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March 2018

Dear *Friends & Family*,

"A MIDWEST MISSION"



[2/20] Kim & I returned late last night from a record-setting **9 day/12X's ministering 1,118+ mile** ministry trip to the **Cleveland, OH** metropolitan area. It was uncanny that this particular trip was right on the heels of another record-setting trip to VA just two weeks before. I say, "record-setting" for the fact that in **32 years of ministry** I have never preached so often in such a short span of time, & these two "record-setters" were only 2 weeks apart from each other! Yes-the fatigue "bus" has surely hit me today. Along with so many times ministering on this recent trip & with me doing all of the driving {since we were pulling my ministry trailer-a rarity, as I only use it typically in the summer}, I was fighting for weeks a debilitating sinus issue. On top of that, we stayed at our oldest son's home, who has five children ages 11 & under! I was at a winter camp, so to speak! 😊 I marvel as I ponder that despite how exhausted I was our Lord kept me "up"- "up" that is, for setup, prayer, loading, packing, preaching, interacting with hundreds of people, from kindergarteners, to youth, to senior citizens [plus family], the entire trip until this a.m.

“HITCHES & GLITCHES”



For as smoothly as this trip went relatively speaking, we did hit a couple of glitches en route home. The weight of my ministry cargo, including the trailer, & climbing the mountains of northern PA on interstate 80 was just too much for the truck. It really strained the engine & transmission en route there. I decided for the 1st time in 46 years of driving to buy Hi Test 93 octane gas for it. Wow. What a difference! So, while I was getting amazing power I've never had, eventually the truck began to sputter, to where we feared we might not get home! Hence, we got up 1st thing this a.m., exhausted as we both were-in our pajamas (!), & dropped the truck off at the shop as I need it this coming weekend for more ministry in N.Y. [I later discovered the distributor went. My mechanic, knowing my truck, said it was a big miracle we got home, as when it goes on this particular vehicle, it typically just dies!]

“TO EXPLORE NEW FRONTIERS” Speaking of my truck, it is a 2000 Nissan Frontier. Despite its recent woes, I like it a lot. It has always run like butter until this trip. Speaking of *Frontiers*, Kim & I have prayed for years for “new ones”-“to boldly go where no man [well-at least *this man*] has gone before”, as the famous line from Star Trek goes. Our Lord fulfilled that prayer this trip.

"EASTSIDE-WESTSIDE-ALL AROUND THE TOWN"



As that old song goes, that is what this ministry trip encompassed. We began on the westside of Cleveland first-at **Westside Christian Academy**. The Lord used three students there who had heard me preach last October at their youth group in the Cleveland area to open the door to their classical education Christian school. They told their headmaster & he graciously invited me to come [4 of our grandchildren attended this school for 2 years].

"CHAPELS, FUNDAMENTALS, FUNDAMENTALISTS"



Typically, when I minister at a place for the first time, especially when I'm doing a series of meetings, I always feel it necessary to break up any fallowed ground that might be there. Kim & I setup the Sunday evening before. Upon completion, I had her go with my son to his house, while I gave myself to prayer alone in the sanctuary. "But Michael? This is a Christian school! They are around the gospel continually? Why the need for such focused prayer?" For that very reason. I have seen & experienced for years what I call the "gray goopy mass", i.e., the human heart's fleshly reaction to things holy when constantly around them. Holy things become "familiar", they are taken for granted, taken lightly-even treated irreverently. This is most prevalent in Christian institutions, church staffs, & pastors' homes. I walked along the chairs, placing my hand & praying on each one as I did, as each chair represented an immortal human

