



# Chronicles of Diversity

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Chronicles of Diversity  
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## No Compromise

I was reminded last Sunday that sometimes the preacher has to preach, for reasons and with an emphasis that is not in the message outline.

The biography of the late leader of the early contemporary Christian music scene, Keith Greene is entitled, "No Compromise." This book outlines the singer's struggle with contemporary evangelicalism probably best described in the title of one of his songs, "Asleep in the Light."

Virtually all the time, this preaching stems from such a similar struggle. Similarly, this preaching is not focused upon the choir, but on the congregation comfortably sitting in their padded pews, analyzing their padded lifestyles, instead of truly listening to the sermon, all the while the world rushes headlong into catastrophe.

One of the sidelights that came out of last week's dealing with the dark side of my mother's estate is the fact that I learned

a great deal about my mother's family heritage, which stems back into the State of Washington to 1883. I also learned some things about my dad's lineage. In summary, I found out that my ancestors lived a lot longer than I was aware. Therefore, should the Lord tarry, I have many more years to preach, if that be the Lord's will.

Because I had not gotten significantly into the work I came to Spokane to do, Saturday I decided to go down to my small piece of the old home place and work on adding another ten feet of drain pipe to the spring development and make some improvements upon the spring's holding tank. At least in a few hours I could finish something this week.

Down in Jump Canyon, somewhere between the sheer basalt cliffs at the top of the rim and Lake Roosevelt and the Columbia River at the bottom exists the shoreline, or more appropriately shorelines, of



Glacial Lake Columbia. It created as an arm of the Columbia Ice Sheet cut off the regular flow of the Columbia and helped to force the flow of the river through much of the intervening land between Spokane and Jump Canyon, known as the Scablands, or the Channeled Scablands.

Most of the waters for these floods however, came from Lake Missoula in the area of western Montana where I am now trying to move. In geologic time, geologists believe that between ten and fifteen thousand years ago, at the end of the Pleistocene period, floods of unmatched proportions reshaped this landscape as many as fifteen or more times, perhaps as often as every fifty years.

Standing on the bluff overlooking Lake Roosevelt and White Stone cliff that juts vertically still over a thousand feet above the impounded lake waters, it is easy to visualize this area as it appeared not all that long ago.

To the north, only a few miles away, is the edge of the massive ice sheet. You are standing on firm ground on an island completely surrounded by flood and lake waters. The winds and the weather are beyond comprehension as the rapidly melting ice sheet and winds are creating not only the now surrounding unflooded fertile farm lands, but also the Palouse Hills less than a hundred miles to the east and south.

But this is not the real struggle for man. The real struggle is not with the water, wind, weather, ice, and other problems in which man could not survive. The real problem is with the hermeneutic on how all this could take place.

These floods, that left their influence throughout Washington and Oregon and well out into the Pacific Ocean are the most recent massive geological occurrence on the planet. Far dwarfing the formation of the Grand Canyon and other so called feats of nature.

Into the theory of uniformity in geology, just after World War I, Chicago geologist J Harlen Bretz first proposed this flood theory. Needless to say, his proposal was not met with enthusiasm from his peers because Bretz's theory basically overturned all the religious hermeneutics of the religious nature of geology. Essentially, what

Bretz's work stated was that catastrophes exist in nature, these floods being the prime example. While not setting out to counteract geology's gospel message, Bretz's work opened the door on the possibility that the whole theory of geological time millions and billions of years may also be wrong. Therefore, the whole concept of the evolutionary development of the earth, may also be in error.

You can contrast this hermeneutic with the typical modern evangelical who states, "The Bible says that the earth was created six thousand years ago. Any day now I am going to be raptured to heaven. After the seven year tribulation period I will return to rule with Jesus for a thousand years. Then God will make a new heaven and a new earth for eternity."

Looking north from the shores of Lake Columbia, seeing the remnants of once large granitic mountains now rounded smooth by direct evidence of glacial ice, you must stand amazed at two overwhelming hermeneutics. The first is the amazing power of God working through nature, and second, just how stupid are the best aspirations of man.

The Bible does not say that the world was created six thousand years ago, but this theory was created by Bishop Ussher in Ireland in the seventeenth century. In fact, "Ussher deduced that the first day of Creation began at nightfall preceding Sunday October 23, 4004 BC in the proleptic Julian calendar, near the autumnal equinox." This date of course must be corrected into our modern Gregorian calendar if we are to truly establish when God began His work, but it is sufficient to say that Ussher did his work in an office in Ireland, not on the shores of Glacial Lake Columbia, or even modern Lake Roosevelt.

So here we are marooned, my fellow travelers, on this island in the midst of chaos, in which man's best and most learned aspirations are ground into nothing but a handful of fine fertile Palouse loess, blowing in all directions. Amazing, since all we had hoped to do was put in a couple of pieces of plastic pipe and finish a job to get something off the checklist.

It also makes no sense that all this catastrophic destruction happened slightly over 4000 years ago, to fit with Ussher's date for the Genesis Flood of 2348 BC. Just as God was preparing to call Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans on the other side of the

world, a close approximation of hell on earth was occurring on my great grandfather's home place.

It makes even less sense to believe that the world is 4.5 billion years old or whatever dating is now in vogue just because we like our evolutionary lives to be orderly and without chaos.

