



# *The* Wonder Springs Chronicle

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## The Wonder Springs Chronicle

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## Water to wine

When the name of your organization is built upon the concept of refreshing water, it is always of interest how various enterprises use water in marketing their products. As a general rule, new and improved signifies that someone found a way to use more water and hence make the product weigh more, or be softer, or smoother, and still charge the same, or more money for the “improved” product. In reality the water is essentially a free filler to give you less of what you think you paid for.

I like to have bacon and eggs at least once on weekends for breakfast. A man can only live just so healthy and then life becomes a drag. The best bacon I ever had came from a meat packing plant in Wilbur when my mother lived there. They had to close their doors when the state required expensive upgrades to their facilities that could not be justified based on the potential returns.

I have made my own dry cured bacon, but it takes facilities that I no longer have at my disposal. Costco has dry cured bacon, one of the few places it is available, but I really don't like the taste. So I am continually on the lookout for different brands of commercial bacon to try out. Last week at the supermarket, there was a 20 oz packet of thick sliced bacon, which was nearing the pull date and marked down. I decided to give it a try. When I open the package Wonder Springs, as I tried to guess how they got so much water in something that is supposed to cook up somewhat crispy.

Since that time, I think I have figured it out. Now the true goal is to sell you as much water as possible and still make you think you are getting a good deal. To do that you create a brine that will give you the smoke taste you think will sell. Once cured it is pretty squishy so you deeply chill and maybe even freeze the bacon slab so that it will slice evenly.



Then while it is still frozen you package it for distribution. Once the frozen water thaws you have the squishy wet bacon I popped in the pan and it shrank to about two thirds the precooked size.

Now that energy prices have made the transport of water much more expensive we are beginning to see many more drinks delivered sans water. You must add your own water in your own container. The manufacturer gives you a powder in a little Mylar tube and you add it to your own tap, bottled, or designer water, which saves everyone money, especially the luscious drink maker. However it does make you think, I am paying a whole lot of money for a few grams of artificial sweetening and flavoring, when the chilled attractive bottle looked like a better deal.

We could go on with lots of other illustrations of water in all aspects of enterprise but, many readers understand my distain for ethanol in fuel, which is really just water that has had one of the hydrogen atoms replaced with an ethane group, ethane hydroxide if you will. This wonderful chemical reaction gives us wine and beer, and all derivative beverages. That is where the utilization should end, especially for those who cannot use these beverages in definite moderation.

But no, the corn lobby can only sell so much whisky, and moonshine is highly frowned on by the federal government, hence it is now blended at about a 10 percent additive to our motor fuel. By no amazing feat, your vehicle now gets about 10 percent less in fuel economy. Older cars that don't have parts designed for ethanol have problems, as to virtually all highly efficient small engines like on chainsaws, water pumps, even snowmobiles and watercraft. Succinctly put, ethanol from temperate climate planted and harvested crops will always be a loser except in the eyes of the varying special rights special interest lobbies and their federal government cronies.

All this points out that America, not all that long ago, used to be thought of as the home of high quality goods and services, at pretty much all levels. Now it seems to be how can we squeeze a little more profit out of something by changing

cheapening the formula. After all in a consumer society, global corporate management believes that people are too stupid to know the difference, especially if we sell it as new and improved. And since everyone else is doing it, over time the quality of everything deteriorates to the point to where any semblance of the product to the original is pretty much in the marketing hype.

As we debate reforming national healthcare it looks like everything is either watered down or the American people are, or about to get hosed.

To say that is all about the money is simplistic and basically denies any philosophical underpinning that separates the human condition from the chipmunks, sasquatches, and polar bears. I suppose it is too much to say that you have reverence for your Saturday bacon and eggs, but at least the pig is committed and the chicken is only involved. However, it wasn't all that long ago, that your Chevy was revered as American as hot dogs and apple pie. Now I assume the New General Motors are still going to make some type of Chevrolet, but they will never be the classic revered Chevy.

In a world that teaches everyone that this is all there is, there ain't no more, and we evolved here out a slough of goop struck by lightning, there seems to be no a priori evidence for any basis for reverence. In a world in which reverence does not exist, the fault for the lack of transcendent reverence lies directly with Christianity, and specifically Protestant evangelical Christianity, which has become so material in achieving "your best life now," it is really no different than those making soupy bacon.

Christianity has lost its power to transform the culture, because it has divorced itself from the power of God. Specifically modern evangelicalism has just substituted a New Testament covenant of law, for the Jewish Old Testament covenant of law. So the Jews had the Ten Commandments and the Torah, modern evangelicalism has the Ten Suggestions and heaven helps those who help themselves.

What is missing is the covenant of grace, amazing grace that saved a wretch like we. As Jesus said the righteous have no need of a savior, hence Pharisees in Jesus day didn't need redemption, nor do the Pharisees of today. You can get a witness from pretty much every heathen and pagan in the world, as well as most non evangelical Christians,

that “self righteous bigots” populate most of evangelicalism.

