

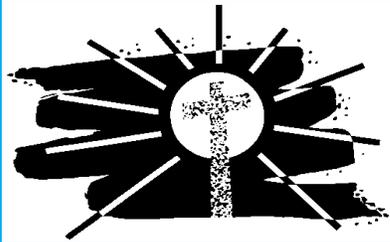
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# The Perihelion

"THE POINT NEAREST THE SUN"

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KEEP THE SON IN YOUR EYES!

Vol. XXX no.1 3/15

## SPECIAL 30 YEAR BONUS EDITION!!! THE DAY THE POPE CAME TO MY TOWN!

Once upon a time, the Pope flew into the Cincinnati airport because he was scheduled to speak at a conference in Ohio. In those days, most people did not realize the Cincinnati airport was actually in Northern KY rather than OH. I knew it well because my dad worked for Delta Airlines at that airport when I was growing up.

I played basketball and tennis for Lloyd High School. Our arch rival was the Catholic school across town called St. Henry. Later on, one of my friends from St. Henry became a limo driver. Little did he know the adventure he was in for the day he was hired to be the chauffeur for the Pope.

Unfortunately, the Pope's plane was extremely late, which meant he would be late for his speaking engagement. After the limo driver picked him up, they headed north on I-75 into OH. The Pope began to urge his chauffeur to drive faster using such phrases as, "Drive faster!" My friend, the chauffeur, was a devout Catholic and not about to speed with the Pope in his limo.

Finally, after much futile urging, the Pope told his chauffeur to pull over and get in the back seat. Switching places with him, the Pope got behind the wheel and floored it, speeding close to 90 mph up the freeway.

Soon they saw the flashing blue lights from a police car pulling them over. As the policeman sauntered up to the limo, he gazed inside and was astounded at who he saw in the car. Immediately, he called his police chief to brag about who he just pulled over.

"You'll never believe who I just caught speeding!"  
The captain guessed, "Was it our town's mayor?"  
"No," replied the policeman. "Someone much bigger."  
"Was it the governor?" queried the captain.

"Nope . . . you need to think even bigger!"

"Don't tell me you pulled over the President of the United States?"

To his surprise, the policeman replied that it was someone even bigger than the President!

Finally, the exasperated police chief inquired, "For cryin' out loud, who in the world did you pull over?"

"I'm not sure what his name is," the policeman paused, "but the Pope . . . . is his chauffeur!"

## UNCENSORED INTERVIEW W/ PRESIDENT OBAMA "CONGRATULATIONS ON 30 YEARS!"

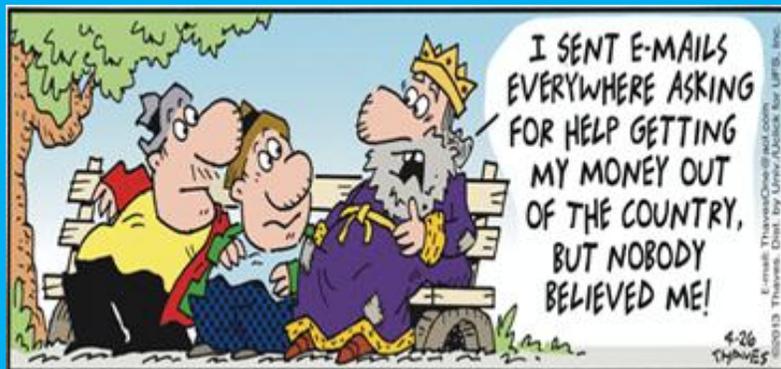
I know what you're thinking (at least 3 of you). "I remember your interview with President George Bush back in June of 2001 so . . . good call showing equal partisanship." Rick Warren and Louie Giglio were President Obama's 1<sup>st</sup> choices to pray during his 2 inauguration ceremonies. I am one of the few people on the face of this planet who has ministered with both of those men. Thus, in Kevin Bacon's degrees of separation, I am only 1 person away from the President . . . . on 2 occasions! After Louie and I led the AK State Youth Conference together, Louie wrote (Cont. page 3)

## SPACE TRAVEL AND THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

**Preface (Providence or Coincidence?)** I was stunned and saddened when I recently discovered that a good friend of mine from college and her 12-year-old daughter had died in a tragic accident some years ago. Debbie had been a missionary to Zambia. As I tried to make some sense of this, I prayed and asked God how I was going to heal from this trauma and why it had taken me so long to hear about it?

