



# *The* Wonder Springs Chronicle

16 January 2008 ; Volume 10, Number 3

## The Wonder Springs Chronicle

### Contact Information:

Jerry Bannon

Publisher

Wonder Springs

PO Box 1381

Orient, Washington USA 99160

phone: 509.496.5855

blog: [www.wondersprings.org](http://www.wondersprings.org) email:

[jerryb@wondersprings.org](mailto:jerryb@wondersprings.org)

[chronicle@wondersprings.org](mailto:chronicle@wondersprings.org)

©2008; non-commercial education  
& forwarding encouraged, please  
give a citation credit all other rights  
reserved. This work is licensed under  
a Creative Commons Attribution-  
Noncommercial-No Derivative  
Works 3.0 United States License.

For past Chronicle archives or to  
subscribe to this weekly email please  
visit our web site at:  
[www.wondersprings.org](http://www.wondersprings.org)

## *Symbiotic economics:* The Gracious Diversity

*Without faith it is impossible to please him (God), for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.* Hebrews 11:6 ESV

For a long time I have taught that the opposite of faith is not unbelief, but fear. This is also a somewhat general consensus among Bible teachers. I might also add that the main difference from last week's article on the Timid Desperadoes and this week's Gracious Diversity is the way faith is exercised in life.

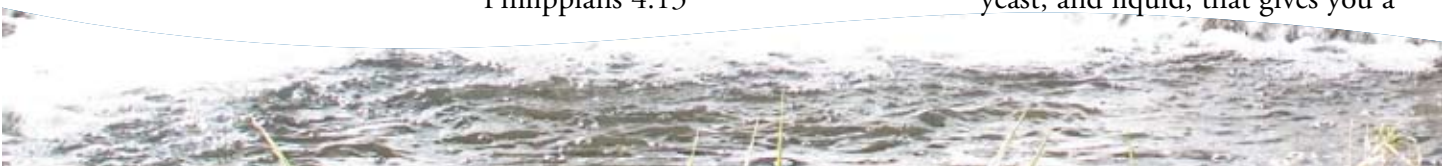
Timid Desperadoes basically have a small God. That may manifest itself in a small view of who they are, as created in the image of God. The other opposite tries to inflate the self, in their own image, not understanding the difference between the Creator and the created.

Members of the Gracious Diversity however, have an inkling of what the Apostle Paul meant when he stated, *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* Philippians 4:13

It isn't even science to understand, if you never try, you can never accomplish anything. Furthermore, without trying, you are not fulfilling God's mandate to "be fruitful and multiply." Fruitful signifying something much greater than just the possibility to procreate. That reproducing gift he gave to all the animals and the plants also.

So is there some mysterious formula that can change a Timid Desperado into a member of the Gracious Diversity? And can using that formula make the small numbers of the Gracious Diversity even more gracious and more gifted?

Formulas you use to make cleaning compounds and recipes you use make something to eat, dealing with human beings are a lot more complicated than some alchemy concoction. But there is one thing that is required to make things work. That is true of the magic blue cleaner that cleans the toilet bowl, and also the gooey mess of flour, yeast, and liquid, that gives you a



loaf of bread. That last recipe should give you a hint, we are speaking about the application of energy. In the toilet bowl cleaner it was chemical energy, in baking bread it was the oven energy.

So speaking of energy, has your happy clappy Sunday church service worn off yet? Is the pedantic lecture on a few verses of the Bible, void of a transcendent God, not still fresh in your mind?

Chances are, remembrance of your church service didn't make it even to checking out the scores of the NFL football playoffs. That's probably even true if you are the Pastor and you spend a great deal of time trying to get everything just right. Most of us were going home, well before the closing prayer or the doxology.

Is it any wonder therefore, Christianity has to enter the world arena promoting only moral ethics and little else. The world sees few members of the minority class of the Gracious Diversity, simply because they are the most endangered group of people on the earth today.

When the Christian's strongest and only voice in the daily world really doesn't get anything out of church but moral lessons, more or less amusing stories, and mostly irrelevant insights to the problems you face as the alarm clock arouses your slumber early Monday morning, it's no wonder your identified partially, either as timid, or desperate, and both, way too often in your life.

The science is that there is no energetics in church services, hence it is no wonder you so quickly run out of gas. This is even true in churches that operate like a pep rally. While people get all fired up to change the world in church, the world's reality and struggles, can sometimes make the weekly depressing time, not worth the effort to go to church in the first place.

Contrary to popular opinion, this lifeless church, is nothing new, and I suspect quite normal for all of church history. However in the mid 20th century it was quite common in what has become known as the liberal protestant era. There is a good chance, that if you now attend a church that calls itself evangelical, it either grew out of that period, or has tried to distance itself from that time.

H. Richard Niebuhr, a theologian from that era, described quite correctly the cause of this dead

*orthodoxy: A God without wrath, brought men without sin, into a Kingdom without judgment, through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross.*

When was the last time, or have you ever heard, a gospel message that used the word propitiate or propitiation? Not atonement, not redemption, salvation, conversion, transformation, regeneration, I could go on. "Jesus died as propitiation for your sins."

