



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

15 July 2009; Volume 11, Number 28

The Wonder Springs Chronicle

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Three Medicines

Somewhat building on last week's discussion of hummingbirds as a natural model for humans in this new century, this week we will attempt to break down that model into three specific paradigms. Paradigm is a pretty generic concept that today we would probably call worldviews. In the past and spun through western culture they would probably call them three religions. Broadening the concept and making it, what we the enlightened would call primitive or not evolved, those indigenous peoples would probably call them three medicines.

This concept came to mind as I was reading a book on the Protestant Reformation. In that book Person A says to Person B, "You know there are two religions present in this world. One religion is true Christianity, which rests entirely upon the unmerited grace of the Savior, Jesus Christ and His life, death, and resurrection to provide justification for a person's

righteousness before God. The second religion, and much more popular, is one in which people perform all sorts of good works by which they think they can merit God's generosity to save them from eternal damnation."

At the conclusion of that statement Person B agrees with Person A. In this particular example the first religion referred to those who were part of the reformation medicine, while the second religion, or medicine referred to the papists, which we would call Roman Catholics.

What the historical context of this conversation shows is the subtle ascendancy through time of another worldview, religion, or medicine as old as human life itself. The Bible speaks to it in the Book of Genesis as the "Fall of Man." That story begins in Chapter 3 and is the underlying theme throughout the rest of the whole Bible. That medicine, promoted by the serpent, is the human desire not so much to



be religious, but to be the author of religion, to become God personified.

Therefore in the flow of time and the development of human culture, we see in the light of human evolution the upward progress of humanity developing from three medicines at the beginning, to two medicines during the Reformation, until today the model to be emulated, as the highest and best representation of humanity, is our unique personal godliness. We have no need for a savior, for we will save ourselves, both individually and collectively. There remains only the medicine of the self deified of our own enlightenment.

So why do we need to discuss three medicines rather than just a discussion of worldviews, or religions?

The reason is quite simple. In our age, worldviews are totally pluralistic. Everyone has a worldview. You have yours; I have mine. The followers of Islam have theirs. In India and China they are just another form of the human diversity of worldviews. If we would only just accept passively each other's worldview, we would achieve world peace, prosperity, and the human animal would finally reach the zenith of the evolutionary continuum.

That surely is the prescription of today, for the curing of society's ills. There is only one major problem of that medicine. That problem is all those other people groups are not like us. The summary is best described in the toast to human achievement, "Here's to you; and here is to me, may we never disagree. But in case we do; to hell with you, here's to me."

So in the economic sense those who need to go to hell are either those "capitalists," or those "government progressives." The good thing, or the bad thing, is hell is just an invention of some of those more primitive and not highly evolved worldviews those religious people. Once those religious people are eliminated from the gene pool, then society will be cured and we will no longer need cultural medicine.

The problem then is as long as there is one other person on the face of the earth; there will be "the them." The them of the medicine of

worldviews doesn't solve the impossible quest for us to all live in harmony. We, the enlightened, know how to do that quite well, just let everyone else understand their lower evolutionary place. Of course the enlightened are the solution, not the problem.

So except for the evolutionary enlightened, everyone else should plainly see that the medicine of passive worldviews has really no standard by which a real worldview civilization can actually function. Hence we must return to the medicines of our Reformation persons to see if they give us a possibility of a real unity in diversity.

Back in those olden days of the Reformation, the concept of hell and heaven were understood to be totally a reality of the future world. The goal of virtually everyone was to go to heaven and not to hell, by whatever means it might take. That is probably true essentially because the present was truly a daily struggle, at least by today's standards, and that future was where just rewards were given to us and punishments given to those bad other people.

The Reformation however was a European event. But in the rest of the world a formalized religious structure also dominated the community, society, or civilization. One human constant dominated those religions, which we are today unwilling to accept. In the medieval civilization, or its similar counterpart in the rest of the world, those who took the evolving worldview medicine, as we understand it, were eliminated from the gene pool.

Some of that gene cleansing had to do with the true scientific principle of natural selection. In those days in order to be a member of your social class you had to actually work to be a member of that social class. If you were unwilling to contribute tangibly to the community you were not treated as special in a positive sense but were ostracized from all society. That was true no matter your role in life, from serf to the emperor, or even the pope.