The 2<sup>nd</sup> part of my question involves a few major chess moves by God over a few decades, which are hard to fathom. I began doing Internet searches to find out exactly what had happened to Debbie. I contacted some of my fanatical Facebook fiends from college, who

**Page 2** found nothing whatsoever. I tried calling and emailing her husband, son, sister, brother, brother's son, and her home church, all to no avail. After many hours of searching over the following weeks, I could find absolutely nothing. I remember praying and telling God, "I give up. Help!" The next day I finally found an obscure reference to her sister in an article about a young man who had tragically died some time ago; I was not sure how long. I saw the name of a doctor and found an old email address from 2006. I was desperate, so I figured it couldn't hurt, although I do remember fearfully thinking that if he did see the email, he would think I was a scammer like the King of Nigeria or King of San Diego asking for help getting money out of some bank account. But to my surprise, not only did Dr. T (for short) reply, but he actually remembered meeting me at my college when he went to visit his Aunt Debbie in the 70s!



Frank & Ernest by Tom Thaves - Permission by NEA, Inc.

In the midst of thoroughly answering all my questions, he casually mentioned it was **his 22-year-old son** who had just tragically died in a car accident only 5 weeks ago, just before Christmas! He said, "It is hard for me to praise God at the moment." He was in shock, devastated, and feeling like the cosmos had just kicked him in the gut, knocking the air out of his lungs. As we emailed back and forth, an intense counseling session and Bible study broke out as he opened up more and more trying to make sense of it, wondering where God was in the midst of it, if God was punishing him, or if He didn't even care. It suddenly dawned on me why I did not find out about Debbie for years and why I could not find anything in all my online searching. I thought I was searching for info on Debbie, but unbeknownst to me, God's providential timing was to have me search for Dr. T in his great time of need, to be a comfort and help in his healing process. As he wrote, "What are the odds that you would send me these messages at this time of my life? It's been almost 40 years since our paths crossed . . . I find this all incredible . . . These emails have helped me more than you know."

So to recap and fill in a few more gaps relating to God's providential foresight, God orchestrates a meeting 38 years ago and gives Dr. T a brilliant memory to even remember it. Over Christmas, out of the blue, my mom gives me a bag of letters I had written home from college which I did not even realize still existed. As I look through them, I can actually read one of them (you'll understand if you have ever seen my handwriting) because it is a letter I believe God inspired Debbie to write my parents postmarked May 3, 1977 inviting them to her graduation. (I did not know this either.) This leads to the shock of discovering Debbie's obituary from years ago (which God had prevented me from finding out about) and subsequent futile wild goose Internet search. Then God finally leads me to Dr. T some 2,000 miles away at the perfect time when he needed a miraculous reminder that God did care about what was happening to him, loved him, and was hurting with him. Even in his perplexed state, Dr. T admitted it was undeniable that God had orchestrated this extraordinary series of events to remind him God cares about him and is in control.

One good thing about getting older is you can look back over many years of life and see firsthand how God has been miraculously weaving this beautiful tapestry together! Have I ever mentioned that if you hold a dime out at arm's length at night it will block some 15 million stars like our sun? God created and sustains this amazing universe, so all this with Dr. T was a "piece of cake" for Him to pull off!

To answer my 1<sup>st</sup> question, which now related to both of us healing and making sense of these tragedies, God reminded me of some thoughts He had given me a few months ago for this very newsletter. I suddenly realized, unbeknownst to me at the time, I was actually writing words of comfort for . . . ME! As this turned out to also be an encouragement to my new friend, I hope it will be to you as well. Here is what God led me to write even before I knew why I was writing it.