Wesleyan holiness, Arminianism, as well as revivalism are deep rivers running through evangelicalism, hence the belief that little good could come from Calvinism. However the systematic Calvinist has some theology that would lead evangelicalism out of the evolving created Slough of Despair. That theology is encapsulated in the concept of Guilt, Grace, and Gratitude.

Summarized briefly, in order to understand God’s Grace properly, you must also fully understand your sinful, condemning, guilt before God’s holiness. Once, and if you get the guilt right, then you objectively and emotionally begin to grasp the depth of God’s grace. When you understand that you have freely been given that gift of grace with no merit of your own, and are justified as holy before God because of Jesus’ incarnation, death, and resurrection. Then you experience the gratitude that empowers you to actually produce good works in the power of God, rather than your own strength.

Being a little simpler minded, as we began this blog format in November 2006, we posted two articles based upon the concept of wearing your CAP. CAP stands for the acrostic: Condemnation Adoption Praise. The first was “Wear your cap!” [http://www.wondersprings.org/pastarchives/pastarchives/files/wearcap11\\_15\\_06.php](http://www.wondersprings.org/pastarchives/pastarchives/files/wearcap11_15_06.php) the second, “Thanksgiving Cap” [http://www.wondersprings.org/pastarchives/pastarchives/files/thankcap11\\_22\\_06.php](http://www.wondersprings.org/pastarchives/pastarchives/files/thankcap11_22_06.php)

To put these concepts in a form more familiar to old fashion Christian fundamentalism you might use the terms: Sin Repentance

Worship. However to be worthwhile you must understand that repentance is not generated within the individual, but rather a gift of God’s grace and legal adoption as one of his children.

There is a worldly concept that seems to think that all the world needs is love. As with all worldly endeavors there is an element of truth in that, but love by itself must be framed in some sort of context. Pastors are famous for

teaching the Greek definitions of love, which is a variation on that worldly theme. However the power of God rests only in love that is the result of human gratitude, praise, and worship. All three words signify the unity and diversity of God’s “Appreciation Love” to use a concept developed by C. S. Lewis.

If you think about it, Appreciation Love is an attribute of God, and a gift of his grace to his human family. Appreciation Love is both time sensitive and timelessly eternal. Therein lies that power for God to be present in his triune personality in any of our circumstances, whether they be pleasant, difficult, or mundane.

To put this in a relevant context, let us look to what is happening in the United States concerning healthcare. As a general concept that most would agree upon, we are paying for wine and getting water. To turn this around if you want water healthcare, you should be able to get it. If you want your own special vintage you should be able to get that also. This shows the unique individuality of each human being.

What the President and his cohorts don’t seem to realize is when it comes to life and death, and healthcare is really about life and death, only the very liberal believe that one size fits all. Further complicating the issue, which no one is talking about, is healthcare is an individual expression of ones life and place in history. Everyone reveres and has Appreciation Love for that concept and true or false, a lot of people are beginning to take the threat to their personal eternity personally.

There is an old and very wise saying in the field of Christian missions. That truth acknowledges that you are immortal until such time that God is done with your pilgrimage on this earth, and then you get promoted. Most people, and that includes most Christians, do not share that worldview. However the truth of that reality, of God’s deliverance from absolutely impossible situations, personally and in print, are really countless in frequency. Appreciation Love made the calming way, when no natural way existed.

Put another way, if you have invested your whole life into yourself, even others, and worthwhile projects, without the power vested in gratitude, praise, and worship, to and from God, your

healthcare is your one gift to make it last. Hence price is not the most important product, and you will do whatever it takes to pay and extend the reality that someday you will have to come to grips with your own mortality. Appreciation Love is the only power on this earth that can truly transcend that reality of human mortality.

When I had my heart surgery, with excellent medical insurance, previously absent for the span of almost 20 years, it was amazing the grace through Appreciation Love that I experienced. When they lay you on the stainless steel gurney and tell you to count back from 100, either the cardio vascular surgeon, perhaps the best at this specialty in the world, will do his job or that is the end. When they are replacing your aortic valve and your ascending aorta to the arch of the arteries that go to your head, it either works, or you are in eternity. There is no closing you up and saying you have this long to live; that is it, finished. From the diagnosis of this condition through all the preparations I was absolutely convinced that there was nothing to fear.

Only the Christian church and Christians can truly deal with death. You didn't pass away, or even pass on into some Elysian Field, you died to this world, and you await the hope of the resurrection of the dead. From that point according to Christian theology you will have an unblemished view of God and enjoy him forever, in the company of uncountable numbers of others. However it is an exclusive family, a family not based on being a good person, but a family based on your blood brother Jesus Christ.

Instead most Christians seem to think that ObamaCare is the issue by which socialism will be fought. However, if the church and Christians would spend their time and resources on the furtherance of Appreciation Love and begin to again proclaim this gospel of good news, without all the worldly hype, healthcare as well as the other cares of this world will be changed from tepid water to vintage wine in communion with the savior Jesus Christ who did it all. Then in that future date Wonder Springs will mean the fluidity of Appreciation Love as the taste of God's living water. Living water is the drink all humans seek, but few are those who will accept the reality of its cost.