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Life With the Hurricanes

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Dealing with a hurricane is bad enough, but add on top of it the promotion of the myth that it's all because of man-made climate change – and that makes it worse.

Ryan Maue, a research meteorologist with ties to the Cato Institute, wrote an op-ed for wsj.com (Sept. 17), with the title, “Climate Change Hype Doesn’t Help.” Amen. He talks about how climate alarmists “gleefully reported that President Trump’s Mar-a-Lago might be inundated by Irma.”

Maue states, “My own research, cited in a recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, found that during the past half-century tropical storms and hurricanes have not shown an upward trend in frequency or accumulated energy.”

However, last week, when Hollywood stars put together a big show to raise funds for hurricane relief, within minutes, Stevie Wonder declared, “Anyone who believes that there’s no such thing as global warming must be blind or unintelligent.”

After Harvey, before Irma, Brad Johnson of Climate Hawks Vote tweeted: “Climate change denial should be a crime.” Nicolas Loris of Heritage Foundation responded at dailysignal.com: “Rather than focus on the victims and offer solutions for speedy recovery, pundits and politicians in the wake of Harvey focused on saying, ‘I told you so.’”

Richard Branson survived Hurricane Irma in his concrete wine cellar in the Caribbean Island he owns. He blames climate change. Man-made climate change.

I once had the opportunity to briefly meet Dr. Max Mayfield, a leading expert on hurricanes, the former head of the National Hurricane Center. It was in 2008 when I met him at a church-related event. I asked him if there was a chance the globing warming alarmists were right in trying to correlate man-made global warming with the rise of hurricanes. Back around 2004 and 2005, we had had more than our fair share of them.

He laughed and said no. It was not the product of man-made global warming, but was related to El Niño in the ocean.

Besides, these hurricanes have been around for centuries. They caused Spanish galleons around the coast of Florida, including the Keys, to sink two to three centuries ago. Alexander Hamilton, a key Founding Father of the United States, grew up in the British West Indies. He was

discovered because, as a 17-year-old, he wrote such a compelling description of the devastation wrought by a hurricane.

Dr. E. Calvin Beisner of The Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation told me for this column: “Climate physics really doesn’t support the idea that either Harvey or Irma was caused, or strengthened significantly, by man-made global warming.”

Beisner explains, “All the carbon dioxide we’ve added to Earth’s atmosphere since the Industrial Revolution has reduced the climate system’s ability to cool itself (emit excess energy to space) by no more than 1 percent, probably only about 0.25 percent.” Is man-made global warming a lot of hot air?

More importantly, why does God allow hurricanes? We live in a fallen world because of sin. St. Paul writes to the Roman Christians: “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration. ...”

In the meantime, we need to do what we can to help alleviate the suffering of those who endure the storms of life. And many are doing just that.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott worked proactively to prepare the state ahead of Irma. Among many things, he encouraged people to volunteer in some capacity if they were available. I considered it and logged on to the listing of volunteer agencies. It was like a who’s who of mostly Christian denominations.

It is not surprising that Christian nonprofit organizations have donated nearly 80 percent of the aid so far to hurricane victims – far outdoing FEMA, according to USA Today.

As D. James Kennedy and I pointed out in our book, “What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?” in the chapter on how Jesus unleashed the forces of charity in the world: “Even the most virulent atheists still live and operate within that Christian worldview, whether they know it or not, and are indebted to it.”

Interviews of the survivors from Irma touch the heart. The attitudes differ. Some seem resigned; others seem resilient.

I remember a Christian song on the radio that touched me in the wake of Hurricane Andrew in 1992. The refrain stated, “Pick up a shovel and dig another well.”

A healthy perspective on saving human life versus saving property is key. I remember after Andrew, I saw a house with its roof blown off, where the following was spray-painted: “House for sale – half off.”

But my favorite sign in the wake of Hurricane Andrew was seen on another damaged home: “No Jesus. No peace. Know Jesus. Know peace.”