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September 2016

“THE SUMMER IS PAST...THE HARVEST IS ENDED”

{Pictures below: Candy drop, M5 Robot, Time Machine at evening chapel, me preaching "Creation", & me portraying the commander of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem under Pontius Pilate for my field drama}











Dear Friends & Family,

The camp is quiet now. The children & staff have all gone home. The airplane that flew overhead while the campers were on the field & dropped candy for them is back in its hangar. My robot, "M5" & Bible Quiz Machine are packed away, the puppets are back in their bags, the puppet stage & countless props have all been taken down & stored in the camp shed. My numerous & various object lessons are back in my basement. The Time Machine is back in my garage. My costumes for *The Bodyguard of the Magi* time machine skit & my *Jesus Tried By Herod Antipas* field drama costumes & props are back in our church "Via Dolorosa" storage room or in my backyard shed. My administrative & counseling staff are all back to their daily duties, routines, & regimens. By now most of the campers have returned to school. Even my health has basically "gone back to where it was" [in 34 years of camp work I had never been so sick as this past children's camp in August. Antibiotics & steroids did very little. And, of the 4 camps I do each summer this particular camp is the hardest as far as workload is concerned.] I wrote back in June about my lack of vision & motivation to do camps this summer, wondering if my time for them was over. Some of you may recollect the Lord used an American church history book to put resolve in me to make sure there were "blips" on the timeline of my life while serving at Tel Hai—"blips", i.e., of moves of the Holy Spirit among the young during my tenure as pastoral director there. By His grace, kindness, & faithfulness I think I can confidently say such "Holy Spirit blips" occurred again this summer.

"FOCUS"



Every year, at every camp, I meet with my staff first on the Sunday evening of the week, before the campers arrive, to impart vision & minister to them. I held up a "Jesus doll" & stared at it, quoting slowly & repeatedly Isa. 42-"BEHOLD My Servant...". BEHOLD Him. The theme of the camp was "FOCUS". The Father commanded His people to *behold* His Servant-to gaze intently upon Him. We did this during the week via His Written Word by His Spirit's illumination. "MY" Servant. Christ belongs to *GOD*. This has incredible implications for the way we "handle" Him, either for indescribable blessing or unfathomable horror. The text goes on to say, "Whom I uphold". The Father gave His angels, who were so zealously protective of their Creator & Captain, "charge & care" for their Master. Their commission? Don't allow Him even to stub His toe or to trip on a stone! [Can you imagine how very difficult it was in the light of this charge for the angels to be told by The Father to "pull back" their hedge of protection from **The Darling of Heaven** at the commencement of His passion? [Where He would be delivered by The Father's ordination into the hands of sinful men "to do whatever they wanted to do", "to their will".] "My Chosen One"-choice & precious to The Father, yet so often devalued & disdained by men. "Whom I delight in"-The Father's ultimate delight is in The Son of His love, Who dwells in the intimacy of His bosom like no other [Jn.1:18]. Ps. 34 commands His people to delight in The Lord-to have their delight in Another Person. This follows The Father's **heart** & example.

"FROM PREACHING TO DITCH-DIGGING"



After elaborating on the Christ from this text in Isaiah, I did something I had never done before, neither at a camp staff vision meeting nor a regular camper chapel-I escort-ed the whole group outside. I had procured a shovel from the camp earlier that day. I led the staff to a patch of ground where I could dig a trench & began to do so, while they lined up on each side of it. As I dug this trench right down the middle of

them, I began to recite some of the countless [literally *thousands!*] details involved in preparing for camp, from emails, texts, phone calls, drama planning, procuring actors [& horses!], writing scripts, planning staging, & editing music for said dramas, buying &/or making costumes & props for the dramas, recruiting worship, administrative & counseling staff which begins in the winter (!), sermon planning & preparation, striving to ensure staff were qualified re: the new PA child protection policies & background checks, ensuring my truck & trailer “rig”, which is my workhorse ministry vehicle for the summer, was capable of the many miles & several hundred pounds it would travel & carry over the course of the 4 camps, packing & loading object lessons for 4 teachings/sermons I would do for this week, etc. The list is endless, & to be honest, often overwhelming. And yet-this is why I do it: when The Lord instructed Moses to build The Tent of Meeting, He told him 3 reasons why: He would *dwell among* His people in it; He would *meet with* him there; He would *speak to* him there [Ex. 25:8,22]. Is there anything more a child of God could desire?! Moses was to build. God would do the rest. Hence, the menagerie of camp “building” above was greatly motivated by this deep desire for God to “come”. All of the work involved beginning several months before each camp season was my “building”.