**Chapter 1** The phone rang late that night in my Juneau, Alaska hotel room (no, we did not stay in igloos!). It was one of the local youth workers asking if Louie Giglio and I were up for seeing the Aurora Borealis . . . brighter than he had ever seen it in his life! We had just finished leading the Alaska State Youth Conference. Long before we arrived in Anchorage for the first half, I was hoping and praying I could see the Northern Lights since the stars are my favorite of all God's creation. We had not seen anything the entire week until that last night. Louie asked me if I thought God was rewarding us for our service. I would not be surprised as God was really showing off this spectacular heavenly laser light show like nothing I have

**Page 3** seen before or since!

It was a glimpse of Heaven, yet still *nothing* compared to Heaven. Because Heaven is SO MUCH better! I don't mean it is just better than whatever your picture of Hell is or your crummiest day on Earth. Heaven is a million times better than the best thing you can conceive of or experience here on Earth!

**Chapter 2** Recently my wife and I were excitedly looking forward to getting away to enjoy the spectacular beaches in the Caribbean. It was with great anticipation we were longing for relaxing white sand beaches and warm, calm, aqua water. Additionally, in the Caribbean we wouldn't have to worry about bills to pay or beckoning house repairs or distressing calls. It dawned on me that I should also be anticipating Heaven as it will be a million times better!

**Chapter 3** Rich Mullins was looking forward to Heaven and going to be with his Creator. His favorite song he ever wrote was Elijah, which described how he wanted to die. How inspiring! But it was a great reminder that this world is not our home, we're just passing through.

I *used* to be more excited at the thought of going to Heaven but I fear I have become too attached to this dying, painful, tangible world in which we live. Rich described it well in his song If I Stand: *"The stuff of earth competes for the allegiance I owe only to the giver of all good things . . . If I weep let it be as a man who is longing for his home."*

We often forget how much better Heaven is . . . than anything we could dream or imagine. Rich's translation of Phil. 2:5 (*For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain*) was, *"You should be happy to be alive and look forward to being dead!"* Rich once made a comment I have often pondered. He talked about how some say it is unfair that someone could die as early as age 18. His response was that we should be thankful we even get to live to be 18. It's all perspective. If we really believe Jesus' words and what He did in John 11:25-26, then we know we will be living much longer than 18 if we have given Him our lives . . . only in another, much better place.

Imagine some beautiful planet we discover, with magnificent sunsets, perfect temperatures, warm blue crystal clear water, where there is no pain and a constant state of joy. Billionaires would save up money to take a month-long journey for the vacation of their lives. Normally if we read that some Martians came in a spaceship and kidnapped 100 of our children and teens, we would be horrified and sad to have lost them. But what if we knew they were getting a free trip to this wonderful planet for a month, that would be exuberantly life-changing for them? We would be envious that we did not get to go. Well, Heaven is a gigibillion times better than this experience. It is a

brighter, better, fuller life than anything this earthly life has to offer. So if we really believe this, we should be thrilled for anyone who gets to take this journey, knowing we will get to meet them soon and have this experience as well (this life is but a vapor that appears for a short time . . . James 4:14).

I took our youth group to hear Keith Green in his 2<sup>nd</sup> to last concert before he died in a plane crash at age 28. He quoted from John 14:2-3 about how Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us in Heaven. He said if it only took God 7 days to create this beautiful planet and universe, think about how beautiful Heaven must be since He's been working on that for 2,000 years now!

