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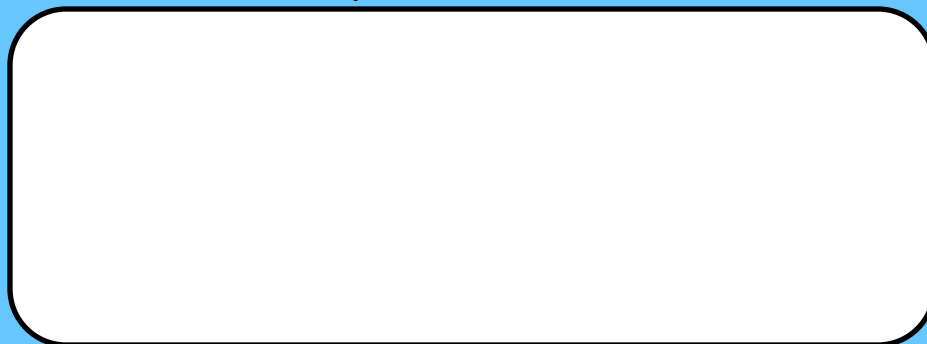


Keep the **SUN** in your eyes!

The Perihelion

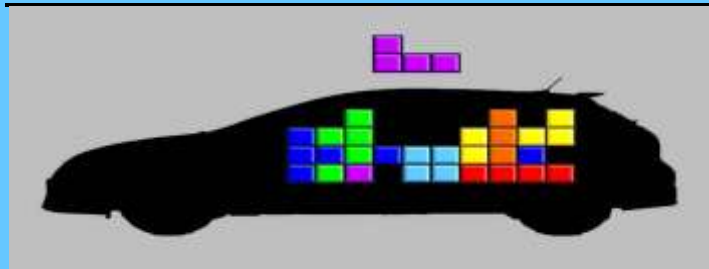
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"THE POINT NEAREST THE **SUN**"



(Email Perihelion available upon request)

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RED LIGHTS AND TETRIS

I know what you're thinking ... I don't even know how to play Tetris so this article does not apply to me. Well, I don't know how to play either so it doesn't really matter! However, I have made up my own driving game that I like to pretend is just like Tetris. Strategies include logical options like when you come to a stop light with 3 lanes. If there are cars in 2 lanes but one is open, you should obviously pull your car into the lane with NO car. If you come to the intersection and all three lanes have a vehicle (a tractor, an electric car with a *texting driver*, and a motorcycle) pull your car behind the motorcycle, which should be the fastest off the line ... by far! Speaking of which ...



My goal in this "game" is not to be the first, but merely to finish in the best possible time I can without breaking the law (too much ☺) or obnoxiously cutting anybody off. My passion for this driving game is to be Biblical and "redeem the time" (I'm pretty sure Paul had driving cars in mind when he wrote Eph. 5:16!). As I get older I am increasingly aware that time is such a valuable commodity. You can't buy extra time on Amazon and there is no App called "Light Be Green" that allows you to get past a red light more quickly ... at least that I am aware of as of this writing.

I read that the average driver will spend well over 2 months of their entire life waiting in traffic. And that driver will also spend 6 months of their lifetime waiting at stop lights!

I often feel that if I can spend less time driving on our CA roads and more time at home encouraging someone by connecting with them, reading a Christian book, or writing an article like this one ... or even relaxing watching a sporting event (OK ... maybe not so relaxing at times), then my life will be more enjoyable and God-honoring than sitting in traffic for hours. So I try to get through traffic as quickly as possible.

One time I was driving (playing Vehicular Tetris) and I remember being frustrated as the light was about to change red just before I got to it and there were absolutely NO cars waiting to go in the other directions. In other words, the light (or maybe the *evil one disguised as a light*) was messing with my head! The guy next to me ran the red light as I was slowing down to stop and obey the law. He was, of course, disqualified from this version of Driving Tetris since he blatantly broke the law! It turns out that 2 stop lights later I pulled up to the red light and who should be stopped directly next to me one lane over but the guy who ran the red light. ☺

I had an epiphany about life at that moment. Sometimes it seems like the odds are stacked against you and nothing is going right so it is very easy to get down or discouraged. **BUT GOD** ... has a way of leveling the playing field. I thought back on the passage in the OT

where it says God WILL repay the people for the devastation caused by the locusts (Joel 2:25). I am not saying we will always be blessed to the extent Job was after all his calamities if we choose to obey God. But in the eternal bigger picture, it will most definitely all work out in the end! So we just need to remember these things during those challenging times when nothing seems to be working out the way we want it to or think it should. Faith ... Trust God!

