



# Chronicles of Diversity

10 May 2006 ; Volume 8, Number 15

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## Creation Speaks!

These last few weeks and months of writing Chronicles has been quite difficult. I never considered myself a crusty old prophet proclaiming gloom and doom, but as the weeks continued, there were times I seriously considered that I needed to let my beard grow, and go down to the closest thrift store and see if they had any animal skin clothes. I wouldn't say that the phase is now over completely, but you can only beat death and destruction so much, and then you need to move on and let death take its natural course. I have learned some interesting things in these times however, and this week we shall begin along that path to see where it might lead.

For those of you in America, if you watched "The West Wing" Sunday evening you would have learned that the Constitution either has a smudge, or a comma in a certain place. Depending on whether it is a smudge or a comma, might rest two hundred

years of the rule of law in Uncle Sam's nation. While I don't know if this smudge comma place actually exists in the actual Constitution, but only added dialog to a portion of the show, punctuation can make dramatic differences on the meaning of writing, as well as its ultimate interpretation.

Many years ago, I was given a consulting contract to sign so that I could do some work for a major corporation. I was assured that this was a fair and wonderful agreement that had been prepared by the best legal minds in one of the nation's top law firms. Always being a trusting soul, I decided to take this great contract to my lawyer to get his opinion. I mean who was I to judge whether this contract was as good as it was reported to be, why not ask a real expert. Besides if it was anywhere as good as I was told, I could use it for my own consulting agreement, if I needed to hire someone.



As my lawyer looked over the contract he from time to time remarked that it was indeed a well written legal consulting agreement, fully providing the safeguards and guarantees it was meant to express. However, just as he neared the end of the document, he stopped and stated that the sentence on one particular line needed a comma between two specific words, to clearly and legally state the implied stipulations of the rest of the contract. I could even see it too. Since the no comma, legally was to my benefit, he suggested that I sign the document, and if the agreement might need to be litigated, he could easily point out the error, and we would automatically succeed. This contract, with the comma in place, then became part of my own companies legal documents.

When you think of prophets in the desert and doom and gloom, you must think of John the Baptist. Camel's hair garments, a leather belt around his waist, and eating wild locusts and honey. John be 'da man. He said:

*"I am*

*The voice of one crying in the wilderness:*

*"Make straight the way of the LORD,"' as the prophet Isaiah said."* John 1:23

While all Bible translations that I am aware of translate the verse in John as punctuated above, not all of the translate the original in Isaiah 40:3 the same way:

*The voice of one crying in the wilderness:*

*"Prepare the way of the LORD;*

*Make straight in the desert*

*A highway for our God.*

Actually, the nearly inspired NIV thinks you can have it both ways: *"A voice of one calling: In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God."* is the regular text version. However, they also have it in a footnote without the colon, the more traditional way.

Now to 99.6% of American Evangelical Christians this doesn't make any difference, in any fashion. They are probably wishing they were listening better to what Toby said to C.J. about

the Constitution, than to even consider that there is any difference in any of the Bible translations. Three tenths of a percent were aware of the difference, but quickly dismissed the thought as requiring too much thought. That leaves Chronicle readers as part of the 0.1% who know there really is an important difference, but you will be forced to read on to gain that insight. In regard to "The West Wing," you will probably have to wait until the 7th Season DVD comes out about this time next year, unless they mention the comma again this coming Sunday.

Back a few thousand years ago, when copies of the Bible were meticulously made by hand, the scribes accurately copied every letter in the Bible. However, it is assumed to save space and time, they did not record any of the punctuation marks. Therefore, we really don't know how the first written copies of the Bible were actually punctuated. All our early manuscripts don't have any commas, colons, semicolons, or even periods, period.

So when we say that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant word of God's revelation to mankind, that has to be the original manuscripts, punctuation and all, if punctuation was even a valid concept in those days. Sola Scriptura. Since we don't have those true originals, we must rely on the interpretations of what the Bible translators thought how the list of words should be punctuated to say, what they thought God was speaking. In other words, the punctuation is not infallible, just the inspired inerrant words.

With the different punctuation we really have two distinct meanings for this passage. In the first translation, with no comma or other punctuation you must go to the wilderness, or the desert to hear the calling voice, hence in the wasteland you will hear the prophetic speech. In this case we are shown that this is John the Baptist in his camel hair dress. But in that desert wilderness place, different translations for the same word you must hear a human voice proclaiming the message.

However, with the comma and especially the colon, you have a voice that is not area specific calling you to the wilderness. It could be the desert, as in John's case, but that is not required, it could be a voice in the city. The voice of the LORD in the desert wilderness is independent of a speaker other than God alone. In this case to paraphrase the tree falling in the forest concept, the LORD speaks in

and through the wilderness, independent of any preacher or prophet, or anyone to hear. That's pretty heavy! "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God." does not require the preacher only that you go to the forest to hear God's voice.

The empirical evidence for this is almost too loud, especially in the Northwest and Seattle, to think that anyone who does not believe this, must be mentally unbalanced or truly deaf. In fact, not believing this may be the cause of much of society's cultural problems. But more about that later.

