

February 1, 2012

“WITH MY DARK-SKINNED GRANDSON...IN THE DARK”

Dear *Friends & Family*,

Some of you may not know this, but we have an adopted grandson from Ethiopia, a.k.a., *Malachi “Breha-nu”* [His Ethiopian name]. He turned three years old last November. While in OH last month for Christmas with our oldest son & his family, our son-in-law & daughter Laura met us there en route home from MI where they were visiting, & of course, had their two daughters & Malachi with them. This translated into 13 people being in a relatively small house, seven of which were *between the ages of 1 & ½ & 6!* While I did not go into “panic” mode, I must admit I awoke one morning wondering how to survive. During the evening the adults, typically excluding me as I’m not a “**night** person”, would play table games. Malachi was put in the bed Kim & I were assigned to for our stay there until his parents went to bed in the basement later that night. While lying there with Malachi one night, even though I was right beside him, in his fear of the dark, he wanted to make sure I was there, & that I was close. Even though he knew I was there, could feel me moving from time to time, & surely heard me make noises in doing so, he would reach his little arm over to me & grab my head or neck & try to pull it toward him. I thought to myself, “C’mon, bud—what are you afraid of? I’m right here. You know I am. I can’t get any closer to you...”, etc. **“I’M ONE TO TALK!”** Of all people to think such thoughts, I surely should be the last, given the deep-seated fears & insecurities I have had to deal with over the years re: the love of God & fears that He would leave me, in my constant struggles with sin! May I say that “the cure” for me re: such insecurities, & the only cure that has “worked”, are the precious doctrines of grace that are my daily “survival kit”. As a dear brother & friend of mine once said re: these precious truths of the gospel in Scripture: “They’re the only things that ever really changed me”. How very true this is. **“CLOSER THAN POP-POP MICHAEL”** Actually, my fears & insecurities are even less justified than Malachi’s, given that the Lord Jesus is not only “right next to me”, as I was with Malachi that night, but our hope of glory is that Christ is *in* us, & as a result, we are *in* Him—the safest place on earth. Yes, I admit it, I still like to know, like Malachi, that Jesus is always “close” to me.

‘MICHAEL’S MONASTERY’

Given the situation above, that is, being “locked-in” with our seven grandchildren in a relatively small house, I shifted into “survival mode”. An idea “came to me” before I arose from bed one morning—a game to play with & occupy the kids: “Monastery”! And boy, did it work! I was able to enlist four of them (three grandkids & a friend) to participate. First, they had to procure their “monk’s robe” in order to play. Some towels & blankets sufficed. I had them cover their heads & then fold their hands, as if in prayer. I told these *four little girls* that

in some mona-steries, they had a “vow of silence”, where they were not allowed to say a word for long periods of time. The ob-ject of the game was to see who could do so the longest! It was quite a sight to see these lil’ cupcakes following me around the basement in single-file line w/heads covered & hands folded. I told them the winner would win a **dollar**. Guess what? They all won! Oh, that old song “Silence Is **Golden**” has been given a new meaning!

“LENGTHY—BUT LIGHT ON LYRICS” or “PLEASE BE ‘CROSS’ WITH ME”

Kim & I were out of town in another state, & visited a local church. At the commencement of their worship-in-song segment, this worship team played with great skill, quite loudly, & with obvious sincerity. I began to notice after a while that none of the songs in the worship set nor the “improv” style afterward contained any references, words, or lyrics pertaining our Blessed Lord’s cross, death, nor blood. To make matters worse, not a single word in the sermon contained them either! Well, “one single word” did, a.k.a., “cross”, but it was only referred to in passing in an illustration! On another occasion, in a different church & state, we attended another worship-in-song service. I was entering in & singing to the Lord. After a while, I sat in my chair & just “chilled”, trying to ascertain what the Lord was doing. After an hour a thought out of nowhere hit me & just kind of struck my spirit. In the hour or so since the service began (I looked at my watch) not one lyric, word, or reference was made to the horrific passion of our Lord, i.e., His **cross**, death, or **blood**, which is a major basis & motivation of our worship, & the actual means of access we have from God to do so! From that point on, I began to watch. Another 40 minutes or so passed with no reference to these glorious truths being made. I was stunned & heartsick, & to be honest, in a state of disbelief that such a tragic “debacle” could happen among God’s people in two different places. My heart exclaims as I type, “O, my Father, my Father, my Father! What has happened to **Your Church**, that we can assemble for an entire service & not even mention Your Son’s central, horrific, & glorious death?! You told us in Your Word by Your Spirit Who inspired the Apostle Paul, “I’m determined to know *nothing* ... but Jesus Christ & Him **crucified**!” Whatever happened to, “When I survey the wondrous cross...”, or, “Sweet the moments, rich in blessing, which before His cross I spend...”, or “O Sacred Head, now wounded...”, etc. Yes, I know--every song we sing need not have these themes [most of the Psalms don’t--though, they were, “pre-cross” when written!], nor every song be a hymn, etc. But--a whole service failing to mention them?! Surely, this tragic condition is due in great part to the **57%** biblical illiteracy rate in America, the damaging influence of seeker-sensitive & emergent doctrine (& lack thereof!) & practices. Now, here is what makes the first incident mentioned even more perplexing: the “afterglow” of that service was deep, rich, & sweet re: the Lord’s presence—even despite this serious dearth of the gospel in it! I can’t help but believe it’s the hunger & sincerity factor on behalf of the participants that led to the Lord pouring out His Spirit in the way that He did. This lack of doctrine in worship often