What lessons can we learn from playing Vehicular Tetris ... or reading about someone else who plays it in his own little world by himself?

Biblical Tetris Lesson 1) The ends do NOT justify the means. For instance, evil is NOT thwarted by violent means in the name of justice. Many Muslims play by those rules. It also makes human sense at times in our efforts to eradicate evil and make this world a better place. But if it contradicts what Jesus said, we must break from what our human nature tells us makes sense, and follow what He commands. We must love our enemies (not destroy them) ... we must repay evil with good (not look for subtle, passive-aggressive ways to get back at others). Jesus did not call us to be the best humans we could possibly be but rather to be God-like. That is impossible by our own will power or by our own intellect. We need God's Spirit within us and in control of us to be able to pull that one off successfully.

Biblical Tetris Lesson 2) We must learn to trust when the outcome looks bleak. He will repay the bad locust years (and driving moments) sooner or later ... and not usually the way we expect. So we must trust God above our instincts and intellect.

Biblical Tetris Lesson 3) These days you can call someone from your car phone to encourage them, or listen to the Bible in your car, or pray while you are sitting at that stop light, so there are other ways to "redeem the time" without rushing through an evil red light. Along those lines, here is a note I got from a member of our church home group ...

When I sit at a red light, those 7 seconds seem like an eternity. That is because there usually seems to have been several traffic light cycles' worth of cross traffic already having passed through on the one cycle where I am.

*Truly, each one of us is called upon to bear our own cross traffic. And the **Devil can appear as an [evil] angel of traffic lights.***

*What in the **cornbread heck** is the solution? You can be reasonably sure it is not a "firing solution," as in artillery. When a traffic light is broken [oops!] you treat it as a stop sign. Am I right?*

*Another incorrect response would be an epic **Tourette's Syndrome** torrent of your pet impropriety. [Oh, the embarrassment! Did I just hear me say that?]*

No, the correct response is to make your request known to God: "Request green, please!" We should never say what we want to befall the other guy, but how we would like to be blessed. Then begin praising

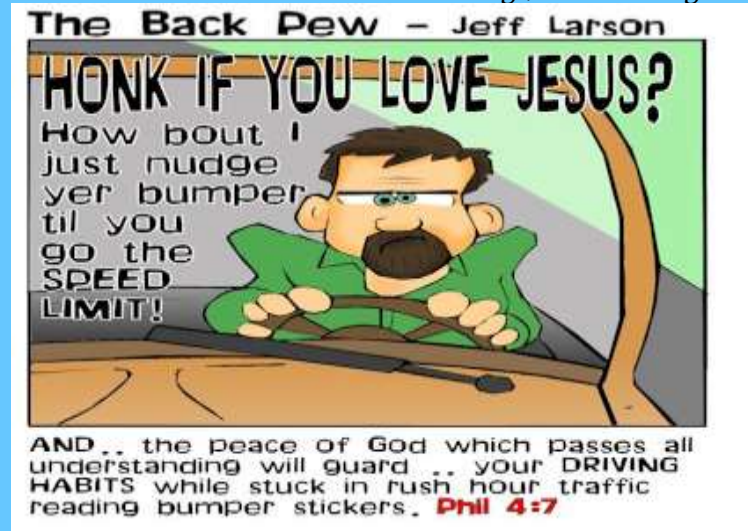
*God LOUDLY! This is called **Paul's Syndrome**. After all, you are confined by the red light, n'est-ce pas?*

So, in a nutshell [How I got here is not important, but how I get out is!], we say, "Ce n'est pas terrible!" We get to choose [in the context of French usage] what we meant when we said that:

Either, "It's great!" or "It's awful!"

