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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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THE END?

For decades, mathematicians, neuroscientists, and comics have tried to figure out why hot dogs are sold in packs of 10, yet buns are sold in packs of 8. AND nutritionists have tried to figure out why hot dogs are sold . . . period. Finally, Frank and Ernest have solved the mystery in this cartoon used by permission . . .



DISASTERS!?! END OF THE WORLD!?!

Warning. This is a "deep" article, which was extremely difficult to write. It is not for the faint of heart so read at your own risk! I don't need to detail the recent plethora of man-made and natural disasters. I wouldn't be surprised if there is another even after I send this off to the printer. The result has been no small number of people wondering if this is the end of the world or if it is God's judgment on a sinful planet. One of the Bible passages that may help clear up some of the confusion is Luke 13:1-5. Jesus uses a recent example of deaths caused by a "madman" as well as a natural disaster to emphatically conclude that neither was the result of the people's sins or God's punishment. It is the principle found in Matthew 5:25 that it rains on the just and the unjust. Being a follower of Christ does not exempt us from rain, or hurricanes, or madmen shooting in a church. In fact it was the norm that Christ's closest followers in the NT were put to death for their faith.

This passage is a clear example from Jesus that catastrophes do NOT happen as a punishment from God, yet He does hasten to use it as a teaching point to

encourage people to repent. Similarly, in Matthew 24 He tells us the "signs of the times" and how to know if the end is near. But He quickly clarifies that NO ONE knows the exact day or hour therefore we *all* need to be ready! (Of course, this is not a loophole meaning you *can* know the *month*, as some have foolishly said!) The emphasis is on living out our faith today rather than figuring out the future.

I remember once telling a friend I was looking forward to Jesus coming back. He replied that he wasn't because he was not ready. Will we be ready?

Chapter 2 – Addictions: I watched an intriguing late night talk show conversation featuring the rather wild Russell Brand. He had recently written a book about overcoming our addictions and he candidly shared about his plentiful addictions to sex, drugs, and alcohol (evidently he had no rock 'n' roll addictions). He mentioned that we can have freedom from our addictions but we need to realize our addiction often results from our "drive to know truth or to know God, yet we are unable to successfully medicate because the culture tells us there is no meaning ..."

Surprisingly the host Steven Colbert replied,

"Thomas Merton said that we clothe ourselves in the bandages of other people's perceptions of us OR in our appetites and pleasures and we say those bandages are who we are without ever looking at what's underneath the bandage, which is a hole in our heart the size of God."

This is similar to what Eccles. 3:11 says related to God putting eternity in our hearts. That "eternal" space in our hearts can only be filled by God or eternity related activities. Unfortunately we get sucked into trying to fill it with the things of this world. Now for another piece to this puzzle (as in puzzling article) that will help us see the entire picture towards the end. Please be patient.

Chapter 3 – Eye Poking: I love to comment that

there is a reason the Old Testament (OT) is called OLD! Let's use the synonym "covenant" instead of "testament" and remember that the human race was in a covenant with God (actually a few of them) in the OT (Old Covenant). This is a binding agreement between 2 sides, namely God & humans. For instance, the Sabbath observance was specifically made between God and the Israelite nation (see Ex. 31:13-17) and is not a valid covenant for us in the NT (NEW Covenant). The Sabbath principle of rest and worship is still important today but is not a legally binding agreement between God and the NT church like it was in the Old Covenant (OC) with the nation of Israel.

In the OC, God protected and punished depending on obedience to that covenant. God does not deal with mankind the same way in the NC, as He does not promise to protect us but rather that He will be with us through the storms of life.

Now we see the fullest and most perfect revelation of God's nature in Jesus (Heb.1:1-3). In the OC we see "an eye for an eye" and God is exacting judgment immediately on nations and individuals. Now in the NC Jesus says things like, "You have heard it used to be an eye for an eye (revenge), but now you are to love your enemy and do good to them rather than poke out their eye. Whoever lives by the sword dies by the sword." (Mat. 5:38-39; 26:52).

He is speaking to individuals, not governments. Ultimately, Jesus' disciples chose to die for their faith rather than using their right to physically defend themselves. They realized the enemy was not going to be defeated with weapons but chose to radically follow Jesus' teaching to love their enemies and turn the other cheek.

Chapter 3 – Guns: So how does this all relate to man-made disasters mentioned at the beginning? Kristen told me I might get into trouble if I write about guns. *"You're going to end up shooting yourself in the foot!"* First off, let me say that I do not believe guns are the biggest problem ... it's those blasted flying bullets that cause the most pain! We just need to get rid of all the bullets! Although, it is interesting that the bullets would bounce off of Superman in the old TV shows but when the bad guys would run out of bullets, they would throw the gun at Superman ... and he would duck! So we learn from Superman that guns seemed to be more dangerous than bullets! :-)

I grew up in KY so you may have guessed that I shot a variety of guns when I was young, not to mention my trusty Bow and Arrow. One of my mom's cousins was actually named Daniel Boone!

