

January 1, 2013 New Year's Day



"Caboose!" End of Year Report-2012"

Dear [Friends & Family](#),

This week will mark the completion of [27 years](#) of full-time ministry, and [13 years less a month](#) of living-by-faith itinerant ministry. Once again, as in previous years, [2012](#) encompassed traveling thousands of miles to minister in various states, which included [DE, PA, NY, & OH](#). I preached [53X](#) & drove over [3,000](#) miles just for preaching ministry. This did not include many more miles for non-preaching ministry-related meetings & events. Venues of ministry included Sunday morning whole-family services, young adult services, youth services, youth retreats, children's services, youth & children's camps (five last summer, which included one weekend "mini-camp"), Christian schools, a prayer breakfast, a Bible school Alumni banquet, a 4-night "Passion of Christ" [a.k.a. "Via Dolorosa"] drama, a downtown rescue mission, & a non-stop revival service ministry. Expressions of the Body of Christ I ministered to were [Elim Fellowship](#), [The Hopewell Network](#), [Presbyterian](#), [Christian Missionary Alliance](#), [American Baptist](#), [Vineyard](#), [Black Pentecostal](#), [Sovereign Grace Ministries](#), [Pentecostal/Charismatic](#), & [Urban Promise](#). Once again, I could not help but notice the Father had me share "the basics" to His people, i.e., the doctrines of grace, the supremacy of Christ versus idolatry in His peoples' hearts, the coming harvest, judgment, & retribution, the exclusivity & indispensability of the gospel, & Christ's deity & propitiation rendered on behalf of God's people. As with 2011, this past year showed noticeably increased involvement in worship leading for adults, youth, & children.



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(12/5) "THE KING'S THIEF"

While walking through an outlet mall with Kim yesterday doing some **Christmas** shopping, my spirit was sickened & grieved by the plethora of secular-only "Holiday" music bellowing in every store & breezeway. Not once did I hear a song recognizing Whose season it is. I found myself preferring, if forced to choose, music sung & played to a **Hindu deity** or some other pagan idol rather than to have to hear revelry at Christmas which ignores the Christ of Christmas, Who should have all of its music sent up to Him in His honor! As with just about every Christian/Church holiday, the evil one, once so very close to the Eternal Word in ages past, since his fall, has constantly endeavored to steal the limelight of the holidays from The One Who they are in honor of. And he has done a splendid job of doing so. **Lucifer** was at one time one of the "King's Men". Now, in his thoroughly depraved state, he has become the King's "thief", endeavoring at every turn to steal the attention, focus, & time that men give their eyes & ears to, & hence their heart's affections. O Jesus, please come & invade the culture & take back what is rightfully & solely Yours! I'm reminded as I type of the missionary to India years ago, who, as he observed the countless idols in that country, each one in its own way stealing the Savior's rightful mono-poly on glory, said something to the effect of, "I don't want to live another minute in a place where Jesus is so unglorified!" To this I so very deeply & wholeheartedly concur. Sensitivity to such things increases as your time & gaze do upon the Savior's face through His Word by His Spirit. As I've written before: "Lots of communion [with Jesus] = little compromise [re: the things of the world]; little communion = lots of compromise". Help us, dear Lord!



“ON THE HOME-CHURCH FRONT”

When I’m not out on the road ministering to other groups of God’s people, I try my best to serve my own local church in any way that I can. This week happens to overflow with such opportunities. Tonight, I’ll be leading worship at our weekly [Tabernacle of David](#) service, which is devoted to worship & prayer. Then, this coming Sunday I will be baptizing a [little girl](#) per her request, at the outset of the adult service upstairs, after which I will proceed downstairs to kids’ church & come out of a Time Machine as one of the king of Jericho’s soldiers. Near the end of the service, I’ll lead the children in worship in song. Then, that same evening I’ve been asked by my son-in-law, our church’s youth pastor, to host the youth group’s Christmas Talent Show, which, gulp, translates into my wearing a bow tie & cummerbund!