But lest we forget, God is not the means to our treasure . . . He IS the treasure! Heaven is not about a location but about a person . . . Jesus! *"He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."* (Rev. 22:4)



(Cont. from page 1) an encouraging note I use in my brochure. *"I firmly believe students in our culture have a sixth sense for authenticity. In Larry Bubb, students find someone who is real. His genuine love for students all across this country and his passion for Jesus Christ are clearly demonstrated in . . . the way that he lives."*

I don't want to brag, but I've gotten very few bookings from his recommendation compared to the huge boost for his career after doing the Alaska Conf. with me. 😊 By far the most popular quote on my brochure and PR material is from Billy Graham, *"Larry Bubb . . . well, actually I've never heard of the guy!"*

Speaking of bookings, God has been better than any booking agent I could have hired these last 30 years. One time God pulled some strings to get me booked as the host of on an Emmy Award winning TV show for a couple of seasons. I did a concert at Six Flags over Magic Mountain amusement park. I had the

**Page 4** privilege of speaking for numerous State Evangelism Conferences and State Youth Conferences to crowds of over 4,000. But one of the greatest examples of His providential timing involved 9/11. Many people eventually made their way back east to minister after that tragedy. God, in His foresight, already had me booked months in advance for that very week after 9/11 to fly back to Washington D.C. to share with a variety of hurting groups. And speaking of privileges, the greatest has been seeing literally 1,000s of people decide to follow Jesus Christ at some event I've been part of leading!

In the spring of 1985, I took one small step for a man, and one huge terrifying leap (of faith) for Larry Bubb, as I left my lucrative paying job as a youth pastor to form this non-profit corporation called Larry Bubb Ministries. I had no guaranteed salary whatsoever yet I had this deep belief that if God wanted me in this ministry, He would not only take care of all my needs but also open doors for me to share the message He had put on my heart. I decided there was no need to ask anyone to donate money or ask groups for any certain amount of money before I would agree to share with their group. Doing so could potentially perpetuate something that was against God's will. Plus, I just could not picture Jesus responding to an invitation by saying, "I'd love to come and tell you about God . . . but you have to pay me more money first."

Reminiscing about the first year, the total income for Larry Bubb Ministries was around \$7,000. And no, it wasn't because I only had three bookings all year. I led one week-long youth camp that gave me a grand total of \$35! I had an inexpensive one-bedroom apartment, no car or credit card payments, and was content to eat a lot of pot pies (3 for \$1). I remember telling God that as long as He put grilled cheese sandwiches on the table and opened up doors, I would love to continue this ministry as long as He desired.

And God was always faithful to provide every need I had over the years! (Phil 4:19) One of many examples sticks out in my mind. A regional camp had scheduled me to be the youth speaker and at the last minute they had to cancel. For a speaker, this is like getting laid off. Groups almost always pay my air travel but rarely do they pay my gasoline expense. In addition to the \$1,000 this camp had agreed to pay me for the week, they were also going to give me \$50 for gas. I mention that because out of the blue someone who had heard me at a camp years earlier made a donation that week of exactly . . . \$1,050!!! It was a first-time donation and they lived in another region of the country so they had no idea about the cancellation, much less the exact amount of money. But God did!

Someone recently asked me about what visions or dreams I had for the future. My dream has simply been to travel anywhere God wanted me to so I could let people know about my best friend, Jesus, and how God passionately loves them. I feel so privileged and humbled to have lived out this dream! This was all the more amazing once I realized early on that I am not that good of a singer or speaker. Just look at the eloquent way I phrased that last sentence. And I do speak much worse than I write! However, that did not seem to concern God too much.

I am a living example of Paul stating that when he was weak, God got the glory. Over the years, God allowed me to write, record, and perform songs. I know I am not that good at it, yet God still allowed a number of my recorded songs to be played on the radio to reach people. I am not a trained actor, yet my one-man drama surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus was one of my only sermons that actually got requested for repeat performances. I am not a comedian but I was invited to do a mini comedy tour by professional comedians who have performed with guys like Robin Williams and David Letterman. Maybe I just knew how to act like a comedian and my acting was better than I thought!