After I had *already* written most of this article, I saw the shocking news about the horrific shooting inside the church in Texas. I do not want to come at this from a republican or democratic or liberal or conservative perspective but rather a Biblical

perspective. I love what Billy Graham once said when asked about his favoring the "right" or the "left" regarding some political question. He wisely replied, "I know a bird has a right wing and a left wing. I just care about the bird."

Did any of you know Cathy Kennedy? She was shot in the head as she drove home after attending a Bible study in Escondido about 12 miles north of where we live. She died at the hospital a short time later. The bullet was not intended for her. A couple of my friends have suffered tragic results due to having a gun in the house. Dan decided to follow Jesus at a revival meeting I preached. We became friends as he kept in touch because of his desire to grow and mature as a follower of Christ. Tragically, he is no longer on this earth because of a gunshot. Until you know someone who has died like this, it is just a number.

Speaking of numbers I am going to intersperse a few stats backed up by a plethora of credible sources like the CDC agency of the US as reported in the San Diego Union newspaper just 12 days ago.

More than 33,000 people die in firearm-related deaths in the US every year. 2,647 kids will die from a gunshot.

After Britain's deadliest mass shooting in history in 1996, reasonable gun control laws were passed resulting in only 147 killed each year by guns in the entire UK.

Chapter 4 – Drunk on Root Beer: We feel compelled to stand up for our "rights" as a citizen of America or as Christians. Paul discusses a powerful principle about not exercising our rights if it will cause someone to stumble (I Cor. 8 & Romans 14). There is a difference between Christianity and Americanism. Just because we can legally do something, does not mean we should. Being drunk is a good example. Though we legally could if we are of age, the Bible says we should not (Eph. 5:18) because there is a better, less harmful way to experience joy and God's fullness. This goes back to self-medicating or trying to fill that hole in our lives mentioned earlier in the Merton quote from Steven Colbert.

I have often joked that I am addicted to Root Beer. However, it would seem crazy to me to sit down and drink a 6 pack of Root Beer (like some people do with Beer that has no Root). In fact, I really only have 3 or 4 a week ... it's just that I don't hardly like any other soft drinks. But if I knew my drinking Root Beer (or any other hobby) was potentially killing people, I could easily stop drinking it. It makes me wonder if some people are addicted to guns ... or if there is some other blinding spiritual force behind the scenes? Not that there is a physical withdrawal from not shooting or owning a gun, but almost a blinding of rational ability to see clearly the heartache and pain

guns can cause. Some people are outraged at the simple thought of reducing the number of weapons available to mass murder others or take human life.

Something may be perfectly legitimate but if it hurts someone, it is wrong! Guns can cause others to not only stumble, but to lose life. If something has the ability to cause someone harm, we need to be willing to reconsider our "rights." Sadly, we can make seeking our rights a higher priority than seeking God's will. We need to be willing to say that LIFE is more important than the right to own a gun.

If guns cause someone to stumble ... or die, then maybe we need to pray for God's grace to vote against or give up something that is destructive for our society and human life. It is a matter of LIFE and death!

People with firearms in the home are 2 to 3 times more likely to be killed by a firearm.

Australia's government responded to 1996's Port Arthur massacre (in which 35 people were killed) by enacting sweeping measures aimed at preventing a repeat of that national nightmare. In the 18 years before Port Arthur, Australia witnessed 13 mass shootings. In the 21 years since, there have been none! By contrast, the United States has suffered hundreds of mass shootings over that same time period.

VOICE OF THE MARTYRS

I am daily bombarded by images and words, making it so easy for me to get caught up with *the mess this world or our county is in*, or the world of *sports or TV*, or my little world of ministry at the church or the college where I teach occasionally, or how I'm going to make money for "retirement" years. As I am so easily being sucked into the "cares of this world," I will read an article from a Christian magazine like *Voice of the Martyrs* and God reminds me of the more significant eternal things that we are rarely faced with here in the US. I am pretty wimpy when I think of some of the things I spend my time praying about or being concerned about (cares of this world). Fortunately God *does* want us to come to Him with every little thing, but it should also remind us of the more significant eternal things like praying for fellow believers who are facing persecution. Here are excerpts from Khaled's powerful story in the *Voice of the Martyrs*.

On 9/11 Khaled watched in horror in Yemen as the shocking images of the Islamic terrorist attacks on the World

FRANK AND ERNEST
by
Tom Thaves

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Trade Center recycled on a TV in a local café. The cheers of the Muslims near him sickened him. As they cheered the death of 3,000, he thought, "What kind of religion is that?" Six years later he married Samira and while reading a socialist newspaper came across a reference to John 8:7: "He who is without sin among you, let him throw the first stone." The words of Jesus shattered his misconceptions about Christianity.

