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YouTube Channel [for dramas, sermons, & puppet shows for kids]: **Michael Robert Guertin**

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"23 YEARS-& COUNTING"



Dear *Friends & Family*,

[1/17] **Twenty-three years ago** this month, **Kim** & I embarked on this live-by-faith itinerant ministry. Prior to this, I had pastored children for **14** years @ **4** different churches overall, in **4** different states, vis, **NY, OH, PA, & DE**. After finishing my **4th** children's pastorate here in DE, my original intent was to next take a youth pastorate. My ministry strategy I intended to implement was to minister to the youth & also train them how to minister to children. I would then use them as my children's ministry team in the next church I went to. Hence, I would do both roles, *youth & children's pastor*, & basically "kill two birds with one stone". As I sought the Lord & counseled with trusted brothers & fathers in the Lord, we all felt the heart of our Lord for me at this time was rather to be a minister to the Body of Christ "at large". One minister friend from Australia whom I was doing ministry with in Missouri at that transitional time felt the Lord had spoken to him while observing me minister that my giftings from Him were exactly that-to the Body of Christ at large & not to be confined to one local assembly. Over the 23 years, I have repeatedly seen this truth con-firmed. How long will I continue to do so? Only our Lord knows that. What I do know is that His fire still presently burns in me to continue to do what I have been doing. I trust that when it is time for transition He will "dim this present flame" & ignite it elsewhere in His Kingdom. One thing I also know for sure, I have repeatedly entreated Him that when I can no longer bear fruit for Him on Earth, to please take me Home. Not to bear fruit for Him while we live here on this Earth is a waste of time-& life.

"TIME TRANSPORT-IT'S ABOUT TIME"



[1/7] Late last year I had the blessing of giving one of my former Time Machines which I built 30 years ago [altogether I've built 6 or 7] to a dear brother & friend in the Lord who plans to use it for his ministry. Said brother is **Darrell Zimmerman**, whom I wrote about in last month's newsletter-he was "the sickle" in my "The Plow & The Sickle" article. Darrell & his wife Rebecca head up their "**Feet On The Street**" ministry in downtown, Reading, PA. When we lived in Reading, I built two-one for my **Caboose!** ministry, which is being used by a dear brother in N.Y., & one for **Trinity U.C.C.** During our tenure in Reading I served children in 3 different churches, rotating among them. Trinity was #2.



The Time Machine I built for their "Lighthouse" children's ministry I dubbed the "**Trinity Time Tower**". Some years ago, the "TTT" was "transported" to **St. Paul's U.C.C.** in a nearby town where it saw usage for about 5 years. Hence, Feet On The Street will be its 3rd "home base" in 30 years. It thrills & blesses me that these "ministry tools" are still in use. Of the 6 or 7 I've built, 2 are here in DE, 1 in NY, 1 in OH {if it still exists!}, 1 in CA, & 1 in PA. Speaking of the one in CA, a brother/friend flew me to CA years ago to build him a Time Machine! Yes-I also preached 4X while I was there, but he wanted a Time Machine-and-he got it! I built it in 11 hours! To my very, very deep regret, the church is not there anymore & I have no idea where that Time Machine is now. I've tried repeatedly to locate it in the hopes I could pay to have it shipped here. And yes-it would be so worth it to me. These Time Machines are works of art, they're history, & again, they're important ministry "tools" used to bring "the peoples of the past" to our time & place. The Scriptures say repeatedly that the events in the Bible were recorded to serve as instruction & warnings to us today, upon whom the end of the ages has come [Rom.15:4; II Pet.2:6; I Cor. 10:6,11]. Hence, why I've used them for decades.

"THE WORD MAKES WAY FOR THE WAVE OF THE SPIRIT"



[1/18] This past **December** I had the honor & privilege to be able to minister to the children of the church pastored by my dear brother, friend, covering, camp board boss, etc. **Curt Malizzi**. As the pastoral director of the Hopewell Summer Camps, I have found much security under Curt's wings over the many years. To be able to come to his church & be entrusted with his precious little ones is a high honor. His children's pastor, a.k.a., **Matt Bittner**, had asked me months ago to come but up until last month I was prevented from doing so for various reasons. Now was the time! Though I have been ministering to children since **1984**, I had never once been told what I was told after this service where I did a **Time Machine** drama [**"Simeon & The Holy Family"**] & preached. Matt's right-hand man whom he has been training contacted me a few days later wanting to speak with me. To be honest, my first reaction was fear. Why? Many of the children & staff that morning had never been with me before. As I've often said, I preach to children the same way I do to adults. In an American culture where so much of children's ministry is cheesy, shallow, entertainment based, etc., "first-timers" sitting under my preaching to the young are somewhat stunned by the doctrinal content I share to children & teens & the response & accountability our Lord holds them to, despite their age. I truly thought this brother was going to share his "concerns" re: this. When I finally did call him, **I** was "stunned" to learn of what he wanted to tell me. He said, "I have never seen the Spirit of God ushered into a church service via the preached Word as happened on Sunday. I've only seen Him do so via worship in song", et al. Wow. As a preacher of the Word I couldn't ask for more. **THIS** is what I always long for! No one has ever expressed it to me in this way. O, that it would always be this way, Lord! Amen!

