

“Are we there yet?” These are the words every parent dreads on a road trip. That’s because once kids start to ask that question, problems are usually not far behind.

But help is at hand. A maths expert has calculated the “exact formula” for predicting the chances, and timing, of children throwing a tantrum in the backseat of a car during a long journey.

According to Dr James Hind, from Nottingham Trent University, the formula parents can use to crack the probability of their offspring's backseat breakdowns is:

$$T = 70 + 0.5E + 15F - 10S.$$

- T is the time a child will take to throw a tantrum, on average 70 minutes.
- It is reduced by every minute a child is entertained (E)
- And food (F) will enable parents to delay the tantrum by 15 minutes.
- However, having siblings (S) in the car will increase the chances of a tantrum by 10 minutes!

And what causes these tantrums? Well the research found that the main cause is boredom, followed by hunger and the journey being too long.

But maybe this is not just true for kids on a road trip. I think, in our Christian lives, we too might be tempted to throw a few tantrums – to get angry, give out to God, or even to give up on the journey all together! And sometimes it is also because of

- boredom
- or hunger for something different
- or with the frustration over how long the journey is taking.

The writer of Hebrews was concerned about this with his first readers. He knew that some of them were struggling in the journey of their Christian lives. Some of them were even tempted to give up completely and go back to the Judaism they’d come from.

So in the next section, he paused his teaching about Jesus being our great high priest to challenge them to get back on track in their journey of faith. And in particular, he challenged them to do this by eating better food.

Hebrews 5:11-6:3: “We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ² instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And God permitting, we will do so.”

1. Don’t Get Bored!

This section starts with the words, “We have much to say about this.” Hebrews 5:11. The writer had already taught amazing things about Jesus to show how:

- He is better than the angels, Moses, Joshua and the Jewish High Priests
- That he is the destroyer of the Devil, the conqueror of death, the one who can offer us salvation, freedom and rest

But amazingly, the writer had so much more to say about Jesus. So much more to show how Jesus is superior to all who came before him and all who would seek to replace him. To show that Jesus is all that we need!

I think that’s important because sometimes we get a bit bored in our Christianity. Maybe we’ve been to church for years. We’ve read a lot of the Bible. We’ve listened to a lot of teaching. Everything seems so familiar.

And as the saying goes, “Familiarity breeds contempt.” We get bored because It seems like there is nothing new to learn!

But the writer of Hebrews knew that this wasn’t the case. There was so much more to learn. In this case, the writer was talking about the high priesthood of Jesus. And he will go on to teach about that from chapter 7 onwards.

But it is also a general truth. If we get bored with reading the Bible, because we think we know it all, then we’re deluded.

There's so much more to understand. More depth and meaning and treasures to enjoy!

a) God's Unsearchable Wisdom

That's because God is so amazing. In the middle of his letter to the Romans, where Paul explained the glory of the gospel, he broke out in a declaration of praise:

"Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

**How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!"** Romans 11:33

- The wisdom and knowledge of God is so deep that we'll never get to the bottom.
- His judgements are so incredible that we'll never truly work them all out!
- His paths are so incredible, that we'll never get to the end of them!

This is one of the ways I try to get my head around the idea of eternity in heaven. I know that some people love that idea, but others are a bit freaked out by it. It sounds like a bit like that movie Ground-Hog Day - the same thing again and again. Is that not boring?

But that's not the case. Some people think that about being married to the same person for years is boring. But, if you really love someone, then they're never boring. There is always more to understand, more to grow in, more to enjoy! A lifetime is not long enough to spend with them!

And if that is true about another human being - how much more is it true about our infinite God! He really is so amazing that eternity will always be a wonderful journey of discovery.

b) Christ's Unending Love

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians was this. **"I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fulness of God."** Ephesians 3:17–19

Christ's love surpasses knowledge. So when we think we've started to understand, how wide and long and high and deep it is,

- We've really only started to grasp the dimensions of his love.
- We've only taken a little step on that journey of discovery.
- We've only been to the foothills of the mountain range of his love.
- We've only dipped our toes in the ocean of his love.

With Christ there is so much more to grow in. So much more to learn. So much more to experience. And so, as we learned at the start of the year, our calling is always to **"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."** 2 Peter 3:18

2. Don't Be Lazy

So if there is so much more for us to grow in, why do we get bored? Why do we sometimes become so familiar and unaffected by the person and work of Christ? Well maybe because we're like the initial readers of this letter.

The writer had so much more to say, but he said, **"It is hard to explain because you are slow to learn."** Hebrews 5:11. This wasn't a criticism of their intelligence or their ability. Rather it was a challenge about their desire and eagerness.

The word translated slow here, is translated lazy in Hebrews 6:12. The writer believed that they had been negligent, indifferent, lazy in their learning! The reason why he was finding it difficult to explain more about the person and work of Jesus to them was because they hadn't dedicated themselves to growing in their Christian lives as they should have.

a) Share With Others

It was if they'd got stuck in their Christian growth. **"By this time you ought to be teachers."** Hebrews 5:12

I don't think that means the writer thought that every believer should be preaching in the church or running ministries. We've all been given different spiritual gifts and different roles in the body of Christ. As Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 12:18: **"God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."**

But God does want all of us who've trusted in Jesus to pass on our knowledge of Christ to others. He wants all of us to be involved in discipleship. This is Jesus' call on our lives! ["Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."](#) Matthew 28:19–20

Of course we never graduate from our own discipleship. We need to keep on learning more about the Lord. We always need the humility to learn from others. I am so grateful for the books and podcasts that I can learn from regularly.

