



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

21 May 2008 ; Volume 10, Number 20

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 email:

jerryb@wondersprings.org

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

Reflections & talking points

In recent weeks I have been listening to a great number of people espousing talking points on various subjects. That spin basically comes from two sides:

“Things are bad and getting worse unless you adopt this specific plan.”

“Things are pretty good and if all we do is dwell on the negative all the doom and gloom will become a self fulfilling prophecy.”

The reality lies someplace in the middle, but for some reason not only do we not hear the middle, the middle ground seems to have been swept away. People have sought the high ground on either bank while the floodwaters have wiped out the middle ground and covered the fertile valley soil.

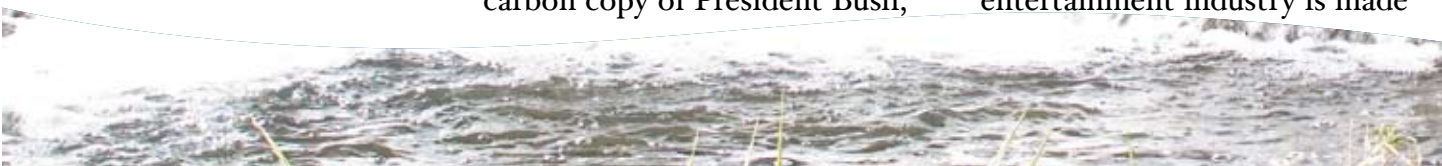
Recently I heard a couple of Democrat senators expressing their view on the attractiveness of their candidate for President, either Clinton or Obama. They both continually mentioned how McCain was, or was becoming, a carbon copy of President Bush,

who has some of the lowest popularity ratings in the history of such things.

What they seemed to have just overlooked is that the popularity ratings of Congress, both Democrat and Republican are about a third lower than the President. Furthermore, all three major Presidential candidates are members of that less popular arm of the Federal government. Candidates still are courting their historic political bases, and as of yet there have been very little if any ideas that have any merit towards actually contributing to some positive change.

Obama and Clinton's messages seem to be messages of the historic liberal in this era's definition of liberal. That old news is that big government will make your life better, elect me and we will change the world into your likeness of utopia on earth.

One of the laments of the Republicans is that, the entertainment industry is made



up of people who work for all these liberal causes. To give these people a break, they are some of the most gifted, especially artistically, and have made a great deal of money doing their work. This is typically greatly beyond the work's true contribution to society. Therefore it is admirable that they want to give to those less fortunate, sometimes in diverse ways. There is really no mechanism within the more conservative sphere for them to do this without giving up their cause to someone else that will distribute it for them and take all the credit, but will assume none of the responsibility.

Bluntly, many liberals are trying to give something away and big government and non governmental organizations seem to be the only mechanisms within society to do that sort of thing. The Christian church, which was given that calling by God, is too busy doing other things, and not doing those other things too well either.

Therefore traditional conservatives on the other hand really have not achieved that liberal level of contentment yet; they still want more for a diverse number of reasons. The religious right of recent vintage had that message almost exclusively. They wanted to form a Christian utopia on these shores, with moral and political restraints coming from their understanding of evangelical Christianity, and if you would just send them a check, especially a very large check, they will do that work for you.

So we have two extreme views of society and two groups of people who have the goal of making your life better, in spite of your own personal opinion on the subject or subjects. On the one hand you have people who consist of an enlightened elite who want to make your life better through government regulations and handouts. On the other are those of a religious enlightenment elite who want to make our life better through religious regulations and handouts.

This of course creates another group of people who only want to be left alone to be able to do what they want, in the way they want to do it. That ethos says by definition something good comes out of this worldview, but perhaps that is there wishful elitist thinking also.

So here are the choices facing the United States, big government, big religion, and big freedom. It seems we left out big business, for they have not just a national plan, but a much more encompassing global plan in which you can give to get also. At least big business is based solely on materialism, unless you would also give that worldview a religious context.

St. Augustine is remembered for a number of his works, but the one most relevant here is the "City of God." In that work Augustine developed the worldly concept of two kingdoms active in the affairs of man, the "City of God" and the "City of Man."

If there is any truth in what we just previously discussed we have basically four kingdoms, which essentially are both material and religious at the same time, or perhaps more to the point, it is impossible to separate the religion from the application.

In terms of Christianity, especially as practiced in American evangelicalism, they have moved the City of God into the City of Man and decided that this is a better life, or in a more modern spin, the two kingdoms have morphed into one entity. The same could be also said for our other three cultures.

So keeping with our flood metaphor we have four shining cities on four hills, each beaconing us to come and live, and the vast majority of people are just trying to not be overwhelmed by the floods of this current season.

The Bible of Jews and Christians makes it quite plain that mankind was created by God to be a gardener. Both people groups have joined the rest of the developed world by rejecting that calling. As a consequence rather than having a unique perspective on how the world works and how humans should live their lives we, meaning everyone in the national and global context, have lost our means to be positive agents of change.

Simply put, the world is going to hell and those called to provide the direction have foregone their calling.

The typical response from evangelical Christianity is that we are not pagans, for pagans need Jesus. But if Christianity no longer preaches a Jesus who is both the Creator of the Universe and unique Savior of mankind, fully sent to bring a

foreign righteousness to all humanity, they are proclaiming a different Jesus, a Jesus of their own creation.

That now proclaimed Jesus, is the Jesus of Babel, of Sodom, Gomorrah, the Jesus of the City of man, not of Augustine's City of God.

Pagans need to understand, as did the Greeks when Paul preached in Athens, the idol of the unknown God is Jesus Christ. Furthermore, I believe pagans completely understand that something is missing in the Jesus of materialistic stuff.

I do not share a belief with the developed world's concept of global warming, but to their benefit they are discussing some sort of limitations on materialistic growth. That is a very different worldview than you hear in virtually any Protestant church in the land.

When conservatives talk of energy independence they mean that we get it in North America where ever it may lie, and whatever it costs, environmentally, financially, or energetically. There is no concept of a garden and gardening, but more rape and plunder. For the most part this is where American evangelicalism has made it's home.

If you look seriously at the development of modern culture in history, right along with the speculators and those seeking worldly riches came the Black Robes and the evangelists. That is still true in most Christianity today. There is a definite link with their Jesus and prosperity. That is a different Jesus than what the Bible discusses.

The Jesus of the Bible was a friend of sinners and tax collectors, an enemy to the religious always right. The Jesus of the Bible didn't proclaim His gospel from the multi campus, "World Ministry Center." To put it in modern perspective, Jesus probably worked out of a bus stopping to talk with people wherever His Father told Him to go and prepared a way.

There are natural changes that have always taken place within the world. We have become complacent and believe in somehow can change reality into a world of our wishful thinking. That by definition is a worldview, but really a sign of sickness and disease rather than God created and sustained health.

The simplest reason that it seems as if America's operational apparatus has no answers, is because it has no answers. Any answer the will work will not come from the City of Man or the City of God as they now exist. The answers will come through God, and as we have stated in earlier articles in the Symbiotic Wealth series, the Valley of the Dry Bones.

It will be a miracle that all will have to understand as coming solely from God. Each human being in somehow will make a choice to believe that it comes from God or is part of natural human evolution. You can't have it both ways, for they are two mutually exclusive paradigms. That is about as simple as it can be stated.

The question as God moves us towards a new understanding of His glory and purpose is will you, lead, follow, get out of the way, or be a stubborn obstacle. If you look only within, you will find no true answers nor will they have any meaning to life in the greater sense. That is pretty much where we are today, but we won't be there for long.