

April 1, 2014

Dear Friends & Family,

[Ursuline Academy, Arcadia, Mo.]



“40 YEARS AGO—YESTERDAY”-No Foolin’!

There was a young man, sixteen years of age, who, along with his parents & three younger sisters, moved from a nice five-bedroom house in suburban South Jersey to the basement of a liquor store in the mountains of southeastern Missouri! He was following his father, who had made a major career change in his middle-aged years. About two years went by. The young man was eighteen now & a senior in high school. He decided to attend a retreat for junior & senior high school boys. His Catholic diocese was hosting it in a small town nearby at an *Ursuline Academy*, where retired **nuns** lived. He went just to do something different. He hung out with some guys who smoked pot & who may have done so at the retreat, but this young man was too afraid to do it there. He “eyed out” the **girls** who served the food in the cafeteria, & pretty much just followed the crowd & the scheduled order of activities. On Sunday morning of that weekend, the group had a prayer meeting around the altar, where an older man who was a chaperone stood in center. The man wept as he asked for prayer for a certain burden he was carrying. The young men around him all held hands & prayed. As they did, this young man felt what seemed like an “electric current” flowing through his hands & arms. He looked up out of one eye to see if anyone else might be experiencing the same sensation. When the meeting was over, the young man felt as though the chaperone’s request was granted. The young man

also felt as if it were the first time in his life that he really thought someone's prayer *was* answered! As the men left the chapel to go to lunch, the young man was the last one in line. When he got to the side exit of the chapel, "something" stopped him. He watched the rest of the guys walk down the long hall that led to the cafeteria. He turned around & went back into the center aisle of the chapel. He stared up at the life-sized crucifix hanging there, & began to weep profusely. He never said a word. After a few moments, his tears turned into those of deepest joy, & he was bathed in a love he had never known before. It felt as if scales dropped from his eyes, & he saw the world in a whole new light. From that point on, he began hugging all of the other guys at the retreat. One of them even referred to him as "the hugger". It was the only way he could think of to express the deep love that God had just poured into his soul. After the retreat, he went home & told his father what had happened. His father shared that he had had similar experiences when he was his age, but that it would "wear off". His father is now very glad for his son that it didn't wear off for him. The young man told his girlfriend & she looked at him as though he were a ghost. Needless to say, his new experience led to the dissolution of that relationship. The Lord would have the perfect helpmate waiting for him in another state. The young man couldn't articulate very well what had happened, but there was one thing he was certain of—he had met God, he was different, & nothing else mattered now but knowing God & making Him known! That "young man"—was *me*. I told the story to the best of my recollection.

"GOD & HUMAN EXCRETEMENT"

Yes—I could barely type that title just now; it breaks me to do so. Some of you may recall in last month's newsletter one of my articles was "[No Use Blaspheming Over Spilled Water](#)"? Could it get any worse? Perhaps it can. Perhaps some of you astute Bible scholars immediately thought of the Lord's command in Deuteronomy to the Israelites encamped in the wilderness re: being sure to cover up their human waste as the Lord told them that He Who was holy walked among their camp. No. I only wish that is why I cited the above title. It was for another more grievous reason. I saw on Facebook last month a post by a young man whom I have known since he was a boy. He's a stellar young man. Yet—like so many his age, he unwittingly posted an expression for all the world to see that greatly demeaned & dishonored his God. He was excited re: a blessing that the Lord had recently bestowed upon him. In capital letters he exclaimed in type: "HOLY CRAP!!!!!!". Oh, how grieved & stumbled I was by it. It didn't lessen my love for

the young man. “Father? Forgive him. He knoweth not what he does.” Most of you will recollect one of the most fearsome & awe-inspiring visions of God that the Holy Scriptures record—that of the prophet Isaiah’s call & commission [Isa. 6]. Even the apostle John refers to it in his gospel, asserting that when Isaiah saw the LORD in His glory, he was seeing The Lord Jesus in His **pre-incarnate** state [Jn. 12:41]. What did Isaiah see & hear? He saw The Lord of Hosts seated on His throne, high & exalted with the train of His robe filling the temple, which was filled with smoke. Its thresholds shook. Above the Lord were terrifying creatures called **Seraphim**—the only place in Scripture where they are mentioned. Each had six wings: two covered their feet, two covered their faces, & with two they flew. Day & night these awesome angelic entities would cry as they beheld the Lord, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty; the whole earth is filled with His glory!”. I remember reading years ago one scholar & his comment re: the Seraphim’s refrain: “they were not inarticulate”, meaning that they did not possess a limited vocabulary! In beholding the “beatific vision” they could have described & extolled it with a million different words, such as “Love, Love, Love!” or “Wise, Wise, Wise!”, or “Mighty, Mighty, Mighty!”, etc. No—their adjective of choice? **“HOLY!”** Then, in the light of this, to see this young man unwittingly attach that same glorious word & epitaph to describe *human excrement*? It was more than I could bear. He chose to post it publicly-I felt it my duty to very, very gently correct him publicly. I just could not let it go unaddressed. Sadly, no-tragically-he is not the first Christian young man I have heard use the expression. May God forgive us. O God. O God.



