



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

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Contact Information:

Jerry Bannon

Publisher

Wonder Springs

36 Merkel Road

Kettle Falls, Washington 99141

phone: 509.496.5855

blog: www.wondersprings.org email:

jerryb@wondersprings.org

chronicle@wondersprings.org

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The Mission, mission

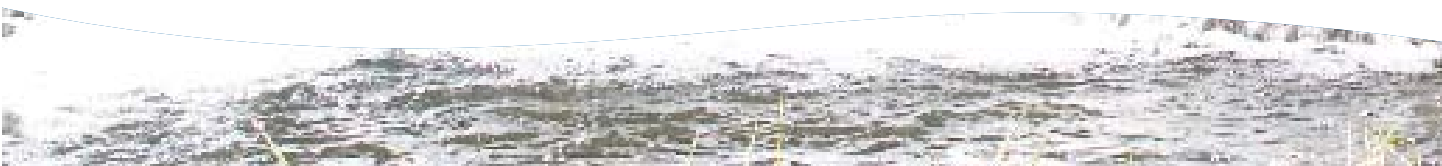
As this New Year begins, the current and pending real world indicators don't look all that optimistic. The latest from the emerging President is that his economic stimulus package could easily reach a trillion dollars. The Federal budget deficit could be a few hundred billion beyond that, and virtually all our states are in dire economic straights. Furthermore, all this monetary chaos is expected to continue well into the future.

Capitalism in its greedy worship of money alone, precipitated this current crisis and at least at present spin asks for more freedom to do it all again. If government would collect no taxes from anyone, then the economy would grow into a giant economic utopia. However, at least for the short term, Wall Street needs some government bailout money to set the ship on course. I think not, that they will not get the money; I think not that it will work.

What is missing in each of these wonderful schemes is any sense of a reality that personal peace and affluence is not only a bankrupt economic model, this all stems from an complete insolvency of the underlying materialist philosophy. Neither of our addicted to their own steroids models above, is willing to accept this absolute truth.

To focus on these true deficits is to say that we are in the secular world trying to achieve a true mission impossible. This is not a Peter Graves or Tom Cruise action fantasy where the good guy struggles for the whole episode to overcome the bad guy. This is a reality world in which at best the good and the bad are so intertwined that there can be no real resolution of the conflict. Before our current problems can be solved we need to redefine the mission.

This new mission statement is not going to come from any players in any of the above. The



only hope for our struggling world is that we redefine the goals of all humanity beyond just tangible material reality. I suppose some good news in all of this is that in the course of all human history, the totally materialistic worldview has little precedence.

In other words this is the only time in history man has not looked in some way for guidance from some type of higher power. This godless materialism, is at best a twentieth century phenomena and has earnestly ruled in the west since it defeated the Soviet form in the 1980s. The end of the Cold War has brought atheistic material prosperity to all, Hallelujah!

For its part the Protestant church in the west has embraced all these evolutionary advancements with evangelistic zeal. Therefore, we see the God who created the universe and mankind in His likeness, now beginning to recreate His church in accordance to its true Biblical mission. Before we get to that mission, let us look briefly at the three prime mission statements that form the underlying odious philosophies, that are used to construct the "Statement of Faith" in a contemporary church bulletin or website.

The first article of that philosophical creed is that the current church body is authorized by God to make converts in His name. The church, by any means they deem appropriate, is to get people to make decisions for Christ, for people to ask Jesus into their heart.

This rewording of the great commission of Matthew 28:18 20 and Mark 16:15 18 essentially means that instead of doing the work of man, defined as making disciples and preaching the gospel, the church has claimed the power to convert God's elect, and consciously refrained from preaching the true transcendent gospel and teaching the wisdom of God's sovereignty. Succinctly, the impossible mission we do right away, the difficult we decide to neglect, for it is too complicated.

The second article of the post Christian world church is to change the world for the better, not by church works of charity, but through governmental programs aimed at legislated morality and egalitarian outcomes.

This concept of creating the eternal Jerusalem here on earth is one of the foundational principles of the founding of the American republic. The whole constitutional principle now stated as the "separation of church and state" essentially rests on my belief that my "City of God" is morally and physically superior to your eternal city, hence regarding your religious dogma, "Don't tread on me!"

The third and final religious article rests upon the presumption that "God wants you to have your best life now." This takes the concept of making the world a better place and not only personalizes it into your life and placing it entirely in a materialist world, it furthermore defines your access to the affluence as an act of faith, and struggle and affliction as either unconfessed sin or lack of faith.

So in this current Christian creed we see in the first article, the transcendent gospel made a natural act. In the second article, the eternal state, naturally is brought into the present. In the third article all growth of personality through stress, strife, and affliction, are realities that need to be suppressed by striving for only material comfort.