Evidently King David wasn't much to look at early on and did not inspire much confidence in others. However, I Samuel 16:7 says about David that men look on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart. My prayer was not that I could be a great, eloquent speaker or incredible singer, but rather that God's anointing would be evident and He would speak through me by His Holy Spirit to reach others for Him. He has orchestrated invitations for me to speak and/or sing in 30 states as well as 10 international countries (once to some 3,000 students in public schools in England).

I did once have a distant dream of someday teaching Bible at a college. I knew this could not come



**Page 5** true since I do not have a Ph.D. But God said, "Man looks on the degrees, but I look on the heart." I have now taught at not 1, but 2 Christian Colleges over the last 5 years!

So the bottom line is, I obviously ultimately have to thank God for this wild 30-year ride! I also need to profusely thank YOU! Thank you for reading the newsletter - it's a hassle to write, edit, and publish each time and my financial reward is I lose more than \$1,000 each edition, but I'm not complaining because after almost every edition someone sends me encouraging words. I remember getting a letter from a teacher who first heard me when she was in Jr. High. She thanked me for sending the newsletter all these years because it was now her primary source of spiritual nourishment and encouragement after some problems with her church. Each edition, the Perihelion mini-mag reaches close to 4,000 families and churches as far away as Australia.

I also want to thank you for your prayers and your support in many silent ways as well as many not-so-silent ways. You are the hands and feet God has used to allow us to make a difference in this hurting world by letting others know there is hope in Jesus.

Well, if you stayed with me through all my digressions, you are to be commended and rewarded with this exclusive interview. It all started with an email correspondence I had a few years back with President Obama.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Email from Barack:**

Dear Lawrence,

You did what the cynics said we could not do! You said the time has come to get beyond the same old tactics that divide us, and you gave people a reason to believe again. Please help us move forward and bring the change this country needs. These are tumultuous times and I deeply covet your support and prayers. Thank you, Barack

#### **My response:**

Dear Barack, Wow. I'm stunned. How did you get my email address? I gave it out to a political campaigner last week on the phone just to get him to stop calling. Did you get it from him? Anyway, no biggie, just cool that you wrote.

As for your e-mail, I don't remember saying "the time has come to get beyond the same old tactics that divide us" but that's pretty much how I feel. I say a lot of things I don't remember. My wife, Kristen, said I told her she could eat my leftover pizza from Dominos but I don't remember saying that and I know I was planning on having it for breakfast the next day.

As far as the prayer request . . . no problem! I do like to pray (though I confess I don't do it as much as I should). A few in our home group really like praying

for you a lot! Well, I gotta go.

P.S. My friends call me Larry, so it's cool.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Email from Barack:**

Lawrence,

Right now you have a unique opportunity to go head-to-head with George W. Bush. This week, John McCain and George Bush gathered behind closed doors, away from the cameras, to raise money for McCain's campaign. Let's show we're ready to take him on. Yes we can . . . you can do it!

#### **My 2<sup>nd</sup> response:**

Barack, dude, that first line freaked me out. For a second I was like, no way, he's surrounded by secret service. And then I was picturing some kind of fight club in the basement of the White House. Did you see that movie?

By the way, I can do what? Did you hear about our house remodel and how I was having trouble picking paint colors? How much did that phone campaigner tell you anyway? And please, everybody calls me Larry.

P.S. Can you get tickets for One Direction, Dr. Dru, or Igloo Australia? They aren't for me, they're for my niece.

(Thanks to author Donald Miller for this idea!)

#### **President Obama Interview Transcript**

**Perihelion:** *We are humbled and extremely appreciative you would take the time to do this interview for the Perihelion. Since you had that good email exchange awhile back, we were pretty sure if you got to know Larry as well as Billy Gramm does, you would say congratulations to the Perihelion and LBM for 30 years of helping bring eternal change and making a difference in this hurting world! But we don't want to put words in your mouth . . . so can you reveal some top secret new plan to the faithful Perihelion readers?*

**President Obama:** *The entire world, not to mention America, is going to be shocked and surprised, hopefully ecstatic when we reveal our new plan to (Cont. page 7)*



Frank & Ernest by Tom Thaves - Permission by NEA, Inc.

