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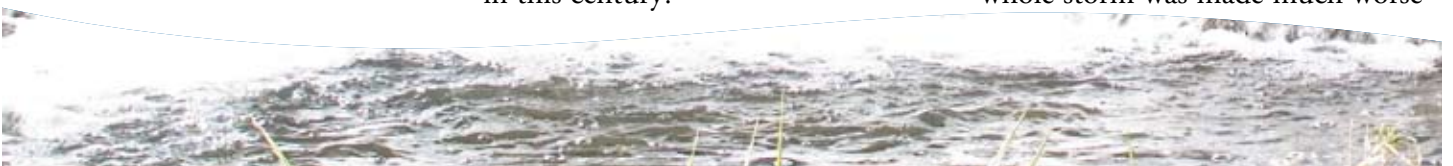
Symbiotic economics: Green Zoos

When we began this year's series of Chronicle articles we were discussing stupendous change. In the concept of transcendence we have been looking at these last few weeks, stupendous change is really just transcendent natural law. Some will say and have said that these natural events are a judgement by God for the sins of America, the world or other parties. However it is a stretch to say that God needs to actively interfere with the natural workings of creation so that He can change the plan of earth's history. More to the point is Romans 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

This groaning in birth pangs, looks forward to the return of Jesus Christ. Creation's churning may also become more pronounced simply because of the Ezekiel 37 dry bones prophesy coming into reality. The complexity of these manners and changes can be seen expressed in three stupendous change events that have happened in the United States in this century.

The September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon were definitely acts of terrorism. They are also a statement of personal and religious rebellion from a group zealous in their belief that the world is heading in the wrong direction. Al Qaeda had the organization and resources to make a very bold statement. In that statement over 3000 Americans died. The point being that when it suits our purposes we believe humanity is above natural law and order, but then in the next breath, we reinforce the belief that we are indeed direct descendants of whales and monkeys. That tension in itself is a groaning of all creation.

Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and vicinity. But matters could have been much worse if the hurricane track had not altered at the last minute probably saving many lives in the process. Was that change in course a gift of God's grace, or was the hurricane itself God's judgement on an evil city? Still others would say that the whole storm was made much worse



by global warming. However, when you build a city below sea level in a hurricane zone, then not maintain the levees and dikes that hold back the river and the ocean, it is only a matter of time until a groaning creation will have an impact.

A similar statement is true for the recent wildfires in southern California. When you build human infrastructure in an area where it should not be built, then in order to protect it and maintain property values you do not manage the vegetation for whatever natural and political reasons, when the fire starts, the impacts are going to be much more severe than a fire in true wild chaparral.

The essential point is that creation, including and especially humanity is fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). *"I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well."*

Both fear and wonder are true descriptions of the transcendent nature of all. The all, we truly fear, because it points squarely to the fact that while I am unique as a human personality I am not autonomous in my being, but are part of the cosmos that speaks of unity in diversity. Unity in Diversity being attributes of the Christian Godhead and the Bible. Their can be no other truly logical explanation for being, outside the revelation of God himself, and that makes us all fear His transcendent nature, even those who understand His grace offered through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

We began the year with transcendence in the very negative sense of stupendous change. We shall end this year with a positive sense of the grace of God making transcendence again a resource to begin to understand and to wonder at life as the true miracle that it truly is. All these changes take place in the world for the Glory of God alone. All we can really contribute is an attempt to apprehend some small parts with fear and wonder.

Tomorrow in the United States we celebrate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving should be celebrated moment by moment, not just one day of the year. Especially when there has been an attempt to hijack that day in the name of gluttony and football. I recently was involved in a conversation about why the stores are now full of Christmas items, when it was not all that long ago that Christmas did not become part of merchandising hype until after Thanksgiving.

The unanimous consensus was that there is no money to be made at Thanksgiving. Turkeys and cranberry sauce are notorious loss leaders in food stores and everywhere else if the store is open on Thanksgiving, it is a matter of policy rather than any profits that might be taken. Everyone should just rest up for the Friday following.

But back to the fact that the transcendent nature of life should be reflected upon continually. The interesting aspect of that reflection is that the fear and wonder, and the power resident in that transcendence is what will make the resurrection of the church possible in line with the Ezekiel 37 dry bones valley.

Earlier this week I posted on the Chronicle website links to last year's articles that demonstrate just how the dry bones valley will come to life, and how you will be able to be part of God's putting the meat on the bones and bringing the bones to life. Those two articles are entitled "Wear Your Cap" on November 15, 2006 and "Thanksgiving Cap" on November 22, 2006. The articles are either available through the 2006 PDF archive page or in html through the new Chronicle Blog archive we are slowly building.

Your CAP is the acrostic Condemnation - Adoption - Praise. CAP basically describes the Christian gospel. The gospel being the power of God for salvation. This power is described by Paul in Romans 1:16 and Peter in 1 Peter 1:5. CAP is essentially a dumbed down rendition of Calvinism's three G's = Guilt, Grace and Gratitude. I don't know what word they were in the French when Calvin utilized them, or even if Calvin actually made them up or they came later.

Whichever rendition you choose to use all three qualities are incredibly transcendent in themselves. When added together you get a synergistic effect that requires an acknowledgment similar to the Psalm 139 rendition, this time "fearfully and wonderfully saved."

