



# Chronicles of Diversity

31 August 2005; Volume 7, Number 31

Chronicles of Diversity  
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*Jerry Bannon  
Wonder Springs  
7950 Seward Park Ave. S.  
Seattle, Washington USA  
98118*

*phone: 206.660.0697  
email:*

*bannon@createleaders.org or  
chronicles@createleaders.org*

*Please forward prayer requests  
to: prayer@createleaders.org*

*Washington State Charity  
Number: 7529*

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## Stupendous Change

Katrina brings catastrophic changes to much of America.

*Hurricane aftermath, hundreds dead, property damage runs well into the hundreds of billions of dollars.*

After Katrina many people have lost everything and no amount of governmental help will ever restore their shattered lives.

So states some of the headlines you can read today and over the next week or so as the United States of America comes to grips, when the final numbers are all tallied, with the greatest disaster in our history.

As I was preparing this new series on change, I had no idea that I would write such lead headlines to begin this new Chronicles of Diversity series. Truthfully, it is rather scary, or humbling, or actually I don't quite have the words to describe the feeling. This coming from someone of Irish decent that hasn't quite been the same, since

he leaned back and kissed the famous stone at Blarney Castle..

Human beings don't handle change very well. Over my last trip to Eastern Washington and Montana which lasted ten nights I slept in four different beds, and none of them for more than two consecutive nights. Some nights I slept blissfully for up to nine hours, others maybe no more than four. Of the over 2000 miles I drove all of it was through lands shaped through the ice age and the great floods that followed.

Instead of driving back to Seattle, I could have had to go back to New Orleans, Mobile,



or even Nashville, I got off easy. But to put it all in context I have heard more than one person say since I returned something to the effect that they would rather live with the potential for earthquakes rather than weather problems. I have lived here through several minor earthquakes and the last 5.8, a few years ago, was more than enough for me. When it comes to natural disasters, I would like to take a pass, all the way around.

It's probably still too soon for some evangelical Christian leaders to state that Katrina was a precursor of God's judgement on America for her sins, but when the Katrina news cycle slows and the reporters return to New York from their assignments, there will be time for some such sound bite discussions.

This does lead to an interesting problem for contemplation, "Is the way we deal with change, at least somewhat, a result of our western culture?" And if that be true, to whom can we fix the blame?

As I said, I have been working on this problem before Katrina passed over Florida, so I do have some thoughts and keeping with my Blarney stone heritage I shall share them with you my readers.

Over the last decade or so there has been a movement within evangelicalism to be more ecumenical with our Roman Catholic church relatives. This really has nothing to do with stupendous change per se, except that for the most part today there really is no theological differences between most so called Protestant dogma and that of the Roman Church. Modern evangelical dogma is pretty much Catholic doctrine from the Council of Trent, without the class, the tradition, or any systematic theology.

On the way to church Sunday, I passed by a neighboring Lutheran church. On the reader board is some message speaking to the innocence of children. I could not help but muse on how Martin Luther would react should he return to find such statements on the reader boards of churches bearing his name.

Traditional Protestant theology must begin with the Total Depravity of all humanity, and lead

through a gospel that proclaims His propitiatory, substitutionary sacrifice on the cross for my personal sins, and His resurrection from the dead for my justification before God the Father. That is the gospel. Here true Christians must stand, for we can not do otherwise. That is the true definition of the Evangel.

From there you can move to your relationship with Jesus, various good works and other things, but we should understand it is the nature of all humanity to major on the minors, and as a consequence lose focus on the essential, for the superfluous, even the vulgar and the silly. By majoring on the mundane stuff of fluff, we feel more in control of our world. It is as simple as that. Therefore, evangelicalism has become a religion of the world, essentially indistinguishable from other worldly religions except in pietistic emphasis.

When I was in my last quarter as an undergraduate in college I wrote a term paper for a philosophy course entitled. "Science and Religion, A Problem Even a First Grader can Understand." In that satirical masterpiece I concluded that "Science was what my father used when he told me to eat my vegetables. Religion is what I used when I explained to him why I would not eat my veggies."

Put into a historical context of the development of our dominant western culture, there is way more truth to that statement than I could understand at the time.

Grossly simplifying what has taken place in western culture in the last 300 years or so, the catholic universal church has followed in lock step with the philosophy of the world as it developed changed from the context of a supernatural God who controls all things, into a paradigm where man can understand the workings of God, into our modern or postmodern view, that God does not exist except for the weak and the unenlightened.

Along the way natural philosophy was redefined as science and as a consequence of trying to make nature into a god we can understand, we have systemically eliminated from science and our religion all doctrines that we cannot control with our rationality. Stupendous change defined as chaos does not exist, because it is not logical. Enter in Darwin, evolution, geological uniformity, the Big Bang, the primordial swamp.

