men and women have moved beyond the thought of earthly gold, to give their lives in service to the God who created them and all the universe.

This is not a summary of their achievements, but rather a short discussion of how they might have made the transition beyond the gold, and how you might participate in such a wild concept. A transition that some might deem, "From the normal to the crazy." Others however, might say they have moved from the "crazy to the fully functional."

Do you have any experience with gold? I'm not talking about money, but real gold, the precious metal. Through out history, until very recently, it was the basis for all commerce, all wealth. Armies and workers were hired, conquest and commerce took place, on the basis of gold.

One could argue that the super athletes want their multimillion dollar contracts because they only get it in paper money, or more appropriately electronic bits of information, not in real gold. Gold has

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mass, value, and weight, and for fallen man, an intrinsic beauty. You also must perform some actual work to protect it from others.

One of the fruiting branches of the Protestant Reformation that was quickly pruned out of productiveness by church leaders was the concept of the Priesthood of All Believers. Only in Arminianism with its emphasis on works contributing to salvation did the concept find any lasting branch. However, again in these sects and denominations, the distinction between the itinerate called and the laity again quickly limited the total productiveness of the entire church.

Paul, in his epistles, speaks about this unwillingness of Christians to truly follow Christ with their lives. This is especially true in 1 Corinthians where he spends much time teaching “babes” instead of mature believers. In 1 Corinthians 3:9-15 he specifically admonishes the church to build with gold and silver instead of perishable commodities.

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

In our politically correct society, with its God of perishable glory and wealth, without form or substance, is it any wonder that these passages are either symbolized or glossed over to promote self satisfied smugness. After all who has any gold, silver, or precious stones except in a few pieces of jewelry. We have our investments ultimately in stocks, bonds, and real estate. Investments that we can't take with us into eternity, and are subject to market and many times professional manipulation.

Last Thursday I met with my securities lawyer who I worked with back when I was trying to establish my gold mining equipment company. As I shared with him the desire to use these assets to promote the development of the Wonder Springs ministry, he cut me off and explained the nature of how business investments actually worked. He then proceeded to counsel me on how I could as we now say, “retire undefeated” in about a year. This definitely was a line of sight program without risk and complications.

Now his pronouncements were excellent in the way the world of investments work, but that was not why I went to see him. The problem is that for most of my working life I have not done it that way, much of the time not by my choice. However, if that is the case, since I have gotten this far by God's grace alone, why should I now change things.

These are the facts, by the nature of Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross and His subsequent resurrection, which we celebrated on Resurrection (Easter?) Sunday last, I am by His grace, through faith, justified as undefeated. Also, since I have found no reference anywhere in my Bible to retirement as we define it today, this concept does not interest me either. In fact, most people with their secure jobs would consider me by their definition, semi-retired.

So it all comes down to developing an asset for ministry by God's grace, through faith. It is really no different than traditional giving today, except there may be a tangible asset (gold, silver, precious stones) as a natural reward that can only be seen by faith, not by sight. Would anyone dare invest in a gold mining start up company that will not publish estimated financial projections and similar hype on how much money can be made?

If these words by Paul, in the inerrant word of God are true, then the return, should be based upon the Godly work, these assets are put to, and not how much filthy lucre, or even gold they may return. So this is the premise, I will move ahead along this line, seeking others who would like to move at least a portion of their worldly assets beyond the gold.

These new financial assets will be initially invested in finishing the development of the company, which will take limited capital, and for the ministry establishing what I now call “Acts Communities.” These are houses with a large number of bed rooms, for people to in a community sense become more deeply involved (or committed) to what is happening in the church. Guests may spend, the night, a

week, or a month or so, as the transition time from one aspect of God's grace in their lives, to another. I know of at least three such facilities that I believe that God could use starting immediately, if funds were available, one in Seattle, one in Eastern Washington, and one in the Chilcotin region of British Columbia. To some extent they would function like L'Abri founded by Francis Schaeffer, but they would be generally for residence of shorter durations and focus on ministry and missions more than study.

