



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

24 November 2010; Volume 12, Number 46

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Blessed are the Elastic

Yesterday the North and South Koreans exchanged about 200 artillery rounds in a confrontation centered on a small South Korean island just south of the Northern Limit Line that divides the countries since the end of conflicts in the 1950s. Stock markets around the world reacted adversely to these hostilities.

Today we will see if the don't mess with my junk TSA airline screening pat-down protest will amount to much.

Tomorrow in the United States we celebrate our annual Thanksgiving holiday. What started out, as a solemn day to thank God for his tangible and intangible blessings, is becoming a festival of gluttony and cult football.

We live in such a boring world in which not much happens anymore.

When we listen to Glenn Beck, he asks us to, "Think outside the box." Seems to me that begs the question — what box? Taking it

a little farther, thinking doesn't change anything, in order to make changes; boxes seem to be the place where you put your junk until such a time as you can either use it again, or more likely just keep it stored in boxes and let your heirs sort through it all.

Chuck Smith, the founder of the Calvary Chapel evangelical movement, has a saying, "Blessed are the flexible — for they shall see God act in their lives." There is another "Where God leads, God provides." I think I am beginning to understand the latter statement. The problem is God's provision almost all of the time is so complex that my simple desires stretch me, rather than providing the security I had hoped for.

For Thanksgiving this year I think I have come up with a concept that encompasses all of the above. That statement is, "Blessed are the elastic, for they will begin to understand God's grace."

You can find this elastic concept with the Apostle Paul,



he was stretched, but returns to his original state, and that stretching doesn't make him weaker, but stronger in the Grace of God, for the enhancement of his ministry.

Below are some examples of elastic from the dictionary, notice the duality of nature:

Able to encompass variety and change — flexible and adaptable.

Springy and buoyant — an elastic step.

Between economic supply and demand — elastic prices.

The times in which we live really are not elastic, but quite rigid. Therefore any elasticity has to come through us.

No matter where we live on this big blue globe suspended in space, for we mortal humans it is a time where elasticity is needed. We are surrounded by noise, literally and in every other construct we attempt to construct. Much of it comes in the form of regulations that we are told will make our lives better. The problem is we have to pay someone so that we can reap the benefits.

The snag is there is not an opt-out provision; pretty much the only option is to drop out, but that provision is soon to be regulated, if not so already. For instance, as Homeland Security and the TSA say, if you don't like what they are doing at the airports, you don't have to fly. Then we are told that these same provisions are coming to trains, boats and metro transport.

All the enlightened elitist powers to boot, don't seem to understand is that we are in the early stages of a redux of culture. This is the second decade of the twenty-first century and we humans are supposed to behave like it is 1984, the book title included.

What is truly amazing is the power that we individual human's have at our control. For a couple of thousand dollars, any person, anywhere in the world, has access to computing power that the National Security Agency was stretched to provide in 1984. The problem is that we use most of that to play games and drop out. The major driver behind this frivolity is that we can.

Using that same concept of "we" used above, what we are beginning to necessarily become elastic

enough to use fruitfully is "Yes we can!" This however is a very different application of the term than Barack Obama used when seeking the presidency. His slogan finds it's meaning in the New Deal, with ties back to ancient Babylon.

In this developing elastic light we are beginning to make some significant changes here at the Chronicle. By the first of the year we will probably be able to announce these changes publicly. The best way to describe it today is moving towards a diversified but consolidated focus.

I am in Spokane for the Thanksgiving holiday. There were a number of things I wanted to get done, in the time leading up to the feast, but an early winter arctic outbreak has sent the temperatures to well below zero Fahrenheit, this after a very pleasant, almost Indian Summer season lasting until basically last weekend. My trip to the big city Monday, basically led the first of the season's significant snowfall.

Elasticity however has provided the opportunity to remain in Spokane for at least an extra week, so that I can truly get the business I need to do done, without the stress of a pending holiday.

When my mother died in 2002, after almost five years in a nursing home with Alzheimer's, as we were working out details of her funeral, we learned that while she still have all her mental facilities she had chosen three songs that were not what was on the funeral home's normal playlist. The first was "One Day at a Time, (Sweet Jesus)." The second was, "When We All Get to Heaven, (What a Day of Rejoicing That Will Be)." The third was the traditional hymn, "How Great Thou Art."

My mother was the oldest child in a family of five children. She entered her teenage years at the depth of the Great Depression. Coupling the two, she had a very strong attachment to many things, with emphasis on the many. The comment at the beginning of the article about letting your heirs sort through your junk, I understand by first hand experience. While I now have gotten through it all at least once, my current living situation really hasn't let be truly get rid of the stuff I don't want to keep. Then there is also the junk I have collected all on my own, that needs to be downsized, so that I can elastically upsize for this elastic world.

The important thing about becoming able to handle this event we call life, forces us into elasticity

as not just a coping means, but also the way to put true meaning into what we do. I don't know the specifics of how my mother made her song selections, but this I know, each day, the good, the bad, and the ugly, are elastically manageable through the grace of God made available to all through Jesus Christ. This life is not all there is, but our trials and tribulations are only gifts for our future home.

Finally:

O Lord my God,

When I in awesome wonder

Consider all

The works Thy Hand hath made,

I see the stars,

I hear the mighty thunder,

Thy pow'r throughout

The universe displayed;

Then sings my soul,

My Saviour God, to Thee,

How great Thou art!

How great Thou art!

Then sings my soul,

My Saviour God, to Thee,

How great Thou art!

How great Thou art!