accompanies the zeal of **youth**, which *is* a beautiful thing—yet, they so desperately need the wisdom of the aged. I wrote in 2006 that our worship ascending to God is only as “fragrant” to Him as the truthfulness of the doctrine that under girds & precipitates it.

“O COME LET US ‘ADORN’ HIM”

Speaking of doctrine, in my continuation of reading thru the Scriptures, I recently did so in I & II Timothy & Titus. My, how much the Lord through Paul exhorts His people to give attention to sound doctrine in these three epistles. After addressing Titus, Paul instructs his spiritual son to exhort elders, aged men & women, young men & women, & masters & their servants re: **Christ**-like behavior that is expected from those who have been redeemed at such great cost. Paul then says that avoiding godless practices & living a life of dependent fidelity upon the Lord “adorns” the doctrine of God. O, reading that word “adorn” & applying it to the gospel & its bearers warms my soul. Other versions render it, “adds lustre to”, “so as to be an ornament to”, & “beautify the teaching” (of). Oh, how grievous, how very grievous it is when God’s people do not “adorn” the gospel by their ungodly attitudes & behavior, & rather, repel others from the gospel because of it! **Judson Cornwall** once said, “Stop preaching! Your life is speaking so loud I can’t hear what you say!” O, but when a servant of the Lord is sweet, humble, & broken before Him, how gracefully, O so gracefully, this one emanates, portrays, & radiates His Savior when he speaks of Him. I want so very much to adorn the Savior, & His doctrine as I stand before others in His Name. In the light of what I wrote above, may He also as well help me to “watch my worship”. Kim & I sincerely thank you for reading this & for whatever encouragement & support you feel to give. In the light of my new email address, those of you who feel to support us in any way, consider yourselves as...

"Behind the Iron Guertin"! ;0)

Our heart is to “fill up, go out, & pour out”. Christ is our all-sufficiency. Amen.

<http://vod.worshipstream.com/ChristmasEve2011> This is a link to that Christmas Eve service where I played a puppet's side-kick. I also narrated the program. While funny in many parts, it does give a very interesting historical background to the writing of some of the most popular Christmas songs.

<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/7420958/EBI%20GRADUATION%202011.mp4> :video link to Elim Bible Institute's Commencement service last April that I spoke at.

<http://calebguertindesigns.carbonmade.com/> :if you have any graphic design needs, this is our youngest son Caleb's link.
themakingmusic.com :Caleb & his wife Elizabeth's worship music website. Music is available. I drum for some of it.

Michael & Kim Guertin 3 Windsor Rd., Wilmington, DE 19809 (302) 764-0490 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. If you feel the Lord leading**

you to have Michael come to your church, or to help support His work through us, please make all tax-deductible gifts payable to: [Elim Fellowship, 1703 Dalton Rd, Lima, NY 14485](#)].

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

Jan. 3: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: Hopewell Network Children's pastors' mtg.

Jan. 4: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: a.m.: Urban Promise//p.m.: Tab of David→ worship leader

Jan. 6: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: "Via Dolorosa 2012" leaders' planning meeting

Jan. 13: Boothwynn, PA: HNC senior high camp directors' mtg.

Jan. 29: a.m.: Living Stones Fellow., Peach Bottom, PA: preach/camp promo; p.m.: Warehouse worship lead

Feb. 2: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: "Pulse" young adults' mtg.

Feb. 5: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Via Dolorosa Team Leaders' mtg.

Feb. 7: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: a.m.: pastors' mtg.//p.m.: kids' pastors' mtg.

Feb. 9: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: a.m.: hnc board mtg.// p.m. "Pulse" young adults' mtg.

Feb. 16: Medford, NJ: monthly EF pastors' mtg.

Feb. 21: Wilmington, DE: NCAAE prayer breakfast: speaker

Feb. 24-26: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: Telford Christian Fellowship youth retreat

Feb. 26: Living Stones Fellowship, Peach Bottom, PA: camper/parent orientation mtg.

Michael Robert "*Guerty*" Guertin

c/o **CABOOSE!** [\(302\) 764-0490](tel:3027640490)

3 Windsor Road

Wilmington, DE 19809-2144

www.CABOOSEMINISTRIES.ORG