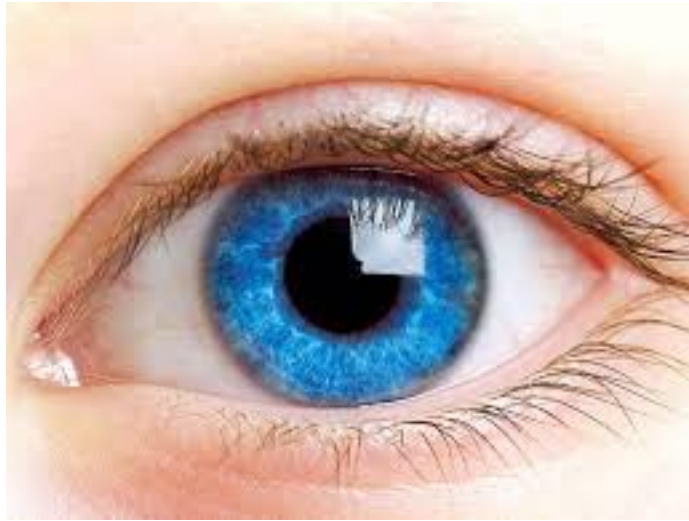
soul. Oh God. One may retort, “But Michael, they’re children & youth-they’re easy!” Yes-on the human side, the easiest to reach-for *either kingdom*. Hence, intercession is crucial. I would conduct two chapels each day [On Wednesday I did three, including a special non-scheduled chapel for the kindergarteners. Speaking of Wednesday, I also preached that evening at my son’s youth group-a 1st for me in 32 years of ministry-preaching 4X in one day.]. The four messages for the week were: *The Sower, The Value of the Soul, The Gospel Elaborated, & Adoration Versus Idolatry*. When the a.m. chapel was finished each day & the Lord’s sweetness filled the room even after the first chapel group left, I still felt to go to prayer & not trust in the previous chapel’s “laurels”. The Spirit of God moved each time & for the majority of the school both staff & students loved it.

“OBJECTION, YOUR HONOR! [to object lessons]



“Majority”, I say, as believe it or not, I was quite dumbfounded that just a [very] few students objected to my use of object lessons & background music. In over three decades of ministry with the young I’ve never encountered this! Several times in my travels I’ve had even senior citizens thank me for using them as they described themselves as “visual learners”. Someone told me prior to me ministering there that some students w/a fundamentalist background attended the school. [Ironically, I consider *myself* one! I love the old-time/old-fashion preachers w/their black & white, no-frills preaching!] The headmaster, who had become a newfound friend, strives hard in his position to keep everybody happy. I see this in my pastor as he constantly faces the challenge of doing so with the older & younger generations at our church. No small task! The headmaster asked if I would meet with the upperclassmen in a special Q & A class. I told him I’d love to.

“SEEING IS PERCEIVING?”



In the class, I explained to the students that Jesus constantly referred to objects in nature & everyday life as He taught the masses. I do the same thing, except I bring them with me! 😊 I learned decades ago as a young children’s past-or that 83% of what a child learns is what he sees. Perhaps most of all, my object lessons are my sermon notes. So often throughout the years, even if my spirit feels bland & dull, I will see a particular visual aid while I’m packing it in my basement for a ministry trip, & instantly the Scripture it illustrates comes to my mind & the resultant “burden of the Word of the Lord” re: it. Amen.

“SCRIPTURE IN SONG”

Or

“MOVIE ‘MOVES-ME’ MUSIC”



I’m sure you’ve either heard or read this caption, i.e., Scripture in Song. It has somewhat of a different context with me. Perhaps 99% of all music I buy is movie music. Why? It moves me in so many different ways. It helps me to “feel” the Scripture. I purposely buy music that will sharpen me spiritually, that will sober me, in a world that is drunk with a party spirit. The devil’s intention is to “dull” Christians-to dilute & pollute their vision of things eternal. He knows they

& they alone are God's means to bring the gospel to others-"others", whom Satan has taken captive to do his will [II Tim.2:26]. I do all I can to stay focused on my calling. TV watching is virtually nill for me. I'm too easily affected by it. I hear a certain song from one of my soundtracks & I instantly "see" one of my object lessons: a group of **G.I. Joe dolls** bound together. Their eyes have black goggles over them, symbolizing to me their being blinded by **Satan** [II Cor.4:4]. Their fists have black gloves on them. I put them in an upraised position. This signifies their hostility & rebellion to God-by nature! I then drop them in a bubbling "sin-mixture" jar. My heart sinks every time I hear this song & see the resultant image in my mind. It makes me want to pray-to press ever more closely to God so that I can be a vessel fit for the Master's use. This is just one of countless examples, Beloved. I can hear another majestic song & break out right on the spot into a potential Time Machine drama narration! I've been doing so lately in my travels re: "Jonah", whom I hope to bring to the "big screen" of camps this summer.

😊 Another song causes me to envision demonic entities as tall as the Twin Towers, dwarfing me in size & power. And yet-as this song plays I see myself, with sword in hand, walking in between them via God's commission to preach His gospel-& succeeding! Another playlist I have is music that was specifically written for children's movies. When I hear these, my heart goes to a group of children I pastored decades ago-many of which are no longer following the Lord. This same music I used in our services together. It moves my heart to think of & pray for them-all of whom are young adults now.

