

July 1, 2014

Dear Friends & Family,

“DOVER DOWNer”



In late May Kim & I drove downstate DE to visit a 90 year old WWII veteran from our church who for the past few years has lived at a nursing home. En route you pass the huge NASCAR track “Dover Downs” just outside the state capital. They were preparing for their annual huge June event. I commented to Kim that a few years ago I heard that **NASCAR** is the biggest spectator sport in the country. I found it hard to believe, assuming it was the **NFL**. Having recently studied, preached, & written re: rampant idolatry in both the world & the Church, my spirit sank as we passed the massive complex. It did so because I pondered that in a matter of days it would be filled to capacity with countless thousands of “Imago Deis”, that is, human beings made in the *image of God*. They would encircle an asphalt track & for hours sit there & watch a slew of stock cars go around in circles. My God, my God-what has happened to us? The Altogether Lovely One, radiant in splendor, infinite in power, each of His infinite attributes worthy & deserving of contemplation & adoration by His people for endless hours, also sits in the middle of a “circle”. The Scripture depicts in various places *His “stage”-His “throne room scene”-His “arena”-&*, apart from His keeping grace, humans would die if brought within even thousands of miles from it. There He sits, surrounded by 100 million+ angels [Dan.7], the thrones of the 24 elders & the 4 Living Creatures [Rev.4]àbeing adored & sung to by these awesome terri-fying human-dwarfing entities, the least of which could easily crush scores of us, given they are mighty in strength, & flames of fire. And yet-and yet-here, we infinitesimal human

beings “sit & behold” finite men hitting balls into little holes on green grass with sticks, running up & down a field with a piece of leather, or driving automobiles around in circles for hours, & are absolutely mesmerized by it. Meanwhile, there the God of the universe sits-ignored, neglected, & despised by most. To make matters worse, He sent His “Darling” into a human hornets’ nest-on (*eternal*) purpose-“& they did to Him whatever they wanted”. And not only is He ignored & neglected-He was & still is hated. And so are His followers-just as He said they would be. Wow. God help us. God help us. As we sang in Bible school years ago, “Without a progressive vision, we dwell carelessly”, or as I like to put it, “we dwell without a care”. Lift our vision higher, Lord!

“CAMP #1 DONE”



(6/28) I returned home late last night from my 1st of 4 camps this summer. It was our Sr. Hi. camp, rela-tively secluded in a rural setting with about 60 9-12th graders. In my 31 years of camp ministry, this particular camp was one of the hardest re: prep. Sleepless nights, stress, fears, warfare, oppression & depression ac-companied this one. At least twice I told Kim I wish it were canceled as it would then give me a month to more fully prepare for my Jr. Hi. camp the following month. I would quickly tell her though that if it were I’d regret not doing all 3 hsc camps this summer as in previous years. 7 days included: unloading, unpacking, setting up the camp, praying, studying, preaching twice, teaching 8X, performing 3 dramas [I portrayed a 1st century Jewish shepherd, David when he was running for his life from King Saul & met Ahimelech, & Pontius Pilate (on horseback) in our annual field drama], counseling staff, counseling campers, & fearing for my own life in the pool with 30 teenage boys! The opening night’s chapel saw the Spirit of the Lord, like a deep ocean current, move through the room. Typically, the campers will go up front & lie on their faces before the Lord-not so this night. They sat there-but they were “there”-receptive, yielding, malleable. My son-in-law who