This shows truly the fundamental exegesis of all of man's endeavors. We will do everything within our power to create lives of order out of chaos, even if that order does not exist in nature. In essence, both evolutionary geology and evangelicalism share the same hermeneutic, peace at all cost. But if we truly seek the truth of what the preacher preaches, how are we to know what really is the truth? And how are we to know how much he has compromised to come to his preaching place?

One of the things I learned last week is that my great, great, grandmother, who came to Washington in 1883, in 1903 she became a member of the Baptist church. In her zeal, one Saturday night it is reported that she nailed the door shut on the meeting house where all the local churches met, so that no other church could use the building for Sunday services. This I learned after I finished my spring plumbing project and searched for family grave stones in the small Sherman cemetery a few miles from the river canyon property. Her marble monument dating from 1911 is adorned with an emblem of a cross within a crown, common especially at Easter services in established denominations.

So Margaret Breshears Jump was a no compromise Christian, because, or in spite of the fact, she was a Baptist. I find that good news, because within my ancestral heritage, that I am aware of, there seemed to be no pronounced Christian witness. In fact, my own religious upbringing seems in sharp contrast to both my father's and my mother's religious education.

The problem with America today is that Christians are not zealous for Jesus Christ, but are zealous for things that maintain their sense of uniformity. Therefore, in their sense of the moral right they will not compromise on so called values, even though that stubbornness will quickly lead to the chaos they fight so hard to protect.

Why is this the case? Basically, because principles and moral issues do not cost you anything. Principles and morals we all have in abundance, it is those other people who don't? Morals cost us nothing, and if we are a preacher, it might even help us raise some money to carry out our moral preaching campaign. It makes good business sense, until the chaotic flood comes.

We see the same preaching model in the Bush White House, because the appeal is now to a moral high ground of whatever issue now seems appropriate. Most recently it was staying the course in Iraq, just before that it was Social Security Private Accounts, and very soon it will be the Supreme Court nominee to replace Sandra Day O'Connor. My guess, Dubya learned this model from certain evangelical pastors, that seem to say they represent the desired views of powerful and popular men and women.

God forbid, we should ever look at the hermeneutic that underlies our actions, which is our need for perceived security, now, in the immediate future, the long term natural future, or eternity. We take our pick, depending upon the current situation we now find ourselves in, and how we perceive the strengths or weaknesses of our enemies, adversaries, and even our friends.

The problem with this type of no compromise is that it is the same causative agent as in the title of Keith Green's asleep in the light. The light is still on, we are just afraid to look at it, for you, like me if we truly look at reality will continually find ourselves on the shores of Glacial Lake Columbia, surrounded by water and ice, in a howling gale of rain and blowing dust and not a person around, except some dude, perhaps being called by God on the other side of the world.

The Bible is first and foremost a revelation of Jesus Christ, written for a period of real history. Not for billions of years, but definitely thousands, but it really does not point out a specific day that in which, "And God said." Within that context, is the reality that this is a chaotic world and always shall be, for that is the way God designed it, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the

world through Him might be saved.”

Sin and death are the ultimate forms of chaos, but everything that interrupts our sense and desire for uniformity and security gives us the opportunity to look for God to calm the storm. How we look to God is directly related to how we are able to cope with the reality of the storms as Philippians 1:21 says: For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Bringing that hermeneutic into the real world, what it is really saying is I really need to die, if I am to truly live. The problem is that I can't really die if I have to make the next payment on the Lexus, because I don't think I can get my home equity loan bumped to 125% of value before that payment is due. Man that car and that house really make me feel like I have finally made it in this world.

That is the prime example of living the successful life of compromise. The only thing that can shake my confidence in this illusion is let me count the ways. One, two, three, four, five whoa! I think I need to take a nap with the lights on, who knows the troubles the darkness may hold.

The preacher now normally makes the invitation to turn your life over to Jesus, again, again. No longer live the life of sin and death, to live the life of no compromise. Don't do it again, again. Change the world for the glory of God. We have all heard the pitch, again. We all know that the pitch may help feed the ministry coffers, but it doesn't change the hermeneutic of our desire for security.

In many ways this appeal is worse than the atheistic geologist. His life is the reality of truth based upon a lie. The preacher bases this appeal, upon a lie based upon an absolute truth. Who shall be held guiltless at the end of life?

At that time our security is not based upon our compromises, it is not our standing firmly for no compromise. The true nature of the gospel is that the storm is controlled from without, by the saving goodness of God's grace through Jesus Christ alone. This is the only no compromise life we can truly live within this world.

Great, great, grandma Jump believed that she had found such a place when she nailed shut the meeting room door. This in her small way is not that much different than Martin Luther and his nailing of the 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg. Both were still completely human, but felt compelled to not compromise their beliefs. It is well known that Brother Martin died in his sleep after taking on the power of the church and the state. My records state that Sister Jump died at the age of 86 of bronchial pneumonia on January 26, 1911.

Just like in the Bible, with a little searching God, has carried on the legacy of two of His chosen into the future well beyond their passing. Did the proper no compromise response have anything to do with it? Perhaps in both cases it was a small silent prayer probably offered in their naive youth that said, "God use me as you will, for your glory alone. Amen."

## Our last six Chronicles of Diversity articles:

Good Stewards; PDF link: [http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/goodstewards5\\_25\\_5.pdf](http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/goodstewards5_25_5.pdf)

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Complacency River; PDF link: [http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/complacency6\\_8\\_5.pdf](http://www.wondersprings.com/2005pdffiles/complacency6_8_5.pdf)

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