One of the most pitiful songs in history was made popular by Old Blue Eyes, Frank Sinatra "I did it my way," or as on the music label, "My Way." What is happening in our modern world today is similar, because you pretty much have to do it your way, because chances are you can't get any help from anyone else, even if you request it. That probably is true for the church pastor also. In some respects there is the opportunity for groups to do it our way, but know one is willing to learn from the past, because the future is all too immediately pressing.

You can't become a member of the Gracious Diversity by doing it your way, or doing it our way. The only way you can become a gifted gracious person is to do it God's way.

God's word makes it pretty clear how to energize church and by extension the rest of the world. The most famous of those passages is found in Romans 1:16: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

1 Peter 1:3-5: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the **power** of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Revelation 12:10a: *Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the **power** of His Christ have come,*

Revelation 19:1: *After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and **power** belong to the Lord our God!*

The church does not have power to transform the world, because we preach: *A God without wrath, brought men without sin, into a Kingdom without judgment, through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross.*

So how can the church become powerful, powerful enough for you and I to have an effect upon the world as members of the class of the Gracious Diversity? Hum, let's see, how about this proclamation: *A Holy God of wrath, declares to debauched sinners, a Kingdom without eternal judgement, only through the ministration of Christ's death on a Cross.*

Well since we got carried away with the Bible stuff, how about an explanation on why you forgot about the Sunday message before you got out of the church parking lot. No, it wasn't because you turned on the football playoffs, or the kids couldn't find the right Veggie Tales DVD. Definitely not because you wanted to get home to shovel snow or work in the yard. How about the whole third chapter of second Timothy, without all those verse numbers that distract our focused concentration (with a few editorial comments):

*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness **but denying its power.** (You sure can't draw a crowd of seekers that way.) *And from such people turn away!* (But be sure to tell them that Jesus loves you.) *For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins,* (Probably expunged from Hillary's translation.) *led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* (But be sure to call now to place your order for this dynamic message.) *Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses,* (Just Old Testament law, we are under grace) *so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.* (Paul is just so un-nurturing.)*

*But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured.* (There must have been sin in Paul's life.) *And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.* (Not if you have enough faith in Faith,

whoever she is.) *But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.* (But everyone is born good, it is just their poor childhood.) *But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* (Then just do what Jesus would do.)

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.* (How can I ever find the time, I really need another job just to make ends meet. I don't have the time to get enough sleep, and surely I cannot truly rest.)

Quiet, be still. Let me ask the question you were about to ask. "What can I do as a post modern, post Christian era, soon to be post consumer, do to access this power of God?"

Answer: When you do anything to try to manipulate God's power proclaimed through the gospel, it becomes strange fire and the energy ceases. You can't even let go and let God. That is just another spin on the strange fire attempt.

If you are familiar enough with the Bible you can find episodes where this power of God becomes manifest. The energy essence is the Glory of God that fills the temple in the Old Testament era, it is the miracles that have no basis in human understanding that the gospels and Paul sometimes talk and write about, some of which are recorded above. God's energy can only be God's energy, it can not be faked by human magicians and sorcerers.

What really happens is that the eternal energy of God's reality becomes manifest in the present, fallen creation. You must let the energetics change you in silent awe, or you must hide from the power. This open concealment is what is described in Revelation 6, when the sixth seal is opened. In this Revelation time however, the power of God is not quite so shielded, but is slightly manifest in judgement of the world and sin, without the restraint offered through the gospel.

It is the power of God under the blood of Jesus Christ that allows you to begin to see that life itself is a gift, everything else, what we consider the good and the bad are also gifts. Gifts not only of God's power, but mostly God's restrained and loving grace.

Jesus speaks of needing to be born again. That born again is the entrance into eternal life, in this fallen world. The Gracious Diversity, have all experienced that transforming power. As life is a gift, everything you have is a gift, received through God's grace, and must be administered through communion with God. To live in that restored creation, you must eat. In the church setting that happens through the Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion.

Through Bread and Wine, all created in ordinary reality, God comes down through Godly grace and consecrates them unto himself. We humans differ on what, how, this actually occurs, because we try to explain the unexplainable. But it happens, and it is through this transcendent transformation of the common that God's power becomes manifest in the church service. It is carried forth by the power of God's word proclaimed in the gospel.

This is where, for the most part, church shuts down. Through the doxology, or the closing blessing, all the gifts of God's grace should be taken to the world, which desperately needs them. However, that does not happen, because church has become rote and happy - clappy, or a lecture, or a divine liturgy no longer divine. Why?

Simply because we no longer consider any of it

divine. We bring strange fire to the altar of the LORD and are not consumed, fried, or smoked, because of God's grace, and we truly don't understand anymore what we are doing. But through us making the true divine worldly, the energetic disappears also.

So just who are the Gracious Diversity? Many are called but few are chosen. The chosen through the grace of God, begin to see that power of God elsewhere in the world, not just in church, or not even in church. The Gracious Diversity sees God's grace present everywhere, in creation, in other people, in life, and vocation. All these attributes, or gifts of life, and many more, are manifestations of God's power, in transcendent diversity in the ever changing world.

The gospel is God's free gift and energy of salvation to fallen mankind. To the Gracious Diversity, life itself becomes the gift which through ordinary means must be shared, because this life is really just a version of eternal life as God's adopted children. Praise God for His power, not ours! That is pretty much the end of today's story, let's go home and exercise our faith!