There is yet another playlist that every time I hear it my mind & heart soar with excitement, vision, & intensity as I ponder a room full of kids before a children's camp or rally service. Here they come-running in-a throng of little human souls-little sons of **Adam** & daughters of **Eve**-precious-priceless-having no idea of the multitude & magnitude of the unseen forces who war for their souls. Here they come, into the room or auditorium-running, laughing-like children do-expectant for a fun-filled time-& we strive to make it that way! Yet-unbeknownst to them-we, the team-have a job to do: to be used of God to rescue them. Yes-this is what my movie music does for me-it so often lifts me to another level & dimension of vision, without which I "dwell care/less/ly"!

"LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!"



Lastly, & perhaps most importantly, movie music constantly reminds me of-yes-a movie! Not a specific movie, but of that fact that many movies tell a story-the story of an individual. It plays

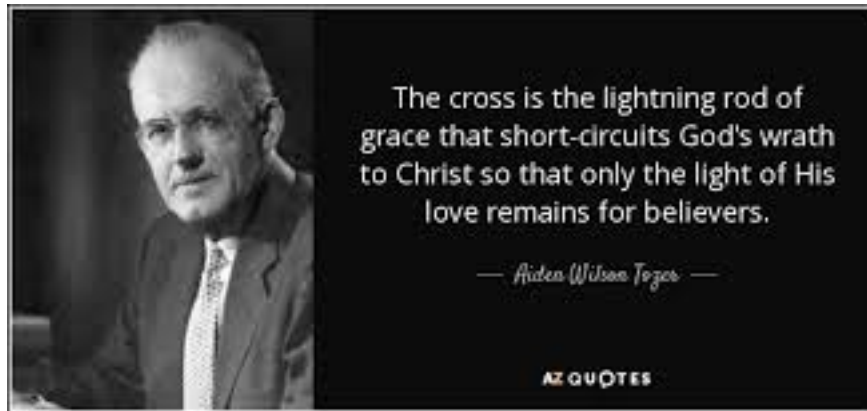
throughout their life as it is being lived out-all 90 minutes of it. **90 minutes**-that is what an average human life is like compared to eternity! The various genres, moods, pitches, tempos, etc. modify or enhance what is happening in the main character's life at that moment. This is a major means I use to teach myself what Moses asked the Lord to teach him: "Lord, teach us to number our days, that we might become wise." [Ps.90:12]. I'm in my own life's movie-*now!* I'm on the stage. I am the "star". No one else can play me. There are no understudies for each of us. We are it! The cameras are rolling. This is a "take". There are no "re-takes". There is no editing department. We're being filmed. We're being taped. Everything-yes, everything-inside & out. This is not a dress rehearsal. This is *live*. And this is the only movie each of us will ever make! There are no second chances. No reincarnations. Everything we think, imagine, wonder, fantasize, feel, say, & do is being recorded in "the books" [Rev.20:13]-"on camera"-& again-we only get "one take"! And every one of us will see a "rerun"-the rerun of our own movie-our life-on that Great Day. This is why I strive with all that is in me to live for the Lord-night & day. This is another reason why I listen to so much movie music-to remind me. To remind me. Help me, O Lord-to remember.This is how my mind works-all of the time! I don't know if these explanations pacified my critics, but given how much these affect & inspire me?, it's going to take more than a few critics to get me to stop. By the way, I first started using background music in the late 80's in my desperate attempts to do all I could to grasp the children's attention. Just an fyi: I pay about \$200/yr. for legal permission just to *play* my movie music!

"TINY TOTS W/THEIR EYES ALL AGLOW"



One of the most precious aspects of this particular trip was the preciousness of seeing little elementary school children who looked so very much like children I had in kids' church decades ago. I texted 2 of my former kids & told them so. Like Scrooge with his former boss exclaimed, "It's old Fezziwig-& he's alive again!" That's kind of how I felt seeing these young men as little boys again. Priceless.

"HATH NO WRATH?"



