

January 1, 2012

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

CABOOSE! END OF YEAR REPORT 2011

Dear Friends & Family,

This week will mark the completion of **26 years** of full-time ministry, and **12 years less a month** of living-by-faith itinerant ministry. Once again, as in previous years, **2011** encompassed traveling thousands of miles to minister in various states, which included **DE, PA, NY, FL, OH, & VA**. Venues of ministry included Sunday morning whole-family services, youth services, youth retreats, childrens services, an inner city childrens rally, youth & childrens camps (four last summer, which included one weekend mini-camp), Christian schools, a wedding, a banquet, an ordination service, & a Bible school commencement service. Various expressions of the Body of Christ I ministered to were **Assembly of God, Elim Fellowship, The Hopewell Network, Presbyterian, Calvary Chapel (a wedding), Child Evangelism Fellowship, Urban Promise, United Church of Christ, & Independent**. Once again, I could not help but notice the Father had me share the basics to His people, i.e., the doctrines of grace, the supremacy of Christ versus idolatry in His peoples hearts, the coming harvest, judgment, & retribution, the exclusivity & indispensability of the gospel, & Christs **propitiation** rendered on behalf of Gods people. One unique aspect of 2011 was the notably increased involvement in **worship leading**. For the first fourteen years of full-time ministry, when I was still pastoring children, I led worship on my guitar virtually every Sunday. Then, with the commencement of this itinerant work in **2000**, that basically ceased, & my primary functions in my travels were **drama & preaching**. I found myself leading worship primarily, though not exclusively, in youth-oriented ministry. Although open doors to preach were at times scarce in 2011 & I re-injured my back, my deepest hearts desire was & still is to continue this itinerant work. I devoted much prayer to the issue, pondering before & conversing with the Lord re: His heart & will concerning it. I still find my **heart aflame** to do what I do & how I do it. I trust that if it is His will to minister to Him, His people, & the lost in another venue of ministry, He shall work in me & Kim both to will & to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). May it be so.

CUDDLE-OR BE CURSED

In previous newsletters I have shared how while reading through **the Scripture**, I will come across a certain verse, phrase, or even word that just stops me in my tracks & I must pause, ponder, wonder, marvel, adore, & even at times tremble in my soul. For example, in 2009 while reading the account of the **Queen of Sheba** in I Kings & I Chronicles, I was gripped in my soul when I read that after she beheld **Solomon** in all of his wisdom & glory, she was breathless. **Christ** in Solomon took her breath away. The awe that it evoked in me was the seedbed for a sermon, a Time Machine drama, & my annual directors field drama at camp that year. Well, in my reading through the Scriptures recently it happened again, this time in a brief but frankly, brunt verse of Scripture. At the end of Pauls first epistle to the Corinthians, he is giving his usual salutations & greetings, even encouraging the saints to give one another a **holy kiss**, an exchange of tender affection. In almost the next breath, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he declares, If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema (I Cor. 16:22a).

Let him be **anathema, i.e., cursed; accursed; be a curse; Gods curse be on him; be outcast; separated from Godlost forever** as various translations put it. Wow. Who is this man, or should I say, Man, Who, if we neglect to sincerely love Him, one of Gods Own ordained messengers & authors of His Word, under the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, calls down a curse on such a persona curse to be **eternally** damned. At first sight, our flesh surely recoils from this. To the skeptic & cynic, this is surely fuel for their godless criticism & blasphemies. As one blogger put it not long ago in an arrogant retort to a **You-Tube** piece citing the absolute exclusivity & necessity of the gospel, Thanks, Lord for the choice. **Believe or burn**. How evil, O, how very evil we humans are! Instead, we ought to allow this pregnant, poignant, **nuclear** Scripture bring us to our knees in awesome wonder & holy trepidation & exclaim, What manner of Man is this, Whom, if we choose not to love, we are under the eternal curse of God Almighty? Instead of allowing our God-hating flesh by-nature react in such a manner, on the contrary, our response should be, O, how unfathomably magnificent, loving, & good this Person called The Christ must be, that, if one chooses not to love Him, they incur the curse & wrath of His holy & beneficent Father!. How worthy, O, so very worthy He must be of the adoration of all, if, to reject Him, there is such a severe repercussion & retribution! Christ must be, & He must have done something extraordinary, to be worthy of such esteem by The Father!

AGAINST MANCENTEREDNESS

[Note that Paul didnt say if one didnt love Him they would lack purpose, meaning, joy, & peace in their lives {Which, of course, is true. But, if were honest, one also experiences many times of perplexity, emptiness, misery, & disruption after meeting Jesus as He faithfully brings you through His sanctification process}. Also observe that Pauls response to not loving the Lord Jesus was not as many retort today who reject Jesus when He & His claims are shared Him with them: Well, thats good for you, or, To each his own, or There are many ways to God, etc. Note also that the Holy Spirit moved upon Paul to write this sobering edict in the same breath & sitting as the great **love chapter, a.k.a. I Cor. 13!** O, how often in sacred Scripture the **kindness & severity** of God are placed in juxtaposition to each other! (Rom.11:22). Another classic example of this is when the Lord Jesus in the same breath admonished His disciples to fear His Father, Who, after killing the body, had the power to destroy both body & soul in hell. In the very same breath Jesus told them as well

how meticulously the Father kept His eye & loving care on them, esteeming them so much more highly valuable than many sparrows, which don't fall to the ground apart from His sovereign will, as well as numbering the hairs of their heads! [Mt.10]. Speaking of the kindness & severity of God, *rare* is the church today that preaches both. I truly believe that is the key to knowing God as His Word portrays Him. Many churches err on one side or the other, re: their emphasis.]