Scriptures: 1 John 1:9 [if needed], Philippians 4:4-9."

~Blessings, Mike Colunga



A LIFE FILLED WITH DEATH

As I awakened in the middle of the night, in only a few short minutes I counted **more than 50 friends or family who have passed over** to the other side, beginning with all my grandparents before I was out of my teens and my dad shortly thereafter. Actually a couple of my grandparents did not make the list because they had died before I was born or had a chance to know them. I feel like I am too young to have personally known so many people who have died.

Just yesterday, my brother, Terry, called to tell me about another good friend of mine who had unexpectedly passed away. I realized it was the **THIRD** time that **same day** I had someone contact me to let me know about someone who passed away! But of the three, Mitch was the one I knew the best and will miss the most.

Mitch and Doug were both integral parts of our high school undefeated KY state champion football team, along with my brother, Dave. I did not know them very well during high school because they were a couple grades below me (I actually DID know Dave fairly well ☺). Later on, I was privileged to sit next to Mitch when he decided to walk forward, putting his faith and trust in Jesus Christ! After that, Mitch and Doug and I used to have **Rook Bible studies**. Our Rook card games usually broke out into deep discussions and inspiring discipleship sessions. We became best of friends the year before I moved out to minister in San Diego. We stayed in touch over the years and Mitch

showed up at my Hall of Fame induction a few years ago.



Sadly, Doug graduated to Heaven 5 years ago from Lou Gehrig's disease. I had seen him and prayed with him shortly before he left this Earth and wrote a tribute to him in the Perihelion. Mitch had taken great care of himself over the years and was in excellent shape as a county Deputy Sheriff. By all appearances he was still as outgoing, handsome, and ruggedly athletic as ever.

Mitch had an aggressive cancer that quickly led to his death much too early in life. It has always sounded trite to hear someone say, "Our loss is Heaven's gain" but in this case it seems so appropriate. Paul realized it when he wrote, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain" (Phil 1:21).

My life feels full of death these days. "He was a man of sorrows acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). Good thing Jesus was personally acquainted with death, much more thoroughly than you or I, so He could defeat the power of death! In fact, the power of death is dead! So for those who have put their lives in His hands, death is not "Good-Bye" but rather "See ya later." AND . . . instead of a life primarily filled with death, death will be filled with life because of Jesus!

"75% of religious persecution targets Christians."
American Bible Society 2/2/2018.

FRANK
AND
ERNEST
by
Tom
Thaves

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Time is the great equalizer. We have all been given the same amount every day. So I can never be in the position to say, "I don't have time to go to church or (read the Bible)." It is more accurately, "I have not made the time to attend a meeting with a group of believers to worship God ..." (paraphrased from the Southern Seminary Magazine winter 2017)

COFFEE AND MINISTRY

(ED. Note: I went to school with Charlie and even played a bit of music with him in the early days as he is a drummer. Even though he went on to become a successful attorney (he actually won a Supreme Court case!) he has continued to be a support and encouragement to me ... even checking on the legality of some of my stranger parodies.)

Larry and Kristen,

One of the many things Lisa and I both enjoy and share is a good cup of coffee in the morning. We are worthless until we have had one. It awakens us, increases our awareness, and helps energize us for the challenges and victories in store for the day.

On a much greater – indeed, eternal – scale, the ministry that the Lord has given you both awakens others to the truth of how much God loves them through Jesus, makes them aware of how to know Him for salvation and life eternal, and quickens and energizes believers to keep on enduring all that life throws at them to ultimately attain the prize.

It has been, is, and will always be an honor to be a tiny part of the ministry the Lord has given you. It is an even greater honor to be your friends. With best wishes for a fruitful and joyful 2018,

Lisa and Charlie Frazier – Dallas, Texas

FOX GOES WELL OVER 10,000 YouTube HITS!

No, this does NOT have to do with the Fox TV Channel! but rather the ever popular parody of What Does the Fox and the Pharisay? To see that video or other parodies and songs like Leonard Simpson and Big Deal, go to the Larrybubb.com videos link.