But we're not designed to be passive in our Christian lives. As we learn more about the Lord, we're called to increasingly be involved in passing on what we have learned to others. So Paul taught Timothy: ["The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."](#) 2 Timothy 2:2

This is what it means to be a disciple. It is about growing in our relationship with Christ, and seeking to help others to do the same. This is why we are piloting the Discipleship Essentials Course. All those on this course are learning, so they can help others to learn and then pass it on to others.

b) Eat Better Food

But there was a problem with the first readers of this letter. Instead of being able to teach others, the writer said, ["You need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again."](#) Hebrews 5:12

They'd been Christians for some time now. But because of laziness, they hadn't been growing. They hadn't been developing as they should have. They were still needing someone to teach them the basic teaching of the Bible, the ABCs of the faith! ["You need milk, not solid food!"](#) Hebrews 5:12

Milk is good for babies. In fact it is essential for healthy growth and development.

But when we start to grow up, we need more than that. In order to continue to develop we need solid food. Only that solid food that will provide for our growing bodies and continue to nourish us as we grow.

And it is the same in our spiritual lives: ["Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness."](#) Hebrews 5:13

What the writer means by the teaching about righteousness here has been debated by many. Some people think it is deeper theological instruction. But it seems that it has a more practical aspect than that.

c) Keep Living For Christ

That's because the writer goes on to say, ["But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."](#) Hebrews 5:14

So maturity is connected with how we are living. Babies have little discernment. They put anything in their mouths – finger, toes, toys and anything else they can get their hands on. But as we grow up, we realise what things are good to eat, and what things are not.

So spiritual maturity is connected with discernment. It is the ability to distinguish between good and evil. With being able to make good decisions. It is about being able to stand in the face of temptation, count the cost of discipleship, understand the need for and value of perseverance in our faith.

So solid food is the truth of God's Word that enables us to do that. We need to go deeper in our understanding of God's Word so that we can see the true value of Christ and understand that following him is worth it, no matter what it costs us, no matter what challenges or suffering we have to go through. To be able to constantly live out the call of Jesus that ["If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."](#) Luke 9:23

So this growth is not an intellectual exercise. It's not about knowing stuff just so that we know it. It is about growing in our understanding so that we can grow in our active obedience, our practical wisdom, our lived-out dependence on and trust in Christ! It is about studying God's Word so we can understand how we should live with Christ.

3. Don't Stay in the Shallows

So because this is so important, the writer of Hebrews was not about to leave his readers in the shallows of their faith. Instead, he was committed to doing what he could to help them move on: ["Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ."](#) Hebrews 6:1

There is a debate about what the writer calls here the elementary teachings about Christ. But I think it is helpful to see these are three sets of pairs.

- First of all there is: [“Repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God.”](#) Hebrews 6:1 This is the initial step of commitment to Christ, as we turn away from living our own way and put our faith in Jesus as the one who died for us on the cross.
- Then there are two ways in which Christians initially relate to the Christian community: [“Instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands.”](#) Hebrews 6:1. Laying on of hands may refer to acceptance into the community or setting apart from ministry.
- And then there is the basic truth about the future destiny of those who trust in Jesus and those who don’t: [“The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.”](#) Hebrews 6:1-2

Some people have even commented on the fact that these six truths were very similar to truths within Judaism. So maybe the initial readers of this letter were more happy to stay talking about them because they wouldn’t attract the criticism or persecution of their Jewish community.

a) Go Deeper

But the writer urged his readers not to stay there. [“Let us... go on to maturity.”](#) Hebrews 6:1

Yes those elementary teachings are crucially important. They are foundational truths, and we need a good foundation if we are going to build well. But we’re not supposed to stop there. We build a good foundation, so that we can build on it.

Similarly, learning our ABCs is crucial. But the reason for learning them is not to stay there. It is so we can move on to using them to read words and sentences and books.

So the writer was not content to stop his letter here. Even though he knew it would be challenging for his readers, he kept on writing. And we’re really glad he did, because there are amazing truths for us to explore in the rest of Hebrews!

But we can learn from this too.

- It reminds us that we need to make sure that we’ve all grasped those foundational truths. If you’re here today and you’ve not yet repented of your sin and put your faith in Jesus, then please don’t wait any longer. Today, you can accept Jesus as your Saviour and Lord and know that you have that solid foundation in your life.
- But if we have done this, then we mustn’t stop there. God has so much more for us. Let’s go deeper, dig wholeheartedly into the Bible, put in the work to get to grips with all the riches of who Christ is and what he has done, is doing and will do for us!

b) Depend on God

But, as we do this, let’s always remember that we can’t do this on our own. The writer was committed to keep teaching more about Jesus. But he said, [“And God permitting, we will do so.”](#) Hebrews 6:2

He was aware that going deeper required more than just his, or his readers’, effort. It needed God’s help!

And the great news is, we’ve been given that help. [“We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.”](#) 1 Corinthians 2:12

Growth is a spiritual exercise. If we’re going to go on to maturity, we need to depend on the Holy Spirit living within us to open our eyes, renew our minds, transform our behaviour and empower us to live for Christ!

So this growth is not just for the clever among us. It’s not just for the well-educated. God wants to reveal his truth to all of us, if we are willing and committed to learn. This is what Jesus said, [“I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.”](#) Matthew 11:25

Conclusion

So let’s not give up on our Christian journey! Yes, at times it can feel long and challenging,

- But we don’t need to be bored, because there is so much more to discover.
- So we mustn’t be lazy or negligent in what we feed our souls on.
- Instead we need to go beyond the shallows. Go deeper. Dive into the Scriptures and grow in our knowledge of Christ, our relationship with Christ and our commitment to Christ - because he really is all we need.