

Chronicles of Diversity



Metis Economics: Rest

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Leadership derives its direction from its doctrine, and hence destination concludes from direction. Therefore, the basis of all our path's pilgrimage is based upon our underling doctrines or presuppositions. That is independent of whatever religious or non religious conventions we follow.

Guilt, Grace, Gratitude, form a sound basis of the specific revelation of God through the gospel of the redeeming work on the cross by Jesus Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice, to appease God's holiness and His law. From such doctrines also flow other sound doctrines such as the Reformation Solas (Scripture alone, Christ alone, Faith alone, Grace alone, for God's Glory alone.)

All other principles of fame, wealth, and religion may lead one into glorious experiences, a form of social justice, expressive ideas, and a whole host of other virtuous destinations, but have little importance in the eternal sense. When faced with the question, "Why should God let you into His heaven?" The best of Natural Law and Common grace won't get you there. But neither will the religious requirements of your personal works gospel.

Individual salvation is based upon what Christ did for me. But community development (phylogenesis) is based upon what Christ did for the whole world. The fruits of individual salvation is love demonstrated through grace. However, unless the underling doctrines remain true to these apologetics, you end up in a program that provides no peace and no rest.

I once constructed a cute little slogan to describe modern (or post modern) evangelicalism. "They know no rest."

What this means is that the evangelicalism of the twenty first century strives to make itself worldly relevant, or some other superlative concept that will sell books and CDs, when in fact, true rest from your labor for perfection rests on what Jesus has already completed in our triune universe some 2000 years ago. Rest will never come trying to figure out what Jesus will do in our trying circumstances. Rest comes from knowing doctrinally what Jesus did to overcome these circumstances.

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Now some will counteract that doctrine is not the basis for relationship with God and Jesus. I disagree, contrary to the social gospel's social idealism and evangelicalism's cheap grace, the true gospel is about friendship and adoptive kinship, not the warm fuzzy burning in the bosom that so many Christians, and even more cults use as the evidence of their religious validity. Until you understand the underlying truth, you can not begin to comprehend the depth of God's love.

This relates to the concept of rest because the rest we are talking about in diversity, is based on the concept of Biblical rest. After God created the world in a short period of time, He rested. He rested not because He had to, but to create a contrast, or tension with work. A time for reflection upon the goodness that He had created.

As we enter the Easter season we see another work of God that enters into the universe. That being the Good News of the gospel itself. The greatest enemy of life is about to be conquered. Death will soon lose its sting, for those who accept this gift of grace in faith and rest upon its promise. Again we see this three pronged continuum, which is really a modification of guilt, grace and gratitude. This time however, the three are grace, faith, and rest.

Without the understanding of this specific gospel revelation pronounced in the Bible the only concepts of rest, are sleep, relaxation, and avocations. All of which are natural and important, but the interesting thing about our avocations is that these generally are things we would do, if we didn't have to work (for a living). In other words, our hobbies are in some way related to our unique created personalities, as tasks we love to do.

Within the context of Natural Law and Common Grace, God so loved the world He gave us things we love to do, to express His love for us. This love to be put in its proper context must then relate to the family, and the larger community. The fulfillment we find in our avocations then relates to finding others to share in our love and to be accepted within that larger community structure.

Our dominate cultural focus on me alone however, doesn't give me the tools to accept differences between my vision of perfection in my avocation advocacy, and yours. This pretty much limits whatever I am trying to accomplish in either my vocation or avocation to personal (artistic?) expressions of me alone and loneliness.

However, we are created with personal avocations and community avocations. Within the sphere of community avocations my focus on my individualism leads me to view the work of others as inferior to the way I would do it. With this concept of perfection as my only vision I can never be part of a team to accomplish anything greater than my abilities.

If, for example, we are put into a situation of leadership, we can only be micro-managers of the goal. I found this truth to be quite amusing in the old management concept of "Management by Objectives." In this scenario the leader brings you into his (or she, to be politically correct) office, and sitting behind his large dominating desk he announces, "I want you to change the world. Do it anyway you would like just as long as you have it done by Friday, and the resources you have to carry this out, is one number two pencil and four sheets of paper. I have faith that you can do it, go and get started."

Of course on Monday you are again called into this office and reprimanded, "I understand you haven't changed the course of history yet (notice the change in the objective) and you tried to get other departments involved in this project without proper authorization. You have consumed a dozen pencils and a whole ream of paper and you still haven't produced the report. (Again, notice there was no report required in the original objective.) You're on probation bucco, one more screw up like this and I will have no recourse but to fire you."

Back long before all this happened regularly in my professional life, I came across and old Chinese engineering principle which stated. "You want it done your way, you do it." and its corollary statement, "You want it done at all, shut up, and get out of the way."

