

Chronicles of Diversity



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So where have you invested your wealth?

The last two weeks I have had the opportunity to visit both the Seattle Recreational Vehicle and the Home Show. Frankly, I was amazed at the number of ways, in each consumption festival, to become separated from vast sums of money.

Somehow entering the RV show, I was asked how much I thought the motor home right in front of the entrance cost. Not looking at the price on the windshield, I guessed \$300,000. I was wrong on the low end, by a paltry hundred thousand. Four hundred grand for a fancy bus, I am amazed.

At the Home Show I saw a friend that I hadn't seen for many years. When she asked what I thought of the show, I responded, "I think Americans have way too much wealth to live responsibly."

Sure, there were probably 20 contractors willing to put vinyl siding on your castle, but there were probably just as many, willing to cover your kitchen counter tops with massive pieces of granite imported from remote regions of the world.

This has got me to thinking, where do the necessity things end, where does selfish consumerism take place, and does any of this stuff really matter? The only thing I have come up with is none of this enterprise has any basis in eternity.

I'm sure most of the contacts which emerge into business sales, are somehow justified by increased pleasure, and in some, their addition to the value of most American's only significant investment, their home. But if you really look seriously at home investments, construction prices are market driven commodities. The real difference between a million dollar home in Bellevue, and a million dollar home in rural America, is in the so called appreciation in the land on which the structure stands.

In Bellevue, the lot will be measured in square feet, in rural America, it will be measured in acres. But no matter where you choose to nest, or roam, the question before us is still what are your investments in eternity?

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Everyone on this earth has a ticket for eternity. The only question is into which section of eternity does your death trail head. Most people think they will go to heaven, in fact they don't know many people who won't.

"Hell? I don't believe in Hell? And if I did it would be populated by the bad people I see on TV. Besides I live a more benevolent life than those Evangelical Christians I know. And how 'bout that George dude, I can't stand him, he thinks he has something I don't have."

Anyone who has read one of these columns knows that to go to heaven and not to hell, it really makes little difference your religious bigotry. What really matters is if you accept the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ to adopt you into His family, the family of God. You accomplish by faith alone, not in your works and your desire to be an apostle, or the President.

However, you still live in a world in which you have to deal with all kinds of stuff. There is natural stuff, like what you can buy at the Home Show, RV Show, Nordstroms, or Wally World. There is also family stuff, religious stuff, spiritual stuff, and many more that we shall cover as we work our way through Solomon's Eight Keys to Successful Enterprise Diversity. But how can you tell in this world if you are investing your time and resources in the stuff of this world, or in eternal investments?

It's not, "Show me the money!" it's, "Show me the Love!!"

Most people on this earth, I think want to be loving people. But that does not mean that the love they show is anything more than common grace. Common grace love is available to all people as a demonstration that there truly is a God. The only way to know if you have or can move beyond this common love is for you to determine the extent you can love the unlovable.

Sister Teresa, I never met, but how do you handle the outcasts of the world? Are you able to show them love when called upon, or do you flee to the security of your apostolic office. How about some local examples of outcasts that you don't normally consider the down trodden. How about the president, those liberals, those conservatives, your pastor, your boss, and all those jerks we all have to deal with on a daily basis.

Those of us in this religious teaching genre, when teaching Galatians 5:22-23, (*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*) state the fruit of the Spirit is love. Notice the text doesn't say fruits, it says fruit in the singular. The other following adjectives are really descriptions of love, or the fruit of the love of the Spirit. Put another way, you can only demonstrate the other fruits if the Holy Spirit is working His love, for you and others, through you.

Moving this from abstract teaching to a practical application, I will have to thank a couple of our first generation church planters who went to Russia. Walt Cesmat, was the first person I recall using the concept of "just loving people." This concept was probably somewhat responsible for beginning these Chronicles almost seven years ago. A couple of years ago on the missions trip to Bemidji, Minnesota, Wade Freshour, after a time of prayer would say, "Well, let's go out and just love on some people."

Let's face it, God has created, for His glory, unlovable people which are impossible to love naturally, so in order for us to show them love, it has to be of God. There are also times when even the people we naturally love dearly, are also unlovable, but again we know it is always their fault. But if we determine to just love on them regardless, it is amazing what God's love will do working through us. It might even convict us eventually that the fault might have been in us, instead of them. (As impossible as that might seem at the onset.) But no matter, through God's love this important injustice quickly fades into a temporal memory.

I was able to share this love on people concept to a group a short while ago. After the meeting broke up, as usual in these situations, I was accosted by the last person in the room I wanted to talk with. In such circumstances, I find it truly amazing the disconnect between our thoughts and our words. It has to be a miracle to be so nice and loving to such a jerk. This then becomes a powerful personal witness of God's love for me. Who is the jerk and who really is the jerk, Hum?