The true reason for the church is to accept the reality that God alone, through Jesus Christ alone calls and chooses this elect through transcendent faith alone. Second, that disciples of Jesus Christ are not created by a false denial of pain or suffering, but through the process of sanctification as we transcendentally realize that the grace of God alone is sufficient for all our struggles. Finally, that eternal Jerusalem is just that, and eternal destination of hope, for a pilgrimage in a world that is realistically not the final destination of the Christian, the adopted child of God.

Since many of our current churches are an anathema to the historic universal church, it really should come as no surprise that in increasing numbers Christians are quitting church, becoming revolutionaries, or forced to become self feeders.

Part of that great commission in Matthew and Mark cited above is to take that gospel and make disciples in the whole world. With inward focus, upon the elevation of the self as a support community, the church pays some lip service to foreign missions to establish like bodies, but is very threatened by any missional aspect of church that may upset the status quo here in the mother land.

So we see, just as in the common world of business and politics, a worldview that will not accept the true reality of the false philosophical worldview that underlies all current operations.

So just what should be the great commission operations of the church? What is the Mission, mission?

The mission, states that the church is created as a community of Christian believers, unified in their diversity. That unity in diversity is basically the only satisfactory explanation of the Triune Christian Godhead. As I was updating the blog archive this month I also found a series of posts in July about the founding principle of the American experiment stemming from the Latin, “E Pluribus Unum” out of the many one .

That means essentially that when you take all the spin that we now hear about the founding of the United States, the E Pluribus Unum wisdom of the founders, Christian, deist, agnostic, and atheist, was the reality of a transcendent absolute, that was needed to hold the whole experiment together.

The motto of today’s America, and our prime export to the world, is essentially “out of the many, me.” To alter the phrase of Abraham Lincoln, “That union is destined and predestined to perish from the earth.”

The reason Wonder Springs and the Chronicle exist is also to report on that unity in diversity in God’s creation. Bringing that common revelation of natural law and common grace into the human world, you find most people seem to like to express their bias about it through word and or action. Most fear that reality and flee from natural wisdom beyond human comprehension. Some think they can conquer that reality by their self sufficient abilities. Those who survive, either worship creation as some transcendent pagan deity, or know this Creator personally through both Biblical specific law and amazing grace. The world’s greatest mystery of unity in diversity.

Out of the many, we have been forced to become isolated. The power of the Internet doesn’t really rest upon access to information, good or bad. Its power lies in the ability for

the isolated to join and relate to others who could possibly share their views, and accept them as true human beings. This is true, especially for those on the political far left and right, but presents its most potential for those who are more centrist in their lifestyle and views. The problem is that nobody or organization is willing to pay someone to not be a pundit or an extremist. At least at this time.

However, this Internet power only creates an artificial reality and the desire for true community. In the modern world, true community cannot coexist with a material worldview that says by its own definition that really there is no meaning to life outside of material pleasures and realities.

The basis for creating that unity in diversity in the church, and by extension to the common world, is found in the Bible in many places, however the concept of “living stones” found in 1 Peter 2:1-12, which quotes Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22, Isaiah 8:14, is perhaps the easiest place to concisely comprehend that transcendent reality:

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

“Behold, I lay in Zion

A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,

And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient,

“The stone which the builders rejected

Has become the chief cornerstone,”

and

“A stone of stumbling

And a rock of offense.” They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Living stones, we really have no problem looking at stones as uniquely placed, but we have a real problem with the unique characteristic of each rock. Rocks are commodities just as are common bricks. The whole concept gets transcendent when they become living and their placement becomes not only in place, but also in mission. We just can't handle that complexity, and therefore we resort essentially to some spin on our previously stated evangelical creed. Therefore, as a consequence when it all falls apart, both in the church and in the national communities, we treat the symptoms rather than the disease. The disease is human depravity, sin, and not evolutionary goodness.

When it all falls apart, the world says we didn't know, but in Psalm 19 and elsewhere we understand that that lack of knowledge is through choice not benign ignorance. When churches collapse, I suppose church leadership would and will say the same thing. The response from Willow Creek and George Barna is for the church to tell mature Christians to autonomously create your own transcendent nature, and the church does not and should not get in the way of that worldly scheme to create the desperately isolated. That happens just because churches refuse to face and to do their Divinely created responsibility. Not only does judgment begin with the people of God, Christian leaders are and will be held to a higher standard.

In that regard we will end at this point. Next week we shall layout some missional missions. The very nature of these missions are not formed from natural programs as we so like to create, but how the church may become facilitators of God's amazing and mysterious grace.