preached that night thought he had blown it. Again-not so. Our Lord was reminding him as He has me thru many years re: *Whose* ministry this is. Night after night the word of the Lord came at the kids thru various speakers with such depth of content & intensity that I would dare say adults in America seldom receive. God's free & lavished mercy upon His people, His setting of His heart's affection on them, His dealings with [Martin Luther](#) re: how free His grace was, a reading from [Horatius Bonar](#), the 19th century Scottish preacher, His intense jealousy over the heart-affections of His people & zeal to deal with their idols they so often place in front of Him, Jesus' magnanimous lavishing of mercy on the woman caught in adultery, genuine believing always results in *following*-not just mental assent, the common tragedy of young people who have grown up & participated in every kind of Christian institution & endeavor [Christian school, mission trips, church 3X per week, family devotions, camps, retreats, etc.] & despite it all still don't know God, etc...these were some of the messages the kids were hearing. As is always the case at camp, their "shields", along with their tears, came down. The love of God & the peace & security that always accompanies it filled the room. We were "safe" with Him alone in Hemlock Hall. We spent many hours in there. It is my favorite building on the planet because of this for the past 24 years. I've said it before but I'll say it again. When I die, I want my heart buried in the woods just adjacent to it. At the end of every camp, I make it a point to be the last person to leave the grounds. I have a tradition. I drive about a ½ mile from the camp & pull into an Amish driveway entrance on a hill & turn around. I just sit there & ponder what has just happened for the past 6 days. It is as if we were in our own little heavenly realm-a divine birds' nest if you will-a holy incubator. There is nothing like it. I sat there longing for more of Him-longing to stay-forever.

"STATIC CLING"



This year's camp theme, which I received on 12/1/13 of last year, is "Static Cling". It came to me while reading Ps. 63 that morning. David was fleeing for his very life from his own son Absalom. He groaned to God, "I cling to You". I've always been struck by that word, particularly in Dt. 10:20, 11:22, 13:4, etc. I've had it highlighted in yellow & underlined in red in my Bible for many years. Just reading it makes me want to do it. In prep for camp, I laid on my back-room floor meditating on Jer. 13:11. The Lord told the young prophet that just as a linen waistband clings to the waist [next to the skin!] of a man, so I *made* [My people] cling to Me..." I couldn't handle the care, concern, & deep desire of the Lord that He would want His people to cling that closely to Him. Reading of His desire for me to cling to Him, it swelled deep desire in me to do so. This comports with Scripture: "...this is love-not that we loved, but that He first loved us" [I Jn.3:9]. Our love for Him is merely a response to His for us. "He who is [first] forgiven much-loves much" [Lk.7:47]. Interestingly enough, one Hebrew scholar said The Lord is never *the subject* of the verb "cling". My take on this is that clinging involves not only desire, but desperate need. God, being totally self-sufficient, has none. That is what makes His love, His deep desire & burning jealousy when spited by us so magnanimousàHe doesn't NEED it! Rather, the Scriptures teach that He "sets His affection & heart upon" His people [Dt.7:6, 10:15, Rom.8:29]. Our first incentive to cling to God is to realize His intense desire [not need!] for us-His *pleasure*, that is. When we fail to do so, either via ignorance or neglect, He uses His "2nd incentive" to cause us to do so: His *pressure*, via David's example above. How do we know if we are truly clinging to Him? My next point to the kids at camp was *the proof* of clinging. Hezekiah was our biblical example. Our camp theme verse concerned him & his clinging to God-"He clung to the Lord his God. He didn't stop..." [II Kgs.18:6]. Hence, "**Static Cling**". The first proof of true clinging

to God for us is the same as it was for this godly king of Judah: “he removed the high places”. Idols, “too-high priorities” in our lives, substitutes, etc. all begin to be removed from our hearts’ affections the more tightly we cling to the Lord, His Word, & His presence. This is what camp is all about. May it continue.



Ministry/events for JULY & those not listed in last month’s newsletter: ***Caboose!*** on the Loose!

June 20: Concordville, PA: hsc sr. hi. Camp directors’ mtg.

July 1: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: hsc camp board mtg. & pastors’ mtg.

July 12-18: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: hsc jr. hi. camp: pastoral director

July 21-25: Friends of the Cross Church, Corning, NY: Camp Victory: guest chapel speaker

July 27: Full Gospel Family Life Center, Lagrangeville, NY: Sun. a.m. morning service

July 28: Transformation Life Center [addictions recovery ministry], West Park, NY: morning chapel

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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 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!**

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