

Lessons from a bike ride home on Sept. 11, 2009.

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I have recently learned that punching a hard object, such as a wall or the road to my home, can result in boxer's fracture, breaks in the bones that lead from the wrist to the pinky and ring finger, the 4th & 5th metacarpals. Still, one should probably go ahead and punch the road if it attacks. Such a punch can soften the road's blow to one's face so that one doesn't lose any teeth and one's moustache only has a few stitches under it. The road can be unruly and may choose to attack on short notice over the slightest offense, such as hitting a rut with the front wheel of one's bicycle. Perhaps the road is overly sensitive about its ruts, like a teenager is about acne. The road might suddenly attack by leaping up over one's handle bars. The road makes no allowance for the fact that one's infraction into its rut was unintentional, the result of being blinded by oncoming headlights. On the contrary, it is even more likely to take revenge if it notices that one is more vulnerable for having lifted one's right hand from the handlebars. The road doesn't care that one was shielding one's eyes from the glare in a vain attempt to avoid the ruts.

I have learned that a lot of people will help a victim of the road: an off-duty firefighter who happens to be driving by, neighbors, friends from church, emergency room staff and physicians, and family. Even in-laws are very helpful when they fetch one from the emergency room after a 3 a.m. discharge, filling in while one's wife is in Seattle with the new granddaughter.

I have wondered whether I am supposed to learn additional things:

Psalm 119:105 reads "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." If God had meant for people to ride bicycles in the dark, then maybe Psalm 119 would have mentioned wheels in addition to feet.

It may be a good idea to pray sooner rather than later when problems happen; otherwise, what kind of a relationship does one have with God?

When one finally starts to pray and recite scripture to oneself during long waits in the emergency room, one realizes that there are many verses which mention the struggle between Satan's blinding darkness and God's redeeming light. One starts to wonder whether there might be an important spiritual message: Perhaps one wrongly supposes that one's walk is adequately "in the light" as per 1 John 1:6,7 "If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin."

Lastly, I have learned that it is tough to revert from touch typing with two hands (thank you Mavis Beacon) to hunting and pecking with just one hand.