

How is my driving?

I often wonder about a sign I see on the back of some trucks that says, “How is my driving?” Then it gives a toll free phone number if you wish to comment on the driver’s driving. I wonder if anyone ever calls that phone number? Do they report how excellent a driver he or she is? Do they report erratic driving habits? Do they report the driver when he or she cuts them off in traffic? Maybe, some day, I may have reason to call that phone number.

The other day, I was driving north on Highway 49 in the Gulfport area near the Turkey Creek area. The area has three traffic lanes in either direction as well as a shoulder on either side of the highway. Driving along, minding my business and watching the traffic, I stayed in the slow lane. Directly opposite me, was a Cable One white truck, traveling north in the center lane. All of a sudden, without warning and without any indicators, he came across into my lane. Immediately, I had to swerve onto the shoulder of the highway to avoid being broadsided by the truck.

The truck driver continued on, immune to his erratic behavior. Recovering from my ordeal, I got back onto the slow lane again from the shoulder and continued on. The truck driver turned off moments later and disappeared to the right.

Once my heartbeat had returned to normal, I thanked the Lord for protecting me as well as my quick reflexes. I also had a few choice words for the driver under my breath. I will never know if the driver was on his cell phone and was distracted or was he focused on something other than traffic at the time. One thing for sure, I was glad God’s grace protected me from disaster.

The incident made me think of something else I have observed while driving. You are driving along, minding your own business and very much aware of traffic patterns and possible danger signals when some driver does something stupid and scares you. They either run a stop sign or maybe pass out a stopped car on their side of street without waiting for you to pass from the opposite direction. Instead of apologizing for their stupidity or carelessness, they stare at you as they pass, trying to let you know that they were in the right and how come you are too stupid to see it.

Don’t you love it when people are always right? Don’t you love it when they always have the right answer and the only answer that matters? Don’t you love it when they let you know that their opinion is much weightier and more important than any possible opinion you may have?

Such persons not only know it all but want you to know that they know it all and that you have to live with their expert knowledge. Such persons know the latest and greatest gossip. They are a human newspaper in the vein of the National Enquirer. They know who is seeing whom; what couple is having marriage problems; who is the latest to get divorced; who is having an affair with whom. They glory in having the latest, greatest, most sensational gossip hot off their professional press and ready for human consumption.

Many times, those who know it all are so interesting, only to themselves. If they took the time to listen to themselves, they would fall asleep with boredom. Shallow water masses make a lot of noise while deep waters hardly make a ripple.

Jesus had something to say about the know-it-alls of his day, When the mother of James and John came to Jesus seeking favorable positions for her sons in the kingdom, Jesus reminded the apostles by saying that “you know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant. Whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.”

So the next time, I am cut off in traffic, I know I cannot bring myself to give him or her the proverbial finger as some people do. Instead, I may stare them down and let them know that I noticed. If I meet an erratic driver with a message to call on the back of his truck, I may be tempted to call that phone number. And when I meet someone who knows it all, especially the kind that annoys me, I may start responding to them in a foreign language, even one I may create on the spot. Then, that should confuse them enough by reminding them that I can be in the driver’s seat too.