Furthermore, Psalm 19 completely reinforces this truth. Beginning with the heavens declaring the glory of God through speech, it goes on in the last part of the Psalm to state that this creation speech is also the basis for our moral code. So without getting too theological, not only was eternity implanted into the soul of man by his creation in the image of God, mankind is also infused by God with both law and gospel by our interaction with creation.

Natural Law, Common Grace, and Creation's God are somethings that Thomas Jefferson knew and believed very strongly. Strongly enough to proclaim it in the Preamble to the Declaration of Independence. His fellow patriots believed it strongly also, and contrary to modern Godless evolutionary spin, Natural Law, Common Grace, and Nature's God are the true foundation stones for the American republic.

Thomas Jefferson did have a problem with church and with the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth, but not with God in nature. Other, Christian patriots, may have had a problem with an others specific theology, but they too all agreed that all those revelations flow from God through Natural Law and Common Grace.

The important point in our clueless amoral society is that without creation's speech we are without a moral rudder. In our March 8th issue we dealt with the Nature Deficit Disorder. Today we have arrived at the same point from another trail. This time with consequences much more serious than just what natural experience does to help people adjust to the world around them. Those who suffer for Nature Deficit Disorder,

are incurably sick, eternally. Therefore, they can not ever become all that they desire for themselves, or even begin to understand a bigger picture beyond their own narcissistic world.

So let's go take a hike and everything will be fine. Not so fast, if everyone were required to walk an hour per week alone in some wild area, things in this world would get better in a real hurry, but they would still not know the really Good News. True they would be more receptive to the Christian gospel, than by the fact that all their Christian friends were constantly trying to manipulate their conversations to get them to ask Jesus into their heart and establish a relationship with Him.

Back to the real science, there really is no significant difference in the actions of American Evangelicals and their worldly counterparts, except perhaps in the evangelical's pronouncement of their own self righteousness. This is especially true as you move up the educational trail. The self discipline required for educational achievement also allows you to become self disciplined in other areas of your life also.

Sadly to say, and probably the reason for most of my previous gloom and doom is that, the problems with America, and the coming stupendous changes, will be much more serious because American Evangelicalism has left their first love, the true gospel of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ as a free gift to all sinners, to become a self righteous Pharisee without the need of a Savior.

Part of that, no most is that the church has lost it's wilderness prophets, and replaced them with worldly profits, plastic flowers, plastic music, plastic preachers, teaching a plastic Jesus to a plastic world. It's recently got even worse because now all this plastic kitsch is produced in China and we call it prosperity.

Next week we will develop this creation speech paradigm more deeply, but briefly I would like to tie it back to some thoughts I discussed about how a new Reformation would take place by the preacher's words changing the artists and artists changing society. I have been watching a number of documentaries, on the era of the 1960's and '70's. What I have found amazing is that much of the stuff that was the problem with the culture back then are the same as what we face today. History

does repeat itself, and those who don't learn from it are bound to relive it over again. There is one striking difference I have noticed however, is that the '60's and '70's was an era of music, not so today.

Don McLean's, song "American Pie" was really correct, sometime in that time frame, music really died. It also seems very true, that, "*The three men I admire most, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, caught the last train for the coast. The day that music died.*"

The truth of that is apparent in that much of today's youth like the same music I did when I was there age. They have no contemporary music, even Christian music, that can truthfully touch the soul, just your other parts. I was completely amazed on the mission trip to Bemidji, Minnesota the kid's knew the Beatles songs better than I did. Of course I never was a real fan, because their music was really too amoral for my rural taste. Today however, and in contrast with today's music, the Beatles seem almost mundanely modest.

If you couple the Hippie back to land out of the city movement, with the folk era, you can see a very strong influence of creation and Natural Law and Common Grace. Out of that came the American Evangelical movement and such church organizations as Calvary Chapel. But the evidence seems to point out that the true growth of evangelicalism and Calvary Chapel came not from the Bible teaching alone, but from the ground swell of disappointment that liberal Protestantism didn't offer, any hope in a real natural world.

What I still find amazing about all of nondenominational Christianity is this sort of organic growth concept, that it just happens. You don't need any education, you don't need to know anything about management, God forbid we should temper or prune our desires, as long as you stay on message, God will make you prosperous and grow your church. You too can be a Casey Treat, a local example.

The question for you to think about before next week, is such growth truly of God with it's basis in the wilderness highway, or the result of the urban desire to build an Interstate system, to

just pass through, or fly over God's true method of reaching people and building his church and calling it Christianity? When in actuality it is really a worldly wolf masquerading in sheep's clothing.

The voice of one crying: "*In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*" It is time for the church to take the wilderness exit to a new, slower but much more pleasant and rewarding highway, the true "El Camino Real!"

## Our latest Chronicles:

*The Nature Deficit Divide; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2006pdffiles/naturedeficit3-8-6.pdf>*

*Birds & Snakes; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2006pdffiles/birdsnsnakes3-15-6.pdf>*

*Given Gifts; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2006pdffiles/givengifts4-12-6.pdf>*

*Our rights and our dusty responsibility; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2006pdffiles/rightrespon4-19-6.pdf>*

*Solomon's folly today; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2006pdffiles/solomontoday4-26-6.pdf>*

*America Amok; PDF link: <http://www.wondersprings.com/2006pdffiles/aamok5-3-6.pdf>*