Hence, any significant change that takes place in this world in a short period of time is defined as catastrophic. This is true essentially because we have forfeited a God designed personal eternal future, for a human designed billion year history. All significant change is catastrophic not necessarily because it is bad, it is bad because we can not understand its total consequences. Enter in Katrina.

The Bible however, is a book about stupendous change in the world we live, brought about or allowed by the Creator of the universe Jesus Christ, for God's glory alone. In the beginning it kicks off with nothing becoming something. Over its pages it describes a young earth undergoing almost continual stupendous natural and spiritual change. These changes center on the cross of Calvary and the resurrection, discuss how the known world was changed by the true gospel in a short period of time, and concludes with more stupendous change at the end of the age.

However, instead of being the agent for the concept of stupendous change in the world wrought by the adoption of God of human sinful children by the true Evangel, the church of all streams and her ministries, has too often become the agent of religious relics, indulgences, and worldly kitsch.

What is needed in the church is not a revival of the spirit, nor is it a reformation of doctrine. What is needed in the church is the awakening of the truth of stupendous change in the Bible and in the world. Change that we cannot put in a box or a cage, "Be a good catastrophic change, because my science, metaphysics, and systematic theology require you to be a docile kitty." Only when the church embraces change as a constant, and stupendous change as beyond the miraculous, can we see the Lion of Judah at work within the church and within society.

Let me illustrate with an example from our understanding of catastrophic science. I inherited a small piece of property on the shores of modern Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River behind Grand Coulee Dam. The lake is now about 280 feet deep at the property right now. When the area was part of Glacial Lake

Columbia, the tongue of the glacier that blocked the flow of the river and forced it through the Grand Coulee, could double the depth at my property. The cliffs behind the property rise about another thousand feet.

When the ice dams in Idaho that held back Glacial Lake Missoula broke, stupendous floods rushed through the Spokane area and created the scablands of Eastern Washington and affected the whole geology of the region far out into the Pacific Ocean. These short term floods would come within 150 vertical feet of over topping those cliffs behind the property and the water for some period of time would flow up and over the canyons that now exist. Local geologists have so far numbered at least 70 varves or layers of sediment that indicate that perhaps this many flood events took place.

This is were the true descriptive science ends and the metaphysics religion of how you handle change begins.

The question is how long did it take these varves to be layered in place? Several thousand years is now what most traditional geologist would predict. But if your event is stupendous enough it could have taken place on seventy different days separated by some period of time, or over seventy total hours. No one was there to record a record.

However, we are no longer dealing with science, but religious speculation about science, and everyone who has a mouth, or a computer is free to speculate to where the true truth of science lies, and there is no way that these debates or arguments do anything but make the debater feel more justified in his or her own position. The better your debates the bigger your following, the more books you can write and sell to justify your self righteousness. Who knows, someday you might even get to appear on Fox News' The O'Reilly Factor, or Hannity and Colmes, in place of some evangelical stalwarts.

There is no chapter in the book of Genesis that even touches on an ice age after the Biblical flood, but descriptive science does tell us that it was the last truly major geological event to take place on planet earth. Nor does the bible truly give us any details on how God made the whole flood thing come about, nor does it even state how God created the heavens and the earth, or how He separated

the firmament from the waters the first time in the creation account. All He says is that all of creation was completed as good in six literal days. Even though our present literal definition of days was undefined until the fourth day.

All our rationality is not stupendous enough to begin to grasp any of these events, but we claim to live in a natural rational world where we have been taught to believe these are important questions and that we are to seek their answers with zeal. Is this really a truth that we should or must pursue? In the balance are we playing religion while ignoring absolute truth.

The effects of Hurricane Katrina are going to have consequences in this country and around the world for a very long time. These changes will affect regions far beyond the Gulf coast and the cities of New Orleans and Mobile. The fundamental truth of stupendous change is that our intellectual infrastructure of rationality may not provide us the security we need to function successfully in a world where stupendous change is more real than we have had to deal with for several hundred years.

In our rational sense people seek religion to help them through this time of turmoil. Religion by definition is our point of contact with the reality or the illusions beyond our personal understanding. True Evangelical Christianity is the only stability in that storm. It has been proven and is being proven in all the situations that stupendous change may present. However, the evangelicalism of America, the Christianity of much of the world, along with a worldly religion it nurtures, will one day find its demise in the words written on a wall in Babylon few thousand years ago in a time of God's stupendous change:

“And this is the inscription that was written:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL,  
UPHARSIN.

This is the interpretation of each word.  
MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; PERES the singular of 'And Pharsin' : Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.” Daniel 5:25-28

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On Your Head; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/onyourhead6295.pdf>

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