“HEY? GIVE ME A RING SOMETIME!” or “LORD OF THE RING”

(3/9) I arrived late home last night from a 7-day ministry trip to **NY & PA**, entailing 6 times of ministry & encompassing almost 700 miles of driving. My first ministry event was a student body chapel at **Elim Bible Institute**, my alma mater. I preached re: “**Adoration Versus Idolatry**”. The message elaborates re: the devotion God desires, so very much deserves, & what He too often gets from His people instead, i.e., idolatry. I then discuss the origin of idolatry in the universe, followed by its origin among His covenant people—“chosen out of & above all the other peoples of the earth” [Dt. 7:6, 7 & 10:15]. I ached re: this meeting-that God would meet us-that I would relate to the students in our rapidly ever-increasing secular culture. He came to us. I finished preaching at 8 minutes past noon [Yes-I was watching the clock care-fully]. At 1:20 the last student left the chapel. Many were crying; some were sobbing; some were on their faces before God. Before the altar-response time ended, I went up to the balcony sound booth to rotate my background music for the sake of those who were still seeking the Lord. While there, a young man came up behind me & placed what looked like a class ring upon the sound table [see attached picture]. I thought he was giving it to me as a gift. Upon closer inspection, however, I noticed it was a ring with a vicious-looking skull on it. He then proceeded to tell me, “Here-this is for you. You can use it for a prop” [I had many on my object lesson tables]. Obviously, the Lord had convicted his heart re: this & for all it stood for to him in his heart. I put my arm around his shoulder, placed my other hand on his heart, & prayed for him. Thank You, Jealous God, that You came after the heart affections of one of Your sons. Your jealousy is our security. Amen.



“WE’RE IN THE \$?”

(3/21) Last night Kim & I returned from our annual trip to our taxman in Lebanon, PA, a.k.a., *Ken Shirk*, of "*Sonrise Tax Service*"-a dear brother & friend. It was our *22nd year* doing so. Unfortunately, we learned from it that our income this past year had decreased *several thousand dollars* [don't interpret that expression to mean we make tons of \$ in the first place! ;0) We don't!] from the year before. Yes-we live entirely by faith, & yes-we’re human. Our first reaction was concern & sadness. As we drove away, I told Kim, “Honey? The bottom line isn’t how much \$ we made, but how much *gospel* was preached”. She agreed. Yes, the workman is worthy of his hire, but the driving force in me is getting Jesus’ gospel to as many as I can in the time He so very graciously gives me. May it continue. Amen.

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*[Michael is an ordained *Elim Fellowship* “itinerant” home missionary & is also licensed to preach the gospel by the local church he attends, *Immanuel Church*. *Caboose!* is also an affiliate ministry of the *Hopewell Network of Churches*. For 14 years he served on various local church staffs full-time. Since 2000, he & Kim have lived by faith, having no salary or retirement to speak of-yet this is their calling at this season of their lives. Michael preaches *God’s Word & systematic theology*, using both visual aids & drama, *to all age groups* either separately or combined, as the Lord opens doors. To help support this work, please make all tax-deductible gifts payable to: *Elim Fellowship, 1703 Dalton Rd, Lima, NY 14485*], denoting it for the home-mission work of Michael Robert Guertin. If your church would be interested in ministry or helping to support our missions’ work in the U.S. to both old & young please feel free to contact us. Thanks!



Ministry/events for April & those not listed in last month's newsletter: Caboose! on the Loose! ;0)

March 5: EBI, Lima, NY: Spiritual Formations' class: teacher

March 14: Concordville, PA: hsc directors' mtg.

March 21: Hockessin, DE: IC home-group

April 1-24: VIA DOLOROSA setup, prep, performances [15-18th], & tear down

April 2: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg.//HN pastors' mtg.

April 28: Shady Maple Banquet Center, East Earl, PA: Tel Hai Camp Spring fund-raising banquet: association member/attendee

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