Applications and misapplications of these two principles are the dominate reasons that this country continues to work harder and harder in all fields with seemingly modest results. As the President stated in the presidential debates. "We are working really hard to accomplish the objectives, its really hard work."

Delegation is something they teach at Harvard Business School, but if rumors are correct about the Bush administration, you may have a few paper clips added to your arsenal in the above tasking

objective, but the mission statement is still the same, and to do the impossible takes a little longer, but not much, we've only got a little less than four years.

To the President's credit, I suppose that old Chinese engineer is again correct, "If you ask nothing from anyone, in return you will receive less than nothing."

So what we are seeking is not a balance in leadership to accomplish the task, but a tension between the objective and the real world.

So what does this have to do with rest, both common and Biblical? Stress is produced by trying to do God's work on our timetable. We live in an increasingly stressful world. With an increasingly stressful world view. That will never change if all we do is work really hard to accomplish the objectives, its really hard work. No, that's impossible work. The answer to the extent it exists in this world means leadership willing to delegate to the community its vision and all its resources to accomplish its world changing agenda.

I don't think the old Chinese engineer has been given authorship of the proverb, "Lead, follow, or get out of the way." In his yin yang theory of relativity, a proverb of merit must have wide application. In the politically correct world which limits the saying, "Too many chiefs, not enough indians," unacceptable because of language, the whole concept of teamwork must be received by osmosis by fans of spectator sports. The old Chinese engineer, I believe, is definitely into participation.

March Madness (Collegiate basketball) is now in its annual spectator hype on the tube and in a few isolated arenas around the country. I find myself quietly admonishing the players and saying, "Why did you let that guy dribble around you to his right and you didn't cut him off at the baseline. Make him beat you to his left. I've told you that hundreds of times and you still haven't got it right yet."

Of course the player doesn't hear my ravings from my rocking chair, but the teams that will succeed will have heard similar exhortations from coach a whole lot more than they would have liked, but the skill is now part of their instinct. Now the field of winners is shrinking and losers growing in multiples almost every night. The difference between the groups is really not so much about native talent, but exhortation as individual members for the team purpose.

Rest like happiness is rather an elusive target. We live in a society which says, "Winning is the only thing." Relegated to the proverbial dump is, "Winning isn't everything, its how you play the game."

When March Madness is over in April, only about 20 people on each team will have won a National Championship, in different levels in men's and women's contests. A total of a hundred or so nationwide. When you add high school state championships, and the pros by June, maybe a few thousand will have won the last basketball game of the season, all the other participants, who played their hearts out, will have had to settle for something between second and last place.

Is how you play the game really worth the effort? Absolutely. There is a rest that encompasses knowing what your limits are in any area. There is no rest in never having played the game. In the name of some egalitarian evolutionary lie, we have a society that tries to crown everyone a champion on the basis of taking up space and breathing. To do otherwise would hurt their (our) self esteem. But what is really promoted in this line of reasoning is the complete failure of leadership to produce games in which everyone can be a team member using their unique gifts and talents.

I suppose the old Chinese engineer wasn't much good at playing basketball, but I think he understood the concept of teamwork. Perhaps he could have coined the proverb, "Competition builds teamwork, aggression causes isolation and death. Build a good team and they shall allow rest for your soul in a world a chaos.

Winning programs have a spill over effect into the broader community that is difficult for us to measure, as our description of Gonzaga University last week. However, the key to the results lies in leadership that seeks commitment rather than involvement, and discipline rather than entropy.

In collegiate basketball, each player is recruited and expected to fill a specific roll on the team. In the world and more specifically in the church, we have no concept of guards, centers, and forwards as players on God's or our enterprise team.

As an illustration, pastors wonder why no one does anything in the church, when the sanctuary is filled with chairs and no basketball goals. Sheep act like sheep because church leadership teaches them sheepish ways and expects them to act as sheep. To be a member in good standing, the more you act like a good religious sheep the better you will be accepted. This is passed into the world of common grace and we have behemoth enterprises that do the same.

In God's creation account, sheep were created distinct from man's creation, man created in the image of God. Then God saw that this was very good and rested on the seventh day.

To change the world, while not losing God's rest, why not just let God's people be the people they were created to be, brothers and sisters of the Living Christ, instead of trying to evolutionarily degrade them and God, by making them into a community of sheep instead of a community of family.

I think Nike also stole their slogan from the Old Chinese engineer, "Just do it!" It sells shoes and other gear because it is perceived that by buying Nike's you become part of a larger team, not just a spectator. There is a certain degree of truth in that, but a greater purpose is to learn your own avocation and become part of that sport.

The role of coach or leadership is to provide the framework by which diverse teams can be formed and in which individuals may learn there are times to shoot, times to dribble, times to pass the ball, and times to play defense. The team concept is that though you may not be able to compete at your best in any instance, the team still supports you in the game to which we are all called to play.

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