So go out and just love on some person who you would normally consider unlovable. Soon you will learn every time, what is impossible with man is not all that difficult with God.

The demonstration of love is the prime example of eternity in this world. But because this part of the series has to do with economics, do your actions follow your love? Or do your actions lead you to the Home and RV show with the distinct desire to invest your capital in something only for yourself.

My reason for going to the RV Show and the Home Show had to do with stuff, but in the complete context it had to do with getting rid of stuff, or simplifying my stuff warehouse, not acquiring more stuff. I don't have to go to such events to justify my purchases, I am perfectly able to do this on my own, thank you very much.

But in the bigger picture, these shows have also allowed us a focus on why should we make superficial temporal purchases that have no eternal value, when for that same amount of money we could invest in loving others with our affluence, and get a much more meaningful return, not only in eternity, but in this world.

I don't have the financial resources to buy that four hundred thousand dollar motor home, but just say we could all pool our resources and put together a mobile medical clinic to go somewhere and minister to others less fortunate. It easily could look, on the outside, like the one as you walk through the RV Show door, but instead of serving probably only two people, it could serve thousands. In that way we all share in the love and accomplish what an individual could never fulfill on their own, and we together invest in eternity and community.

The motor home is probably only an example, but how about buying a truck and maybe a bus and travel around the country stopping at various churches, teaching them how to love on people by serving them. The thing I have learned from this whole loving experience is that America is probably one of the least loving mission fields in the world. America is truly a love desert.

This is in large part due to us taking personal individuality to an art form way beyond practical application. That conversation I had after that meeting, really was about being lonely not love. "Maybe that nice Jerry guy, is loving enough to allow me to share some of my love that has no outlet, because most people think I'm a jerk, they won't give me a chance."

God created the church to be the loving on people center of the universe. Most of the time the church has functioned as the bastion of religious legalism. If we all put on our Sunday best and act like the frozen chosen we are, then the world will beat a path to our door and we will use their tithes and offerings to further the cloister, at home and abroad. Amen.

Only the church has access to supernatural, eternal love. That is manifest through individuals in certain ministerial ways, but there really is no social security in the church because most of the church's resources are focused on saving the lost, which is really God's job. We just like to take credit for it because it helps us justify our apostolic office. Where is the sacrificial manifestation of love? It doesn't exist. Show me your love and I will show you how short of Christ's witness you really are.

Many churches focus on the sacraments of baptism and communion. I dare venture, no church in America gets much beyond sprinkling or dunking, a wafer or cracker, wine or juice. Where is the true Baptism into the Body of Christ's sacrifice, beyond the use of Holy Water. And where is the Lord's Table where sinners can share in common the grace of God, and their kinship with God and each other. The events happen, but they truly are not sacraments of service, of love and family, but only tradition and liturgy. That is true no matter how deep into the behemoth of the church you venture.

Only the church in this world can share the love and never run out of love's energy. God is love, so eternity is nothing more than learning the infinite dimensions of love. The more we learn to love on people, together, the church becomes more effective in a true witness of heavenly eternity, to a world on the sure path to Hell.

Next week back to Solomon's Eight Principles of Enterprise Diversity (Applications of the eternal economics of love.)

Other articles in this Phylogenesis Series:

Liquidity with purpose; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/liquidty9-29-4.pdf>

Bottled Liquidity; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/bottleliquid10-6-4.pdf>

Fakin it; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/fakinit10-13-4.pdf>

Natural Energetics; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/natureenergy10-20-4.pdf>

Political Energetics; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/poleenergy10-27-4.pdf>

Reasoned Phylongeny; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/reasonphylodg11-3-4.pdf>

Sasquatches & Polar Bears; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/sasbears11-10-4.pdf>

51-48 gas; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/51-48gas11-17-4.pdf>

Show me; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/showme11-24-4.pdf>

A cheap plot; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/acheapplot12-1-4.pdf>

Cheesy Cows; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/chessycows12-8-4.pdf>

Raurbs versus Apgars; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2004pdffiles/raurbsapgars12-15-4.pdf>

Metis; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/metis12-29-4.pdf>

The Complete (Natural) Metis; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/completemetis1-5-5.pdf>

Metis Economics; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/metisecon1-12-5.pdf>

Metis Economics, People; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/metispeople1-19-5.pdf>

Metis Economics, Land; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/metisland1-26-5.pdf>

Metis Economics, Water; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/metiswater2-2-5.pdf>

*Metis Economics, Faith*PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/metisfaith2-9-5.pdf>

*Metis Economics, Enterprise*PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/metisenterprise2-16-5.pdf>