

July 1, 2013



“70 YEARS in 70 MINUTES”

Dear *Friends & Family*,

[6/4] Early this morning I drove about an hour away to minister to a group of senior citizens who call them-selves “*The Keenagers*”. All were ladies except for one man. All were precious. All were once *little girls* who wore patent-leather shoes & fluffy dresses & skipped down the sidewalk. And, at that age, they looked at “old people” in the same eerie way that children now look at them. I told them during my 70 minute or so illustrated message [“The Gospel Elaborated”] that all of this occurs because one man ate one bite of one piece of fruit one time. Because of Adam, sin entered the world, & death through sin. Death swallows everyone, like a very massive, ominous, slow-moving tsunami. No one escapes it. *Walt Disney & Michael Jackson* [or so I read] tried to evade it via suspended animation. They both failed. Those pretty little girls in patent leather shoes skipping down the sidewalk mentioned above are now all gray, wrinkled, slower, feeble, ailing, slowly but surely, as Death little by little overtakes them. O, how he comes across the teeming fields of humanity with his harvester, taking us down. The once-lovely, sleek, tan, smooth-skinned beauties all succumb to him. He has mercy on no one. Sadly, strangely, I saw him in a subtle way move his hand, even at the end of this meeting. Remember, death typically is a very slow process. It has been said we begin to die as soon as we’re born. That is true. One of the older ladies, with long gray hair, began to feel ill. It was one of the saddest things I’ve ever beheld. She started to cry, as if she were a little girl again. She laid down on the pew as the other ladies found a cushion for her head. They began to question her to see if she was coherent. They called for a nurse. Here, right before my very eyes, was a sermon illustration I had not planned, yet, to be honest, so fit the message just given. What was happening?



Death, slowly but surely, was taking her, as he does all of us, whether through an accident or an illness. Her son was coming to pick her up. I went behind her, laid my hand on her, & entreated the Lord for her. I don't mean to say that she was dying on the spot, but in a way, sooner or later, just like the rest of us, she would.

[*(6/17)-I just learned the other day that this precious woman has only days to live.] I just saw this universal "process" in action with one of the aged. And yet, despite this incident occurring near the end of the service, earlier, as I expounded on the lavished grace of God upon an unlovable, undeserving, hostile-to-God race, Jesus' substitutionary death, becoming a curse for us to free us from the curse of the Law, etc. I saw a twinkle in some of these same ladies' eyes. The little girls still reside within. And guess what? Despite the sadness re: the "Grim" aspects of Death above, it has been beaten. Death only reigns & has power where sin has not been expiated. I expounded on how the Lord Jesus did that. [Years ago, a friend of mine & father of 7 was dying of cancer. He told me, "I have looked at 'Death' in the face & it has no stinger". {Thanks to Jesus, of course!}] When I finished the meeting there was a sweetness in the room. How couldn't there be as The Lord Jesus alone & His sin-eradicating redemptive work was the sole topic of discussion? I don't usually do this but at the end of the meeting, since there was time until they were dismissed for lunch, I asked if there were any questions. One sweet "little old lady" smiled at me & said, "Do you have a tape?" She meant of this message.

I told her that the fastest, easiest, & cheapest way to do it was to have one of her grandchildren go to my iTunes' account & burn a CD there. The story isn't over. There was a little boy in the room. He was 10 years old. What was he doing in this meeting of 70 & 80-somethings? He was sick & his mother was the church secretary. Therefore, he went to work with mom. Here is where Jesus really comes in. Again, I would guess I preached about 70 minutes. I cover so very much, very quickly, & very animatedly. Creation, The Fall, Depravity, The Law, Imputation, Propitiation, Inability, alien righteousness, etc... Well, as I was packing up my many object lessons & visual aids, the boy's mother, who happened to be a

huge help to me doing so, told me what her son said to her when I was finished: "I wish he wouldn't stop". Did you catch that? I had just preached for well over an hour! He was a TEN year old! In a room of people, some(?), many(?) of whom were 7 decades older than him! You have an octogenarian & a 10 year old both wanting more. Now, I ask you-Who do you think did that? "Guerty"?! Not in a million years! Not even if I put on my best personality act! Only the Lord Jesus' Spirit has such ability, & wonders of wonders, He gave Him to me to do such things. If He were to take Him out of me, no such story could be written. I do not know how to convey to Him how very deeply humbled & grateful I am for doing so. It is a joy of life I cannot describe. Here is part of an email I received from my hostess the next morning: ***"...Dear Bro & Friend....Thank you and Jesus Bless you for showing up when you would have or should have been in bed. You ministered to us with such love and amazing Grace. I am still basking in the overflow of God's presence with us today. I would love to have you back and I'm sure the other ladies feel the same...."***



[6/7] "CAMP CRAMMIN' CRAMPS"

I grew up loving & listening to **Christmas** music, even in the Fall! One such song was Jack Jones', "This Is That Time Of The Year". And, so it goes; except, that instead of Christmastime, it's *camp* time. This translates into àcountless emails, directors' mtgs., costume prep, amassing, sorting, packing, etc., drama script-writing, staging, actor & horse (!)-procuring & training, hours of drama music soundtrack sorting & editing, study for sermons, camper & staff promotion & recruiting, camp administration, prayer, prayer, & more prayer [often in the seclusion {& **heat!**} of my backyard shed!]. One way I know "it's upon me" is my waking up in the middle of the night & thinking of all I have to do, & how little time I have left. I quickly get overwhelmed while I lie there, feeling as if one of those huge black **2000 lb. "trapezoid-shaped" weights** is on top of me. I begin to pray, to quote **The Scripture** in my mind. I've often thought thru the years at such times, "This is it, Lord. I need to stop doing this. It's too much for me. It's time to start doing something else". And, this is my **30th year** of doing them! And yet, The Faithful & True One comes-comes & enables-comes & enables & reminds me afresh that "Apart from Me, you can do nothing". And, each year, camp is so

powerfully sweet, that I ache at even the thought of possibly missing them. I'm even writing this July newsletter this early in June because by the time I get home from Sr. Hi. Camp at the end of this month, I'll be in "post-camp fatigue" mode. L



"THE TWO COMINGS' OF OUR LORD"

Given the theme of camp this year, aka, "**Marvel**", taken from II Thess. 1:10, which cites that The Christ is coming back the 2nd time to be "marveled at" by His people, I plan to bring out of my drama/sermon closet one I have not done in 10 years, a.k.a., "**Castlekeeper**". Out of the Time Machine I portray the keeper of a Medieval Scottish castle who at the end of his monologue, compares it w/The New Jerusalem, & how vastly superior the latter is. This leads into the two times Jesus "left Heaven's castle" to come to earth. The message which follows this drama contrasts His 1st & 2nd Comings & how infinitely different each will be, both for His people & His enemies. In a very real sense, may He come a "3rd" time to us in that little camp chapel this summer, by His Spirit's presence through the medium of the preached Word. 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, retirement to speak of, 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 separ-ately 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].

"Caboose!" on the Loose!

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

June 9, 16, 30: IC, Wilmington, DE: The Father's House children's ministry: worship leader

June 15: Towerville Christian Church, Coatesville, PA: father & son breakfast: speaker

June 17: Concordville, PA: hsc teen camp directors' mtg.

June 19: New Covenant Church, Audubon, NJ: EF pastors' mtg.

July 2: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: Hopewell Network pastors' mtg.

July 13-19: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: HSC Jr. Hi. Camp-pastoral director

July 22-26: Friends of the Cross Christian Church, Corning, NY: Camp Victory-morning speaker