

March 1, 2013

Dear Friends & Family,



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THE LATE (?) GREAT WALL OF CHINA?

(2/21) This past weekend I had the high honor & privilege to be able to minister the word of God to a multi-Chinese church youth group retreat, mostly from the Philadelphia area. In 27 years of ministry, very rare has it been that I have ministered to a particular ethnic people-group. Many years ago my Caboose! ministry team & I on at least two occasions ministered to a Korean church's children. Last Palm Sunday, I was invited to conduct a service at a mostly black church here in the Wilmington area. Each time I have been graced with such an invitation. & I don't say graced lightly. I have felt so honored to have been let in to their world, to their culture, to their sphere, if you will. It is a feeling I cannot describe. Perhaps I should take my shoes off when I do, at least in my heart. I know that people from every people-group, nation, & language will surround Jesus' glorious throne, but, for the time being, here on earth, we have instances where God's people gather where they are culturally acquainted & comfortable. And, it is understandably so. In what little time I had to do so, I just enjoyed watching these beautiful people. They were so different from me, & yet, in so many ways the same. In a way, I felt unworthy to be there. They were so precious. Perhaps it was just my flesh, but I felt like an outsider that was allowed to come in. I didn't take this lightly. And so, I went to work. My burden, as with all of God's people, was to bring them the burden I daily carry. the basics. My favorite Scripture verse has been for decades now I Corinthians 2:2: I was determined when I

was among you to know nothing but Jesus Christ.& Him crucified. And so, in our first session I taught them the inestimable value of their souls, the two gates & roads, & re: the broad one, most of the world's population since Adam & Eve until the last human soul was conceived, would inevitably take, to destruction. I related that right after the Son of God described the way that led to eternal destruction [& Jesus would know, as He is The One Who created it!], the next words out of His mouth were re: false prophets, whom the devil would use to lead this countless group of human souls onto this road to perdition. I then told the kids that what determined on the human side one's destiny on this path to devastation was how one handled the Word of God, via The Parable of the Sower. The next morning they got the gospel elaborated, which included man's inherited depravity, his resultant spiritual inability, God's free choice to save or not to save us, the costly way in which He did choose to save from the Law & its resultant curse on all who did not perfectly obey it; that same curse being levied on Jesus, God propitiating His Own just **wrath** upon Jesus, & Jesus' perfect righteousness being imputed to believers & remaining on them incessantly every billisecond of their lives, even in their deepest, darkest, sin-soaked hours. Saturday evening, they saw **Pilate** come of of the Time Machine chained like an animal in between two holy angels as he awaited his judgment before the **Great White Throne of Jesus Christ**, followed by a very detailed teaching on Judgment Day. Sunday morning I concluded with a message that might be called, The Origins of Idolatry, springing from man's fall in sin & the resultant fear & insecurity.



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YOU ð STAID' TOO LONG!

I was told by my Chinese brother & friend who first invited me to this retreat months ago, that the Chinese people, at least in his circles, tended to be staid in their walk with the Lord. Accordingly, he said that in the light of that, they would usually invite staid speakers to their retreats. This was on my mind somewhat as I pre-pared. What could I do? Hype them up? God forbid! If so, then, all they're left with when it's over is Ö me! This Great Wall spiritually that I was warned about.well, if it was there, God used His Word & Spirit to break it down. Here is some feedback I received after I got home:

Ö I just got back today! It was so much fun & I felt incredibly spiritually heightened

...our youth were definitely blessed by your sessions, & it was absolutely refreshing to hear the basics in a new style.

Thanks for bringing us the good news over the weekend. It gave the youth much to think about, you gave them Knowledge-Nuggets-of-Truth to chew on. It truly is so goodÖ [That one was from one of the Caucasian leaders];

I cannot express what I have experienced the past weekend. Everything I've heard, everything I've read, and everything I've sang has been overwhelming. The brothers & sisters that I have come to know have been miracles of God & living witnesses to His word! So many of them affected me in so many different ways. The words that Guerty had passed on to us changed my perspective on my life & how fortunate it is to not just have Jesus as my friend, but also as my Savior from eternal torment. I've sang "once again I thank you" so many times, but have I meant it? He's given me so many chances that I have began to take it for granted. And yet, this retreat has broken me down into so many pieces for me to pick up & put together again. My arrogance was

stripped away, most likely temporarily, & I saw the path that God wanted me to take & I have "rediscovered" Him. I've noticed that I've been more of a rebel to Him than a friend, even after he has died for me. "Amazing love, how can it be? That you my King would die for me?" I am so thankful for Him & every single one of my brothers and sisters who have made me who I am today. I have rooted down into Christ, built my life on Him, and I will overflow with thankfulness!