The main reason I went to see my lawyer was to discuss various organizational structures for this faith based enterprise. One of his very astute observations concerned waiting to see what would happen with the pending federal legislation to eliminate the taxation of corporate dividends. It was his belief that if corporate dividends were no longer taxed, the very nature of business in this country would change dramatically for the better. This included both large and small enterprise. Business could then be run for the betterment of the stockholder owners instead of tax sheltering, avoidance, and questionable accounting practices. Much of these contributed to our current economic situation.

So beyond the gold, this faith enterprise will be called Justin - Grace Ltd. It will be a Washington State for profit corporation, not waiting to see what the government will do. As initially configured, Wonder Springs will own 90% of the outstanding shares, I will own 10%. This 10% share is to some extent to cover the money and time I have invested, but also so investors will know that I have a stake in Justin - Grace's success.

Wonder Springs will be willing at this time to sell some of its stock either directly or indirectly to begin to obtain these Acts Communities. This will be the majority of the stock available for purchase. Funds needed by Justin - Grace for operations at this time is pretty much working capital, for the completion of engineering, construction, and testing of this improved design of equipment which was operated in the 1970's.

While much of this equipment is designed for precious metals mining, due to current anti-mining regulations in this country, it can also be used domestically for mine and hazardous waste clean up and land restoration projects. The current principle development will be to redesign an air concentrating table. The process uses air instead of water eliminating all water pollution potential. This is linked with a high intensity magnetic separation device, and a proprietary environmentally sound gold refining process. Each of these can stand alone as required, as potential profit centers.

Outside the United States, mining ventures are not so restricted and the potential application of environmentally friendly, inexpensive equipment is almost unlimited. It could also provide a tremendous opportunity for missions development.

Down the narrow track, Justin - Grace may develop a solvent extraction and drying technology either for the chemical process industry, or waste clean up problems. I worked as a process engineer at a Boeing subsidiary for most of my tenure there, and the patents are now expired and in certain niches it still has tremendous potential.

All this is in a business plan still valid, but some years out of date, buried somewhere on this computer's hard drive, or on another, along with some pictures of the air tables in operation in the 1970's which we are upgrading significantly.

So will this beyond the gold enterprise opportunity ever amount to anything? During the years I actively worked on it I became aware of the words of the prophet Haggai 2:6-9

"For thus says the LORD of hosts: "Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory," says the LORD of hosts. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine," says the LORD of hosts. "The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former," says the LORD of hosts. "And in this place I will give peace," says the LORD of hosts."

I feel that we are now approaching these days spoken by the prophet. Does this Justin - Grace enterprise play any limited role in this work of God? Only by grace through faith will we ever be able to move beyond the gold into the glory of that latter temple and its peace. As with Paul's passage, it can be spiritualized and made symbolic, but is that interpretation the context that God will actually perform His wonders, or would it be wise for the prudent to again begin to make some of these investments beyond the sight of this world, beyond the gold. But this as every other decision made in this world is based to some degree on individual choice. That choice is now yours.

Seeds for Prayer

Space does not allow to illustrate just how all this seems to be coming together over the past week. The goal which has been reinforced in me during this time is the opportunity to do God's work by some means other than donation giving. In a way it is like Paul's tent making endeavor just kicked up a notch for another time.

I hope to again go and look at a former convent this week for the first potential Acts Community. I looked at it before I had my operation and it is still on the market. Acts as a New Testament book begins with Christ's ascension, includes Pentecost and Peter's famous gospel sermon. It also includes believers sharing everything in common, Saul's conversion to Paul, and taking the gospel to the known world. All this stems from interaction of God's people functioning as a community, the church.

Please intercede that as God provides that these visions may become reality.

This Wednesday I am officially healed from my open heart surgery. According to what I have been able to find out, this means that the bones they cut and spread in my chest are by definition healed. But since I have had really no upper body exercise to allow this healing to take place in over two months and there may be some scar tissue, I do require some rehabilitation of those muscles as well as continued improvement in my cardiovascular conditioning.