A student told him about a new Christian radio station so he climbed onto his roof to listen to the program in secret. He was in awe as he heard about the biblical teaching of love and forgiveness and trembled as he heard about Jesus' love for him. He became a follower of Christ. Khalid's changed life resulted in his wife also becoming a follower of Jesus.

They were both intensely persecuted for their faith. His wife was literally burned to death. She was 33 years old. Her last words were telling Khalid she had forgiven everyone who had persecuted them, including the man responsible for her burns. He later posted on Facebook to all those who had persecuted them, "I forgive you."

APOLOGETICS FOR DUMMIES

I remember leading the state youth conference for WA/OR one year and being asked if I liked apologetics. I took it as a compliment assuming the depth of my sermon had really impacted the person. As I was rambling off some long pseudo-intellectual answer about defending the faith (i.e., apologetics) the person politely interrupted to say, "No, I mean the band called *Apologetix*." "Oh, the band ... yeah, they're pretty good." That is actually also the name of a band that does parodies like I do. And if YOU like *Apologetix*, then you should go to Larrybubb.com and click the videos link to be whisked away to YouTube Land to see many of my parodies in the classic hit video compilation, *"If Coolio, The Beach Boys, etc. became a Christian Group."* And while you're at it, you may also enjoy the recent video I put together on *Witnessing Hip Hop Style* which also includes numerous references to famous groups and songs cleverly put together in a humorous way to creatively share your faith in this postmodern age. It's like the new TV show *Beat Shazam* on steroids!



LETTERS

Larry, Do you remember when we were eating burritos and I asked if it was getting hot inside but it was the crushed red pepper you put in the burrito? So many good memories with you. I really do thank the Lord for you. You made my younger years fun and safe. Remember driving the bus to New Mexico? (Christian camp Glorieta – see photo below) You've done so much good for so many people, you've touched a lot people's lives, you've helped save a lot of people. I am truly proud to call you my friend.

Rich Thein (former youth group member) – Montana



Ed. note: The following letter is from my dearly, beloved college tennis coach who was the #1 ranked doubles tennis player in the state of Texas for his age division. Before sending this letter, he had called to let me know he is battling cancer. Please pray for Dr. Ronnie Smith.

Dear Larry and Kristen,

I enjoy the fruits of your labors in "The Perihelion" very much. Kristen, you are a really good wife to help support and put up with Larry. Wish I could get to know you personally. It seems like my #1 player at C-ville College from the early 70s is truly being used by God in significant ways with all the Nuts on the W. (weird) Coast. I salute you for reaching people, esp. kids, for the Lord. I know the challenge is truly great.

I am glad you are still playing with the fuzzy balls. My doctor made me quit playing. I still dream about playing. I am doing well (most of the time). I still sing in 2 choirs at FBC. May God continue to bless you and all your ministry.

Sincerely, Ronnie – Amarillo Texas

Heavenly Father, All praise to You. Great is Your name in heaven and earth. Thank you for Larry Bubb. He has done as you have directed him through the power of your Holy Spirit. He has imparted wisdom to me based on the scriptures and sound reasoning and put it together in a fashion that I can digest. Thank you Jesus for Larry and other men of God who minister to

the doubting, lost, and weak in spirit. In Jesus' precious name I pray, Amen. David Heppard – San Diego, CA

AN OPEN INVITATION ...

... to attend Trinity Baptist Church at 13608 Garden Rd just off Poway Rd in Poway, CA 92064. Thanks to those of you that remember to occasionally pray for me as I am the interim music worship leader with the world's most dangerous praise band. I have come to deeply appreciate Pastor Dave Speas. I enjoy his great sense of humor and touching stories. He is a very humble and genuine man of God who has demonstrated great faith as his wife Carol has recently been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. Please continue to pray for them and the church AND stop by some time and worship with us any Sunday at 10:15 AM.

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. FEB/MAR – TEACH ONLINE WORSHIP CLASS – SDCC
2. THURSDAYS – LEAD WORSHIP @ ANOTHER HOME GROUP
3. AN ONGOING SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD (LONG AFTER THE HOLIDAY) FOR 100s OF OPEN DOORS FOR THIS MINISTRY OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS AS WELL AS CONTINUED FUTURE OPEN DOORS
4. A NEW APPRECIATION FOR THE GREATEST GIFT WE HAVE EVER RECEIVED THIS CHRISTMAS
5. FOR PEOPLE TO WATCH THE YOUTUBE VIDEOS (SEE LARRYBUBB.COM) AND BE TOUCHED BY THIS PERIHELION

Special thanks to Melanie Donovan, & Kristen for their help on this newsletter!

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