



# The Wonder Springs Chronicle

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## 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)*

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## The great Gegwatsf Revival

I was very soberly and somberly considering writing this week's article about the latest revival phenomena sweeping the world, when I received an email featuring Ray Stevens and a YouTube rendition of *The Mississippi Squirrel Revival* that took place at the First Self Righteous Church. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNsdF\\_sk7fQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNsdF_sk7fQ)

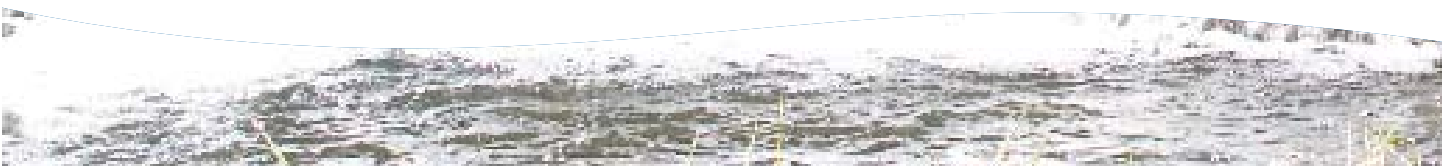
An active squirrel cannot be a better segue into introducing real nature into the understanding of religious revivals. This is especially true because almost all revivals have to be taken with some degree of humor, because if you don't, the members of the First Self Righteous Church will quickly bring you down to their level of scorn of everything and everyone outside the doors.

According to the song the First Self Righteous Church is located in the town of Pascagoula, Mississippi. With a 2000 census of just over 26,000,

Pascagoula is located on the gulf coast at the mouth of the Pascagoula River. Pascagoula basically means "bread eaters" after the Native Americans of the region. The city is the Home of former US Senator Trent Lot and is the birthplace of singer songwriter Jimmie Buffet.

So what is the big deal about the city of Pascagoula? The complex name says it all, along with this vignette of the history. It is the ideal location for revival to breakout, a move of religious excitements that the world has never seen before. However while this revival will breakout at the First Self Righteous Church, this church will be true to it's humanistic enlightenment theology. I am speaking of course about, as I created last week, the complex named Gegwatsf Revival. Pronounced Jeg wa catsf

As defined last week Gegwatsf means: green, environmental, global warming,



cap and trade, salvation fellowship. Where better for this revival to breakout than a shipbuilding and oil town hard hit by Hurricane Katrina. If the Gegwcatsf Revival can breakout in Pascagoula, soon the whole world will be saved. Yes, and I mean the whole world, the people, well that is another story.

As far as saved people, well true to the Pascagoula name, the saved won't be Christians, Jews, Moslems or any other currently well known religion, the saved will be strictly bread eaters. People who eat meat, especially red meat, can't find salvation because cows and other ruminants cause too much flatulence. That gas methane, while a potential form of energy, contributes more to global warming than all the transportation carbon dioxide. Bad cows, not holy cows!

Since we all evolved from a lightning storm, some methane, and a little oxygen, who knows what the future of the universe may hold. This is extremely critical, if no one gets religious about the bovine role in sending the world to a hot hell on earth.

The only real problem with this revival scenario is that of the church music. How in the world is wasting away in Margaritaville going to save the world? We need that ethanol to power our vehicles and trade for carbon credits. Furthermore, a world of dropouts may reduce total carbon emissions but really won't help win the world for the cause. Life isn't a beach after all, just soon to be a hot desert.

Alas, the last best hope for mankind personhood maybe the Margaritaville squirrel revival. Some lime juice, some tequila, a little Triple Sec and salt and the world may more quickly go to hell, but only the Gegwcatsf will care and be saved, which is their self righteous hope all along.

However, the true hope of the world is that they hold there Gegwcatsf Revival and nobody comes. Of course, at the recent G8 summit, China and India told the rest of the world that they didn't really understand the mystique we in the west find so religious. I suppose they don't understand the theological change from "show

me the money" to "show me your cap and trade bureaucracy."

Then the Chinese said, "*They told us that materialistic communism wasn't free. How on God's green earth could they come up with such a stupid elitist narcissistic plan such as cap and trade for carbon credits?*"

Historically, revivalism is America's mode of religious expansion. The premise is build essentially on overcoming individual insecurity through group dynamics. In revival meetings and the megachurches they spawn, the emphasis is on emotion and short on substance. In recent years this dynamic has become less dynamic, pun intended, as we have shifted to a more visually stimulated society. A talking head, 100 meters removed, even if enlarged on the jumbo screen, or on your flat panel TV at home really cannot convey the emotion required in typical Christian revival settings. It just doesn't work the way it once did.

In that light it will be interesting to see how Barack Obama's Presidential nominee acceptance speech at the Democrat Party convention works in a football stadium, rather than in the smaller venue of the convention hall.

As a general rule, Americans today are more insecure than they were while developing our natural frontier, and even more introverted than just a few years ago. As a consequence, they are fearful in large meetings with other people, even if they share the same values; they are still part of the threatening unknown.

The Gegwcatsf Revival does not have that same limitation. The images of polar bears on ice flows, empty glacial valleys, rising temperature charts, and similar stimulations work very well, from your iPod up through the largest big screen presentation venue. In these presentations, reality is altered to fit the message. We are now learning that this has also happened with what is known as the underlying "science." The goal is for you to have an emotional response to the message and take action required by the religion.

Now most Gegwcatsf Revivalists would claim that they are not religious people. This denial comes basically from the premise that they at least mentally affirm an evolutionary worldview, hence they were not created in the image of God, but formed by

highly complex evolutionary happenings that require faith well beyond that capable of human rationality alone. Hence they are perhaps the most easily persuaded to take the leap of faith that we can save the entire planet, have our stuff, enjoy it, and play a significant role in converting others also. To further those conversions, there is no shortage of Gegwcatstf gospel tracts, available in all forms.

