

Cybercolumn by Brett Younger: Doom, despair and the agony of the teeth

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CYBER COLUMN: Doom, despair and the agony of the teeth

By Brett Younger

Carol called me at the church to say, "When I put gas in the car, the Visa card didn't work."

I called the Visa people who told me they cancelled our card because "you didn't pay the bill."

I replied, "I mailed a check on July 30."

They said: "We didn't get it. That will cost you \$85."

Brett Younger

The next day, we got the top half of our check in an envelope from the post office stamped "found in supposedly empty equipment." What could that possibly mean? My best guess is that instead of saying, "We're sorry we destroyed your mail," they're indicating, "We believe you broke into the

post office in the middle of the night and hid half your check in a broken sorting machine.”

Later that same evening, Carol and I were reading in the den when she said, “Does it seem hot to you?”

“Honey, it’s been hot since April.”

“No, I mean like the air isn’t working.”

Six months ago, we cancelled the insurance policy that would have covered this. The first estimate was about what we paid for our first three cars combined. The second estimate was \$500 more, and the third was \$1,000 more. We have money to pay for it. Unfortunately, it’s in an account marked “College Fund,” so I’m encouraging my son who’s a senior in high school to start eating generic peanut butter. The unit that’s not working is at one end of the house, so I’ve become the crazy father constantly closing doors. If we had orchids, they would be doing great.

I went to the dentist the next day. He said my old fillings have mercury and are leaking and could cause brain damage. Carol thinks this explains a lot. Do other people’s dentists still do rinse and spit? Mine doesn’t do that anymore, so I spent two days picking tiny pieces of concrete out of my teeth. I had a constant headache, so I went back to the dentist who told me the aching is a result of the trauma he inflicted. He sanded a piece of a tooth that he thought might be causing the headaches—although I still suspect mercury is seeping into my brain. He was in a hurry, so he skipped the Novacaine.

For last month’s *Baptist Standard* cybercolumn, I wrote about God, evolution and creation. I got a few nice e-mails from *Baptist Standard* readers, but then the column was picked up by the website “Answers in Genesis: Upholding the Authority of the Bible from the Very First Verse.” I not only made “News to Note” but was the object of a not-at-all-flattering

editorial. Since then, I have received a dozen irate e-mails (including ones from livid readers in Canada, England, and New Zealand) telling me I am a heretic and that if I don't think God started creating on Sunday, Oct. 23, 4004 BC, at 9:00 a.m., then I need to leave the ministry and pray for forgiveness—in that order. My favorite angry e-mail begins: "Hey Mr. Younger. I am a youth minister in Texas and your worldview is in need of biblical reprimand." I've started all of my responses with, "It's always good to hear from a brother in Christ," but I stopped meaning it after about three.

I know all of this lousiness is only temporary, but there are also sorrows that truly matter. Over nine days, I participated in five funerals. Life has been miserable lately.

Then on Sunday morning, the choir sang the text from Matthew 11: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and I will give you rest." At first that sounds like, "Take a seat in a chaise lounge on the beach or find a quiet cabin in the mountains." That seems like a fine idea, but the text continues: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me."

"Learn of me" means that I learn to recognize that neither God nor the scientists need my defense. I am fortunate that I can pay the Visa bill, the air conditioning bill and the dentist, but whether I could or not, God is with me. At the best funerals, I remember that a lot of faithful followers of Christ listened when Jesus said, "Learn of me."

I should be grateful and learn to be faithful—in the midst of foolishness and real sorrow.

Brett Younger is pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth and the author of Who Moved My Pulpit? A Hilarious Look at Ministerial Life,

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