One of the most disappointing aspects of this particular trip was the “absence of wrath” on the part of God in some of these students’ thinking. *Many* questions were asked in “sympathy” for the devil, re: why doesn’t God save him? Doesn’t he still love him? Etc. I believe this is a direct fruit of the plague of the “seeker-sensitive” movement of the past 2 decades in America. Even despite the fact that the church who conceived & modeled this approach has since debunked it, saying all it did was produce “tares” in their church, many churches still practice it. Why? Because it fills churches! [And its proponents are deceived by these “big numbers”, believing it’s the blessing of God upon their “methods”!] It softens & tones down the message; it shortens the sermons; it incorporates worldly music & comedy & at times uses videos &/or skits in place of the sermon. It refrains from mentioning suffering & repentance. It shirks from preaching God’s holiness, justice, wrath, eternal judgment & hell-as if these were part of His weak or “dark side”. Beloved? God *has no weak side*. All of Him is **unfathomably & indescribably adorable**. With these churches, everything is “love, love, love” re: God. Yes-His nature is love-but that is not all He is. The *Seraphim* above Him exclaim day & night, “Holy, Holy, Holy”. Because we are a *fallen race*, one does not understand God’s love fully & properly unless it is understood against the backdrop of His holiness, justice, & wrath. These aspects of God produce *biblical* love of God, which *always* includes *fear* of Him. It is that precious fear, awe, & reverence for God that draws you to Him. The “seeker-preachers” do God & His people a huge disservice by neglecting these precious doctrines. May He come to them & convince them soundly of this grave error of theirs.

"FEEDBACK FROM THE WESTSIDE":



"Guerty, I heard this morning of a boy in Grammar School who went home & troubled last night about his own sin. He prayed to receive Jesus with his parents beside him. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. The Angels rejoice and so do we".[Jim]

"Thank YOU so much for sharing the love of Jesus in such creative ways. Truly a gift from the Lord!! My kindergarten class has never sat so well. They were completely engaged!! I know that many seeds were planted!! Glad we got to be a part of it!! [Wendy]

"Thank you Geuerty! It was an amazing week! Your love & passion for Christ exuded from you. I spent some time praying & meditating last night on your sermons. I was convicted that my own son has become an idol in my life. I am beginning to give this over to Christ. You touched my heart as well as our students' hearts. Praising God for your ministry & love for Jesus and children!" [Tim]

"Thank you for coming & teaching us. I liked the coobse time mushene. I hope you can come again. Your meshege tatched my heart." [Nicholas]

"You tot me thet God had a A+++++ [report card] & we had the F----- but God gives his A+ if we bevef in him." [Ave] "I really like the ideas you come up with. Espacily the time machine. I like the part we went back in time to Martin Luther it was realy fun." [Anon]

"thank you for teaching me that God seed & root goes down in my heart the I might not a genst God for wen the time is rite he will take me." [Anon]

"Thank you for showing me that those bubles going up thoes are our sins." [Karis]

"I know how much you love Bbble & I do to & I love all the time that you come heer & that you cam heer from miles away gust to come heer. I love you." [Anon]

"Thank you for teaching me more about the BIBLE. It realy changed my life." [Cole]

***One of the teachers told me he overheard his son in the shower asking God to deal with his heart after hearing me preach re: The Sower!**

There are countless more notes from these elementary students [I'm sure you ascertained that seeing the spelling! 😊] & many from the upperclassmen as well. I wish so much I could post them all! Our Father made it so worth the trip & the labor.

To be honest, I wish so very much I could have a relatively lengthy respite, given I have had the busiest Fall & Winter ministry seasons in 32 years-& these both followed a very full summer camp schedule. Our Lord knows. I've already been working on Via Dolorosa since before

Christmas. Now, it's intensity has begun. May He fill me afresh once more for this annual huge task before me, as He has been so faithful to do all year while I was on the road. Amen.

****Caboose! Commentary Corner:*** [My 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 various Bibles I have studied from.] "When I die, don't let me be found in a church office behind a desk; don't let me be found at ease or engaged in leisure; don't let me be found in a hospital or a nursing home bed; don't let me be found at a conference or on a retreat-but let me be found with a kid I was ministering to on the streets." [9/15/'93-while a children's pastor in inner-city Reading, PA]



Caboose! On the Loose:
****Lookin' out for the little guys...***

Ministry/Events for MARCH & those not listed in last month's newsletter:

March 5: Shady Maple, East Earl, PA: Tel Hai Camp Spring banquet: giving camp testimony

March 6: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg./network pastors' mtg.

March 13-25: IC, Wilmington, DE: annual Via Dolorosa setup begins

March 23: Camp Swatara, Blue Mountain, PA: St. Paul's United Church of Christ youth retreat

March 26-30: IC's Via Dolorosa Production: "Pontius Pilate"

March 31ff: Via Dolorosa tear-down & pack-up

*Michael is an ordained *Elim Fellowship* itinerant Stateside 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 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 Rd., Lima, NY 14485, marking it "Preferred-Michael Robert Guertin" or you may click on the link below to give directly. Any sized amount would be greatly appreciated! Thank you! [click here](#)

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