Ö these youth critically needed to go "back to the basics" & hear it once again with the passion, creativity & energy that the Good News deserves. All glory to God, and what a joy to just be at his feetÖ [shared by the lead pastor of the event].

This same pastor told me that after I left the Saturday evening service, a number of kids went up to the micro-phone to confess. One young man confessed his struggling with pornography; a girl admitted of her coolness & rebellious attitude toward the Lord & the the things of Him. If there was a Great Wall of China with this group, how kindly & graciously our Lord brought it down. A mentor/friend, a.k.a., John Janney reminded me before I left for the retreat, that the gospel is universal & cross-cultural. If it's not, it's not the gospel.

DAMOCLES' SWORD @ PHILADELPHIA PREMIUM OUTLETS

I wrote last month re: my outing with Kim during the **Christmas** season at the aforementioned outlets. You may recall my deep duress re: the **Christ**-less Holiday music, blaring in every store & breezeway. On another occasion at the very same outlets a month or so later, I was once again deeply sobered & moved at something I observed while waiting for Kim. A woman walked by on her cell phone. She was relating to a friend how very busy & unavailable she was the next 3 weekends in a row, citing the various places she planned to visit. I think it's safe to assume from what I recollect that they were all activities of

pleasure. She spoke in such a take-it-for-granted attitude. presumptuous re: her life, her time, her independence, her health, etc. As I pondered her, my heart was deeply grieved for our Lord. She owed her existence, her health, her wealth, her means to conduct her life to Him. And yet there was no thought of Him; no mention of Him; no acknowledgement of His presence, prerogative, & sovereignty over her life. Like **Damocles** of old, she coveted the good life & has it for a while, & like Damocles, though unbeknownst to him & her at the time, there is a huge sword suspended by a horse hair dangling over her head. I felt a sobering fear for her come over me. You may recall in the book of James, the half-brother of our Lord saying, **Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we shall go to such & such a city & spend a year there & engage in business & make a profit. Yet, you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You're just a vapor that appears for a little while & then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, We shall live & also do this or that, if the Lord wills. But as it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such arrogance is evil.** [James 4:13-16]. I had told the Chinese youth last weekend that you can be the nicest & most moral person on your street, but if you don't live for the glory of God [in such a way that when people see you they think more highly of Him] & endeavor to enjoy Him, you're living in disobedience. You're insulting Him. You're slapping Him in the face. You are violating the reason that He put you here. Assuming this woman was not a Christian, she was walking around with God's **wrath** hanging over her head [Jn.3:36]. And yet, unawares, she was arrogantly & presumptuously planning her days. God help us. We just don't get it, Beloved-we just don't get it. People need to be rescued from sin, **the devil**, & from themselves. May He help us. Thank you for reading. I pray you were blessed, fed, & challenged.

Michael
Michael & Kim Guertin
3 Windsor Rd.,

Wilmington, DE 19809
(302) 764-0490
(303) guerty@juno.com

Name: _____ Address: _____
_____ Email: _____

*[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 [MARCH](#) & those not listed in last month's newsletter:

Feb. 3, 10, March 3: IC, Wilm., DE: The Father's House children's church: worship leader

Feb. 22: Hockessin, DE: IC home fellowship group

Feb. 24: IC, Wilmington, DE: Warehouse youth group: worship leader

Mar. 5: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg.//

HN pastors' mtg.//hsc

directors' mtg

Mar. 10-25: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Via Dolorosa setup

Mar. 17: Grace Church, Wilmington, DE: Sun. a.m. service-worship leading & preaching

Mar. 21: Sunday Breakfast Mission, Wilmington, DE: EMF pastors' mtg.

Mar. 24: Seeds of Greatness Church, New Castle, DE: Palm Sunday children's service

Mar. 26-29: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Via Dolorosa: Roman ¼'s Team Leader; director/actor/costumer/etc... :0)

Mar. 26-April 5: Via Dolorosa tear down & pack-up