“WAITING FOR THE WATER”



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I then went to Isa. 44. The Lord promised to pour water on the thirsty land & streams on the dry ground [Believe me, this ground was very dry, as most of you would surmise given the hot, dry summer we've had] just as we His people are until He pours out His Spirit. This verse was a metaphor for the next: “I will pour out My Spirit on your children...”. This is what I was digging for. I dug my ditch of preparation all the way to the end of the staff lineup. I then told them that we've done our part [& that too all by His grace!]. Now, we wait on Him, look to Him, & long for Him to do “His

part”, knowing He didn't have to do anything, but for His kindness & faithfulness. And- He did. Children wept, repented, prayed, worshiped, delved into their Bibles, loved each other, resolved to serve God more wholeheartedly when they left camp, etc. As Isaiah foretold, “They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams.” [44:4]. This is why I do camp.

“MALACHI'S INSIGHT”



The week after this camp our daughter Laura came for a week with their 2 oldest sons. I planned a whole day with her 7 year-old Malachi. He's non-stop energy & inquisitiveness. One of the many things we did was go to NJ to pickup a puppet stage. Knowing his inquisitive nature, I chatted en route re: everything I could think of. He noticed those green rectangular upright "blocks" on top of the cement barricades that separate the opposing traffic. He asked me what they were for. I told him they were put there to block the headlight glare of the oncoming traffic, to keep it from hitting our eyes. He replied, "That's what God did." Wow. I was stunned. He just aptly described the indispensable yet oft'-attacked doctrine of substitutionary atonement-as a 7 year old understood it. Jesus. Teach us. Out of the mouth of babes. Amen.

Sincerely,

Michael



Caboose! on the Loose:

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

Aug. 14: IC, Wilmington, DE: Father's House Children's Church: worship leader/camp testimonies' leader

Aug. 18: New Covenant Community Church, Audubon, NJ: children's ministry puppet stage & Bible games' pickup
Aug. 20: a.m.: Hopewell Christian Fellowship, Telford, PA: puppet stage & Bible game delivery & children's ministry consultation with children's pastor.// p.m.:Camp counselors visitation
Aug. 24: New Covenant Community Church, Audubon, NJ: Elim area pastors' mtg.
Aug. 29: Millers Tire & Auto, Blooming Glen, PA: all day truck repairs on ministry vehicle//former camper hospital visitation
Sept. 3: Exton, PA: Hollinger/Berg pre-wedding consultation [I'm performing their wedding in October]
Sept. 4: IC, Wilmington, DE: "Samson" drama for pastor's sermon: actor, costumer, director
Sept. 6: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg.///network pastors' mtg.
Sept. 14: Maranatha Christian Fellowship, Moorestown, NJ: youth group
Sept. 16: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: association members' dinner & business mtg.
Sept. 24-Oct.1: Liberia, Costa Rica: visiting daughter & family who are missionaries there

*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, 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. [https://www.denarionline.com/DONORSERVICES/TEMPLATEPAGE.ASPXCOMP_REF= ELIMFEL&SID=vjywxzcot0d5c5pnrq1f0rnl&CONTENT=MISSIONARY&MISSION_REF=E8668ABEC7](https://www.denarionline.com/DONORSERVICES/TEMPLATEPAGE.ASPXCOMP_REF=_ELIMFEL&SID=vjywxzcot0d5c5pnrq1f0rnl&CONTENT=MISSIONARY&MISSION_REF=E8668ABEC7)

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