The precision of Calvin begins always with God's law and it's application to bring about salvation for the sinner. Luther, to simplify greatly, did it the other way around, he started with grace and backed into the law. Both ended up with the tension between law and gospel throughout the Bible, but both understood as handed down to us today that the power of salvation is where God's power works, not in any of man's sin tainted efforts. Understanding the true nature of sin and the true nature of God's grace as a free gift through Jesus Christ is alone the basis for salvation and the basis for good works (Luther) and progressive sanctification (Calvin).

This power changes the evil heart through the words of the gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit. This is scene written in Jeremiah 31:33: *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.* It is also found in the New Testament in Romans 2:15,16: *(Gentiles) who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

The problem with the dry bones church today is that we truly believe truly as an anathema, that there is a reward we earn by doing either the Luther, Calvin, or more properly the Wesley handle. However, all this really is the American dream set to religion. It brings God down into our natural, rather than lifting us up to God's transcendence.

All Christians one day want to hear Jesus say to them, "Well done you good and faithful servant. Enter into your rest."

The typical American evangelical religion convert would say, "Well Praise you Lord, now that I am in heaven I will chill out for 10,000 years or so, then when I am well rested I will really get into this eternity thing."

The proper understanding of Jesus' statement however, is that the rest he is talking about is not a work's rest but a positional rest. The rest relieves the true tension between the fearfully and wonderfully, that will always be a part of eternity this side of the return of Jesus or our bodily death.

Properly, the good works we did here were done in the rest of what Jesus did, and therefore He did through us, not in the anxious stress of "What would Jesus do" circumstance. Put another way the power to do good works or to be progressively sanctified is the same gift of grace that saved us in the first place and comes through the power of the transcendent gospel by the Holy Spirit. Maybe the illustration of Green Zoo's will help illustrate.

After last fall's election I hoped that at the national level our government would put away some of the partisan bickering and do something constructive. Just a little something, not all that significant, just a token that someone knows what

is going on and is willing to cooperate with others to a limited extent. Just give us a little hope for a natural future.

In the intervening period between writing about natural transcendent stupendous change events and stupendous change prophetic events, I have come to the conclusion that perhaps our greatest fear should be for our government, mostly on the national level, but also at the state and local level, which can not or will not lead, follow, or get out of the way.

Therefore, it was with some fearful hope that I took some time to see what Newt Gingrich was trying to do with American Solutions. Since he is no longer Speaker of the House of Representatives, I find him to be an interesting character. First of all, he is a pretty smart dude, secondly he seem to be truly at peace with what he is doing in the context of his personality, and finally I think he truly cares and is committed to the nation of the United States of America. The final qualifier I see virtually absent upon the country's political stage.

Anyway, I tuned into his American Solutions website and decided to watch a highly touted video of the American Solutions' concept of green. I will not go into my thoughts on how I thought the infrastructure should have been put together, but what I came away with in a substantive sense is that the American Solutions solution to the green environmental situation, is to turn the whole country into a green zoo. And to add to that when we make our daily SUV trip to buy groceries, we will take along a reusable bag. Furthermore, it would be nice if this green zoo was in south Florida, because they have enough solar radiation in the south to truly make the green, green.

Now I suppose I am being a lot on the picky side, because this was only supposed to be an idea session. But if that was the case why was it so highly touted. Green zoos really are not all that far removed from the other green architecture and lifestyle proposed by urban liberals. Furthermore, everyone has a mouth, a nose, a couple of ears, but pretty much everyone has literally hundreds or thousands of ideas. Leadership is not about generating ideas, leadership is about changing good ideas into reality. Bluntly, just as in the rest of the world, we don't have a long way to go, we have an impossible task within the confines of present human ingenuity.

Where in this new green world is Thoreau's "In wildness is the preservation of the world?"

We have been systematically brainwashed into believing that the transcendent no longer exists. Well that can't be true, because we have recently been told by the courts that intelligent design has no basis in science. I agree with the judge, it has no basis in any reality, just some non transcendent religious legalism, designed to promote evangelical religious power.

Could it be the devil? He doesn't really exist either, just a religious superstition. Well, I guess all that is left is just plain old thermodynamic entropy. If ---, then there is no hope in this world, or do we have a choice?

The choice is truly the God of the Bible and the power of the Christian gospel, or no God of evolutionary religious dogma. Creation Science has not only the transcendent Bible on its side, but also the wildness of transcendent creation, and the non transcendent data of observational descriptive science. Instead of funding creation science and creation scientists, American evangelicalism joins the parade of taming the wild out of creation, the fear and wonder out of mankind, and God out of the Bible.

They might try to change south Florida into a zoo. I know some in Seattle who would also think that would be a good idea for the Emerald City. Perhaps the time to start would be after the Seattle Fault earthquake that could happen at any time.

As for me and my little cabin, we will take the wild of creation, the fearfully and wonderfully made human existence, and the God of the Bible. It might be primitive by modern standards, which means because of entropy it is so highly advanced that most people can no longer understand it's truth.

"Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know." (Ezekiel 37:3)

PS: Remember to daily be thankful that we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

To God be all the glory, he has put his law in our hearts and thereby made all things new