GODS DESIRED RESPONSE

I recently preached re: *King Josiah*, having come out of my *Time Machine* portraying him when he found the *Book of the Law*. Upon hearing it read, he tore his clothes in alarm. The *prophetess Huldah*, whom he consulted, said to him through a messenger that the king would be spared from the disastrous judgment to come, because his *heart* was tender & sensitive, & he humbled himself & wept before God when he heard the words of the book. Modern man needs to learn from Josiah's godly example. Instead of recoiling & reacting in such a hostile manner to such a declaration by the Apostle Paul re: loving the Lord Jesus or face the curse of God, the proper response, which one is incapable of having apart from God's enabling grace, should be: I must find & meet this Person! I must get to know Him, in all of His glory & grandeur! I must study Him, examine Him, marvel at Him, explore His depths! I must find out what He said while He was here on earth! How indispensably important His words must be! How immeasurable must be His depths, if, to ignore Him, there are such dire consequences! But, alas, sadly, tragically, that is *not* the response of most. Is it any wonder Paul, in another one of his epistles declares, it has been *granted unto you* to believe? (Phil. 1:29). Is it this Same One I seek to know & proclaim in my travels. I cannot conceive of any other pursuit more worthy of my time & breath, than to proclaim the glories of Christ. This is why my life, my doctrine, & my health are so very important to me: without them I'm unable to do so. I'm no fool. I know my sufficiency to do so is of Him. Amen.

AN APPLE ONE DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR TO STAY, or ONE BAD APPLE SPOILED THE WHOLE BUNCH

Late in November Kim & I went to a local nursing home to view their Festival of *(Christmas) Trees* event. We thought it would be a nice Sunday afternoon Christmas thing to do together at the beginning of the Holiday Season. There was a bell choir [the best I've heard] & a children's choral group. Two things greatly hampered what I had hoped would be a nice afternoon out with my wife. 1. I had not long before re-injured my back, which resulted in my sciatica flaring up. It was so very painful to walk. Here, at this nursing facility, with so many of them being invalids in wheelchairs, I felt as if I was one of them. At *56 years of age* suffering these symptoms, it was quite depressing, to say the least. To make matters worse, my condition only aggravated the deep depression I felt as Kim & I walked around the facility. All around us were very aged, feeble, ailing people. I thought to myself & mentioned to Kim later, Honey, if the Lord tarries, this will be you & me in not too many years. I recollected the leader of the *Rolling Stones* rock band, a.k.a., Mick Jagger, singing one of their trademark songs when I was a teen, *What A Drag It Is Getting Old*. I truly related with him, deep in my soul. When we finally left the facility, as we were walking toward our car, I felt as if the *Scripture* punched me right in the face, which it seems, happens frequently. Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, & death through sin

(Rom.5:12ff). Here, this Bible verse that I have preached from & expounded upon, both visually & dramatically for many years & in many places, had now hit me perhaps like it never had before! O, my Father, my Father, my Father, my soul in its uttermost depths seemed to cry, By the bite of a piece of fruit, by one man, one time, ALL men die. Yea, more than that, death REIGNS over all men! (Rom.5:17). Oh, how pointedly & poignantly I saw this verse come to life in this very dreary place, even during what was supposed to be, as Andy Williams sings, the most wonderful time of the year! Once again, I was deeply awestruck by the severity & holiness of our God. All of this aging, mind & body-ravaging decrepit condition, which is the way of *all flesh*, which I beheld so graphically in this place, was all the result of the bite of *a piece of fruit* by one man one time. What do we, as His people run to, in such times? O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?! **Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!** To die is gain. He shall change our corrupt bodies like unto His glorious body. We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in moment, in the twinkling of an eye. This corruptible must put on incorruptible. If that same Spirit Who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, He shall bring to life your mortal body. Thank our God, the list goes on & on. What to do in such dreary times? As Isaiah cried out, To the Law & to the testimony! It is only the truth of Scripture that can give us hope as we face death & the aging process door. Jesus has gone before us

. I pray for myself & all of you in this new year, which is purely gratuitous on the part of God to each of us, that we might fix our eyes on Him Who did go before us. May He do so as we endeavor to complete those works this year that our Father prepared & ordained for us beforehand (Eph.2:10). Kim & I thank you sincerely for the prayers, encouragement, & support you offered on our behalf throughout 2011. [I'm even sincerely humbled when anyone tells me they read the newsletter!] Our hearts desire is to keep pleasing & proclaiming Him in 2012.
Gratefully,

Michael and Kim

12/14/2011 Michael Guertin - at Youth Group -->download of a recent sermon in Reading, PA re: "King Josiah & High Places" II Chr. 34

12/11/2011 Michael Guertin - Sun Morning -->download of a recent sermon in Reading, PA: re: "The doctrines of grace"

[both messages were given at Hope Of the Nations Church in downtown Reading. www.hopeofthenations.net

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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, or health insurance-yet this is their calling at this season of their lives. Michael preaches Gods 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 **JANUARY** & those not listed in last months newsletter:

Dec. 15: Medford, NJ: EF pastors mtg.

Dec. 21: Wilmington, DE: Urban Promise Senior High Christmas Devotion

Dec. 21: Milford, DE: Veterans Home: visitation

Dec. 25-Jan. 2: Cleveland, OH: family gathering

Jan. 3: Petra Christian Fellowship, New Holland, PA: hnc board mtg.//HN pastors mtg.

Jan. 15-22: Auburndale, FL: visiting Kim's parents at their FL home

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