At Wonder Springs we write a lot about natural energetics. In that light in those less developed cultures, that which did not contribute to the sustainable energetics of the specific community was eliminated because true survival required it. Today a lot of the nonsense we hear promoted to build, maintain, or renew our communities, must be understood not only in the sense of prosperity, but more importantly the surplus of cheap energy. Once

that energy equilibrium shifts, culture needs to shift also, or prosperity will suffer needlessly. That is not a worldview that is simply a natural law.

Bring this up in an enlightened conversation and the enlightened quickly show the reality of their societal surplus. The truly enlightened, by nature of their intellect, need to be pampered by their very nature; hence their work is always positive and uplifting for them and has only enjoyable physical labor involved, like working out at the health club.

Human logic dictates that you need to work and contribute to your culture to survive. Any true advancement and the resulting increase in wealth stems from the more efficient application of information and energy. In that respect muskets quickly dominate bows, arrows, or blowguns. In that we quickly understand the exploitation of western culture around the world, but also for Native American peoples the introduction of the horse and the gun, also made their lives easier and much more productive almost immediately.

However if we just look at the technology we miss the true medicine that drove the drive. When your culture is immersed in creation you must live with the reality of natural law, but you also understand the beauty of common grace. Borrowing from last week's concept of hummingbirds, outwardly we see really little utilitarian value in a bird that weighs very little. But without their presence in forested regions the diversity of many plants, that supply hummingbird nectar, would not survive. Feeder or no feeder you quickly understand that there is a grand design to it all. Furthermore that design is complex and magnificently beautiful. The effect of it all is a tension between awesome power and tranquil peace.

While driving last week I pulled up behind some compact vehicle with two bumper stickers placed well above the bumper so that everyone could see. The first sticker was basically a worldview sticker we discussed earlier. The second was a specific quote from Gandhi, which essentially states: "I have no problem with Christ, but I do have a problem with Christians."

If we use the second medicine from our earlier Reformation example, what Gandhi and this person were saying was that Christians today for the most part fall into the camp of the works righteousness medicine. Put more bluntly, from outward appearances, most Protestant Christians are more works righteous than most papists or Roman Catholics.

Last December we did a series of articles and posts relating to a couple of books, "Quitting Church" by Julia Duin and "Christless Christianity" by Michael Horton. The emphasis in the books and the articles is that people are voluntarily leaving or are being forced out of all types of Protestant churches because today's "Christians" have a different understanding of Christianity's medicine than what caused the Reformation five hundred years ago. Generally speaking modern evangelicals are more zealous for their good works than Roman Catholics, but yet lack the religious doctrines that even in their cultic view Mormons would find grossly simplistic.

Has today's Christianity really just become a modern, or post modern worldview medicine? The answer probably is yes definitely, with limited exemptions!

The essence of the third medicine is that all human beings have a problem with Jesus Christ, the Creator of the universe, savior of fallen humanity, and eventually restorer of the unblemished unity in diversity of natural creation and all of life.

Gandhi, the person in the car, all worldview adherents, evangelicals, Mormons, Moslems, all religions, you and I believe we should be able to save ourselves and the world by our selfish good works. Today until we realize that ain't going to happen there is not going to be any lasting economic recovery. The world of global consumer prosperity has run out of gas and all the funny money liquidity that governments can create is not going to change that reality.

Christianity divorced from the Creator will not and is not succeeding. Just like politicians, too many pastors have a vested interest in the material world, either through worldly appropriations or with the hope of being translated from the material into the spiritual.

For a brief period during the Reformation there was a basic understanding that without grace from God we are all doomed. There still is a remnant of that amazing Grace, but before it can work, we all need to understand the common heritage of “a wretch like me.”

There is one medicine that does cure all the ills of humanity, that is Jesus the Christ, who didn't not consider his station as God to be the ultimate, but became a human being, and offered his life, so that we might understand one day the true gift of the union of natural life and spiritual life.

That is big medicine because in that form of Christianity race and human religion disappear, humility is continually ascendant, and religion, as we understand it, disappears and in its stead a visible and invisible unity in diversity transcends all of creation.

One day there will occur that final hour when this medicine will be applied, no prophet will foresee its coming, but the whole working of universal time space matter reality will become apparent, and to those who have taken the medicine of unmerited grace it will be a stupendous gift. For those who rest upon their assurance of the other medicines, it will be a sorry time. For at that time the oneness of the one true Divine Nature of a United and Diverse Trinity will be visibly revealed.

Ultimately that's all there is folks.