LETTERS

Hi Larry, About 25 yrs ago, I was at a retreat you led and was brought to a saving knowledge of our Savior through your ministry! It was a kids retreat for Sunset Presbyterian near Seattle. On the last night, you called all of us counselors up to stand at the front and asked the kids if they wanted to accept Christ. I was up there ready to pray with those in my group who came forward, but realized I had never actually been born again! I did pray with a few boys & also prayed myself!

I really enjoyed your teaching, music and especially loved your song "Didn't He." I can't find a copy anywhere except for some guy named Randy Matthews.

Any way to get a copy of your version? Who wrote it anyways? I have googled you a few times and finally decided to email you.

Blessings & Merry Christmas! Andy Moos – Portland (ED. note: The perplexing reason the song Didn't He was only available by Randy Matthews is because ... Randy actually wrote the song! However, my mp3 version is available as well as countless songs I have written on my CD "The Best of Larry Bubb – Plus 17 Bonus Tracks." OK ... so it is only 18 of my songs, but who's counting?)

(GUN ARTICLE RESPONSE – If you would like to read the article, go to the Articles link on LarryBubb.com to read "The End?") Dear Mr. Bubb,

I have been a reader of your newsletters since the last time you came to 1st Baptist Oakhurst, CA! I have always loved and enjoyed your perspective, but specifically how you teach the Bible on the "human level."

Today, I began reading your "hot topic" about gun control. I will start off by saying, I can already feel the negative responses you are going to get, flying across the world like the arrow from your bow. However, here's my perspective: SPOT ON!!!! As a fellow believer and follower for many years, I have had a hard time vocalizing my biblical beliefs with my political beliefs to others. While I am not trying to philosophize here, what I am trying to say is, your correlation between Paul from Romans and gun control is the answer to my lack of words for so many years. While I firmly believe in 2nd amendment rights, I also feel it is our duty to each other, to go beyond MY right and see the benefit to OUR rights in society together, and how my right and your right might clash.

Using Paul's wisdom of not wanting our friends to stumble or suffer, is exactly what my lesson has been for the past two weeks. Using it in regards to gun control is just BRILLIANT. And well, all too true.

I appreciate your wisdom and teachings this month especially, as I have for several years now. However, it inspired me so much, that I actually felt led to donate: put your money where your mouth is. I have wanted to donate for soooo long, that today, I couldn't

put it off anymore.

Keep up the good work inspiring others. Thank you for being awesome. Next time you come North, let us know! Would love to have you again in Oakhurst!!

Your words of wisdom and knowledge of the Bible got me through some tough years. Thank you so much for the many laughs and deep thought. :) :)

Always & God Bless, Dalene Stephens – Oakhurst

Larry, I cannot express how much I loved this latest copy of The Perihelion! I read it 3 times and will most likely read it again. I'm actually going to make a copy for (my friend's) 22 year old son. He's reading the Bible and some of his questions are covered in this newsletter. So thank you once again. Please keep me in your prayers as I will you and Kristen.

Love to you both, Vickie Webster – Elsmere, KY

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. FEB/MAR – TEACH WORSHIP CLASS – SDCC
2. SUNDAYS 10:15 AM– LEAD WORSHIP @ TRINITY POWAY
3. THURSDAYS – LEAD WORSHIP @ ANOTHER HOME GROUP
4. MY WONDERFUL MOM TURNED 87 LAST WEEK! UNFORTUNATELY HER HEALTH HAS BEEN GOING DOWNHILL AND SHE WAS TAKEN TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM THIS LAST WEEKEND. SHE IS IMPROVING BUT PLEASE PRAY FOR HER HEALTH AS WELL AS HER SONS TO KNOW HOW TO BEST TAKE CARE OF HER.
5. FOR PEOPLE TO WATCH THE YOUTUBE VIDEOS (SEE LARRYBUBB.COM) AND BE TOUCHED BY THIS PERIHELION

Please say a prayer of thanks for Melanie Donovan, Holly Smith, & Kristen for their newsletter help!

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