**Change is not always progress! (Hezekiah 3:10)**

Ed. note: I recently found this note from a good college friend after she had passed away. It was very touching and I treasure it as her last words to me from eternity ... a blessing from the other side. (See more details on her passing in the "Northern Lights" article.)

*Larry, I wish you all the joys possible in your ministry. I hope you may touch more lives like you have at Campbellsville. Thank you for being such an inspiration! You have my prayers.* Debbie – Heaven

*Larry Bubb, I wish I had a richybubb.com. I've started writing some things, and I'd like to share them with you. Here are a couple things from this week. I will send you more, and you cannot unsubscribe. Thanks for being my friend and a good influence on me. I'm still easily influenced, even at 46 and a half.*

Love you, Rich Ellis – West VA (Almost Heaven)

### Somebody has to pay

I live with at least seven other people. Sometimes it is very hard to identify who left the door open that let the dog out or why the shredded cheese that was for dinner was all used at lunch time. Much of the time, it's not worth trying to figure out what went wrong.

Sometimes something more weighty happens, like the day a computer screen got smashed. It was an unpleasant moment as someone leaned the screen farther and farther forward until it flipped over and smashed on the table. I don't remember all the details, but I remember having two feelings at once. I was frustrated that our screen was broken, and worried about how I would pay to replace it. I was also feeling compassion and a need to have a kind response and not blow my lid.

The sweetheart, loved person who flipped the computer over seemed to be bracing for an angry outburst. Everyone else may tell the story differently, but I experienced grace in that moment. I am pretty sure my anger would not have helped resolve anything.

Someone had to pay. In this case it was me. I didn't break it, but I had to pay for it.

But Jesus is teaching me some things. One thing he is teaching me is that if we need to get a new computer screen or more asthma medicine, some way will be provided. Sometimes I am really afraid that there won't be enough, even though I have been well kept since I was born.

A deeper thing He is teaching me is that He has already paid the debts of people who break stuff, stay up later than I said they could, fail to rise as early as I told them to, neglect a chore that is important to me.

Jesus has paid for all sins of all time. If we can accept that, and reckon it to be true day by day, we can be real instruments of true grace and unearthly peace.

1 Peter 3:18 says Christ suffered for our sins once

for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit.

John 19:30: *When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

### 30 YEAR GIFT!

The Perihelion staff wishes Larry Bubb Ministries a happy 30th anniversary! I don't know about you, but I don't know too many people who have been at the same job for 30 years. I know of a church that gave their pastor and his wife a free trip to Hawaii at the 10th anniversary. So for 30, we are pleased to give Larry and Kristen Bubb a free trip to the Moon ... without Alice! (If you didn't catch that reference, thank God that you're still young!) Of course, they'll have to listen to a timeshare presentation.

We received a plethora of complaints after the last edition did not have the usual upcoming events and prayer requests ... OR maybe it was just 1 angry letter from the Westboro cult group wanting to know how in the world they are supposed to know where to boycott Larry's next event. Either way ya go ...

### PRAYER REQUESTS

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan-Feb Teach-Intern Class, SD Christian College  
Mar-Apr Potential Local Interim Preaching  
June 2-5 CA Summer Missionary Training-Jenness  
Sept Free Moon Trip (after time share presentation)

#### PRAYER CONCERNS

1. THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE WOULD READ THIS NEWSLETTER AND IT WOULD BE INSPIRING TO THEM BEYOND THE MERE WORDS OF A MORTAL HUMAN.
2. OPEN DOORS FOR PREACHING/SINGING & COLLEGE TEACHING WHEREVER GOD DESIRES.
3. MY YOUTUBE VIDEOS TO REACH AND TOUCH MANY (GO TO THE VIDEOS LINK AT LARRYBUBB.COM).

Please say a prayer of thanks for Melanie Donovan, Holly Smith, Mike & Mardi Shortridge, and Kristen for their help in putting this newsletter together!

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