"STATIC CLING-REVISITED"



Not that long ago, I went through another "dark night of the soul". Anyone who longs to walk closely to God must sooner or later go through one, "Yeah...[even through]...the valley of the

shadow of death" [Ps.23:4]. My most severe one was about 20 years ago, where I seriously feared I was going to lose everything. I shall never forget it. While in that very dark place our Lord had me going out ministering to His people! This reminds me of the 2003 "Luther" movie. When Luther was losing his faith his spiritual father & mentor **Johann von Staupitz** decided to send him to **Wittenberg** to teach theology. The young restless monk was startled. "Teach theology?!", he replied to Staupitz. "Here I am losing my faith & you're sending me to teach theology?!", to which his mentor replied, "*We always preach best what we need to learn most.*" O, how true this is, Beloved. It was in that very dark season two decades ago that the precious doctrines of grace, which I knew & believed, became my only "rope to hope". I clung to them & their precious & priceless truths for dear life-literally! The doctrines of grace that propound that a Christian's salvation is begun, continued, & *concluded* by God-& God *alone*. My faith in these golden anchors was sorely tried. If they were not true, I was undone. I would not want to listen to a man preach whom God has *not* led into a dark night of the soul. His preaching would be more "rote", shallow, etc., if not. People have often wondered why I preach so intensely. That's easy-because my God has brought me through fears & fires which burned all else off & made me cling intensely to Him & His promises.



In **2014** our *Hopewell Summer Camp* theme was "**Static Cling**", based on a Scripture re: a king of Judah who "clung to His God-he did not let go", et al [II Kgs.18:6]. In the not-too-distant past I was once again brought to such a place where our Lord *made* me this time not to "lie down in green pastures" (Ps.23:2), but to "tighten my grip"-on Him! As I passed through this recent fiery trial, it seemed all I saw was my deeply imbedded dross-& not much else! I would fervently pray, & pray some more, & repent, & repent some more, & cry out to my God for mercy. I would cling in my mind & heart to Jesus' nail-scarred feet, only hoping to kiss them, no matter what He decided to do with me. And, HE saw so much more of my dross than I did-& I couldn't bare what "little" I saw! I remember telling our Lord for the first time ever that I could recollect, "Lord? If You let go of me? I'm still holding onto YOU!" And I meant every word of it.



I'm reminded as I type of a story the late **Dr. Donald Barnhouse** shared decades ago. [Barnhouse pastored **Tenth Presbyterian Church** in downtown Philadelphia for decades. He died in 1960. I was 5 years old then]. Here I was, a little Catholic boy living near this great man of God (my Dad would commute to downtown Philadelphia every day for work)-who would so feed & influence me decades later-whom I wouldn't "discover" until **1991!** Well, Dr. Barnhouse related re: a woman in his church who came to him for counsel one day, as she feared for her soul. She feared she was going to Hell, despite being a member of his church. The wise minister asked her, "Ma'am, what would you do in Hell if God sent you there?" This humble little woman replied, "Oh, Sir-I would tell everyone I saw down there about Jesus & how wonderful He is!", et al. Dr. Barnhouse replied with a big smile, "No, Ma'am, I don't think you need to worry about going to Hell." Why do I bring that story up? I totally related to that woman's heart in this fearful trial I found myself immersed in when I told the Lord in the midst of it that I wasn't letting go of Him-no matter what He decided to do with me. Job would relate to this as well when he too had the same fears, "Even if He slays me, I will still trust in Him..." [Job 13:15]. Once again, I'm reminded as I type of our Lord Jesus' solemn, sober words re: what His servants must do to obtain Him: "Anyone who falls on this stone [The Lord Jesus], will be broken to pieces..." [Mt.21:44]. Once again, our Master's words shake us to our core-& yet, being broken to pieces upon Him is *the safest place in all the universe*. May He help us to keep falling on Him. "This Child is destined to cause the fall & rising of many...that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." [Lk.2:34,35]. I want my preaching to be of such a nature that it does just that-it reveals those who are for our Jesus & those who are against Him-there is no neutral ground. May it be so. Amen.

Michael



***Caboose! Commentary Corner:** [Our daughter Laura once said she'd love to have my old Bibles when I passed for all of the notes I have written in them over the decades. This was quite humbling to say the least, especially coming from one of your own children. Hence, I've decided to post each month random notes/comments from Bibles I have studied from]:
"Beware of sermon illustrations & stories that overshadow & obscure the glory & power of the inspired Text itself." [MRG 1/26/2021]



Caboose! On The Loose!

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

Jan.17: Lancaster & Honey Brook, PA: Time Machine pickup & drop-off

Feb. 7: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg//Network pastors' mtg.//hsc directors mtg.

Feb. 12: Hopewell United Methodist Church, Port Deposit, MD: Sun. a.m. service

Feb. 15: Hope Community Church, Audubon, NJ: Elim area pastors' mtg.

Feb. 19: Pursuit Church [Immanuel Christian Fellowship], Manheim, PA: Sun. a.m. service



*Michael is an ordained **Elim Fellowship** itinerant Stateside missionary & is also licensed to preach the gospel by **Immanuel Church**, Wilmington, DE. **Caboose!** is also an affiliate ministry of **The Hopewell Network of Churches**. For 14 years he served on various local church staffs as their children's pastor. Since 2000 **Kim & he have lived by faith, having no set salary, retirement, etc. to speak of.** Yet-this is their calling at this season of their lives. Michael preaches God's Word & systematic theology, using both drama & visual aids, to all age groups, from children to senior citizens, either separately or combined. **To help support this work [any amount no matter how small is greatly appreciated!], please make all tax-deductible gifts** payable to: Elim Fellowship, c/o 1703 Dalton

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