“FILES FOUND & FUEL FOR THE FIRE”

A couple of weeks ago, I had a relation of mine ask if I would take several boxes of their financial records & files & burn them in my fireplace, as it would be quite costly for them to have them professionally shredded. I was happy to do so & was glad I could get a few free fireside visits re: them. Burning papers & files such as this which included many papers & envelopes stacked together required that I constantly watch & stoke & stir them in order for them to completely burn. Having just preached on Judgment Day a number of times at the recent youth

retreats I conducted, I could not help but think of the fires that will burn on that Great Day. For the lost, every text, blog, letter, email, note, word spoken, CD, book, movie, TV program, newspaper article, etc. that they have produced, all, every one of them, down to the very punctuation mark, will all be retrieved, examined, & exposed on that terrible day, before all who were affected & influenced by them. This is why Judgment Day cannot occur until the last human being is conceived & has lived his or her life. Just judgment cannot be determined & rendered until all of those we have influenced, for either good or evil, have "lived out" this influence. For saints, this will determine rewards, but for sinners, this will determine degree of suffering & punishment. Oh, how very ironic it is, that as celebrities stand at podiums during "Awards' Nights" on earth & bask in the fame, money, adulation, etc. of man, that what is actually happening is the exact oppo-site! They are increasing their guilt & degree of punishment for all of eternity, as they promulgate self-glory & wickedness through their "fruits" to the rest of the human race! O, my soul shakes as I ponder that while these award ceremonies are going on, countless recipients of such awards are beneath their feet, in Hades, gnashing their teeth, longing for water, & a chance to warn others "up on top", "up above", not to make the foolish mistakes that they did during their lifetimes! O, the irony of it all! While the orchestra bellows celebrative music in the hall, beneath the surface of the earth, there is another din, but it isn't the sound of revelry, but agony! L O, how I very much wish Christians would ponder these things as they addictively watch these "star-search" shows! It is the principle of "influence" that will be a marked characteristic of the day of "The Great Assize" as the older theologians called it. It is one of the most sobering facts of life & yet I have only heard one sermon on it [on the radio by [Oliver B. Greene](#)], & have only read of it once or twice in my theology books. I'm struck as I ponder these files that I burned in the fire. 1. They were all gathered [none were lost; none escaped!] 2. They were very detailed. My relative whose files these were is a very detailed, meticulous person in such matters 3. They encompassed many, many years of record-keeping [on Judgment Day, The Scriptures say that every word, deed, & secret will be reckoned with!] For the saint, every single deed they did as a Christian will be tried in the fire [I Cor. 3] to see if it meets the test for reward in the blazing light of God's intense purity & holiness. If it was done for His glory's sake & for the advancement of His Kingdom, a reward will remain. I shudder inside when I think of how many rewards I might have been entitled to but have lost or will lose because my motives in doing so were self-based & impure! It is no wonder that the Apostle Paul cited this Great Day as a major

motive for Christians to strive to please God on a daily basis - "Therefore, we make it our goal to please Him for we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, where each of us will give an account of what we have done while living here on earth in our bodies" [II Cor. 5:9, 10]. These truths scrape, clean, & sober one's spirit, & rightly so! My heart for 2013 is to continue this itinerant work to all ages, as the Lord gives me grace. May it be so.

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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, retirement, or health insurance-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].

*Ministry/events for JANUARY & those not listed in last month's newsletter:

Dec. 5: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Tabernacle of David: worship leader

Dec. 9, 16: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: The Father's House: actor & worship leader; child baptism

service

Dec. 12: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: DE H.O.P. "Global Day" service: worship leader, opening

hour: noon

Dec. 14: Immanuel Church Leadership Gathering, Landenburg, PA

Dec. 21: 1st Central Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, DE: Urban Promise Christian School teen chapel

Dec. 30: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Sun. a.m. service worship team: drummer

Dec. 31: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: New Year's Eve service: worship leader

Jan. 5: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: DEHOP worship leaders' dinner & seminar

Jan. 8: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: HSC board mtg./HN pastors' mtg.

Jan. 10: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: "Pulse" young adults' group

Jan. 15: Jesus Is Lord Ministries, Biglerville, PA: 2 live-streaming services, 2 & 7 p.m. www.jilmi.org

Jan. 25: Camp Manatawny, Douglassville, PA: Trinity U.C.C. "Pier" youth group retreat