The problem with revivalism, whether of the Christian variety or the Gegwcatstf Revival is that, while they claim to deal with the underlying human insecurities of where did I come from, why am I here, what am I to do in the pilgrimage, and where will I go when I die, the emotionalism of the revival can not really answer those questions.

For the most part the revivalist answer is don't sweat the small stuff, even if it really is the big stuff. You are on your own to find and build the foundation under the promised security. When you meet the reality of the real world many times you find out that your emotions don't really work in the real world and you blame the revivalist rather than yourself.

So where do you find truth in the world today?

Contrary to what you might hear on TV, or the self help books you find in the book store or the library, the DVDs you rent from Netflix, buy from Amazon, or the revivalist on your flat screen, absolute truth lies outside your self imposed narcissism.

To push our Wonder Springs form of a reality check, time spent in real nature, not the Discovery Channel nature, will at first threaten your insecurity, but then help you to realize, that nature can and will take care of itself, you, personally, are the endangered species. That is especially true if you don't have real answers to the four questions of origins, reality, and destiny related above.

Atheism really is an urban urbane human development. Just as there are no atheists in foxholes and survival situations, there are no atheists to those who truly have encountered nature in her totality. Furthermore if you have

no understanding of the God of the Christian Bible who created creation, you will end up making gods of your own. You can call that primitive, but that is a true wise and universal reality.

As we have discussed in previous posts, Transcendentalism grew out of a lack of a Transcendent God in either Calvinism or Unitarianism in New England in the middle of the 19th century. Adding a little more to the historical context, this was also shortly after the time of the "Second Great Awakening" of revivalism in American history.

As the patron saint of this awakening and American Revivalism, Charles Finney had a systematic theology that denied all the fundamental presuppositions of historic orthodox Christianity. If that threatens your understanding of Christianity, check it out for yourself. Furthermore, to the detriment of Native Americans, at least in Northwest America, their Christian choice was essentially either Finney revivalism or Roman Catholicism and that choice did not come from the free market place of Christian doctrines and experiences, but from political decisions made by the great White Father back where the sun rose.

That same truth may come to apply to the Gegwcatstf Revival also, the results being the same as happened to the Native American nations, rapid decline and continued subservience to others.

Do your Christian choices of doctrine and experiences come from similar and equally limited religious politics?

Because of the disconnect between the God of creation and the God of the Bible, Christianity today really has no basis by which to provide any constructive criticism of the Gegwcatstf Revival. In fact, evangelicalism through the emerging church movement is becoming one of the focus points of Gegwcatstf Revivalism, basically because they share the same revivalist rootstock. The tree and the fruit, which it produces, is not much different than the Protestant liberalism of the 20th century. It has just been given a new fruit variety name.

The question that more orthodox Christian theologians in the few remaining substantive seminaries have failed to address is can you have a transcendent God, in a world in which the God

of the Bible is divorced from the God of the Creation? Lip service to this unity in diversity is not an acceptable answer in a world that no longer comprehends complex written prose and formal logic; now a world of visual stimulation is the only basis for the acceptance of reality and security.

It is easy to criticize Christian revivalism, Protestant liberalism, the emerging church, transcendentalism, Unitarianism, and any other “ism,” but unless your systematic theology can fully and truly address the transcendence of God to change people’s lives, you are no better than those you so quickly dismiss as being part of the First Self Righteous Church. These seminaries need a squirrel revival along with everyone else.

So what does all this mean?

Gegwcatsf Revivalism is not going to give anyone eternal security in any sense, furthermore it is not going to save the world from human interference. As the true science of climate change becomes better known, the revivalist scam of global warming will produce the same disillusion of hopelessness that the Second Great Awakening produced in upstate New York in response to Finney’s revivalism of emotionalism without the substance of absolute truth.

One piece of good news is that God’s creation, while affected somewhat by man’s operations, mostly by deforestation and over grazing is doing fine and that will continue until it is restored to its former grandeur at the end of this age.

The bad news is that man’s efforts to remove all sorts of trial and tribulation from this world will not succeed. Sinful humanity needs a true savior, that savior is not a grand Gegwcatsf Revival. That Savior is Jesus Christ, the crucified and resurrected Messiah. That is the absolute answer, for there is no other alternative.

The Bible warns of many false messiahs coming in the last of the last days, before the return of Christ. With the rise of visual stimulation replacing true reality, that act is getting easier to perform, and while it may lead to fame and fortune, it is an act nonetheless.

However technology is essentially doctrinally neutral, it is just that sound Christian teaching is so tightly tied to the way things have always been, true Christians fail to see the opportunity that this external substantial change presents.

The Apostle Paul gave perhaps his greatest discourse to the Greeks on Mars Hill in Athens. It is time for the Christian church to again use this absolute unchanging message, to a world theologically speaking not all that different than that Greek city. It might take a squirrel in a shoebox, escaping in the back of the First and the Last Self Righteous Church to change the world, but to use the concluding words of the song:

*Now you’ve heard the bible story I guess*

*How He parted the waters for Moses to pass*

*Oh the miracles God has wrought in this old world*

*But the one I’ll remember ‘til my dyin’ day*

*Is how he put that Church back on the narrow way*

*With a half crazed Mississippi squirrel*

Chorus:

*The day the squirrel went berserk*

*In the First Self Righteous Church*

*In the sleepy little town of Pascagoula*

*It was a fight for survival that broke out in revival*

*They were jumpin’ pews and shoutin’ Hallelujah!*

There probably is more truth in those words than we will ever care to admit.

*They were jumpin’ pews and shoutin’ Hallelujah!*

*Amen!*