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**December 1, 2015**

**“MERRY CHRISTMAS!”**

**Dear Friends & Family,**

**“PUPPET, PROPHET, PREACHER, PIPER”**



[10/29] Last night I had the privilege of ministering to two different groups of the young at 2 different locations in the same small town-about  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles apart. The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting was a “Kids' Klub” at a large Methodist cathedral-type building, in its basement. After the program opened, I performed my trademark puppet, i.e., “Chip”- yes, a chipmonk-dressed as a cleric. While operating Chip, I was dressed in my “Prophet Daniel” costume, as after the puppet show, Daniel came out & did a dramatic monologue. Note: this felt quite awkward as I basically never perform such dramas apart from my “Time Machine”, but logistics for the evening prevented me from doing so. After I exited as Daniel, I quickly got undressed & came out as myself & gave a sermon re: the parallels between Daniel's episode in the lions' den with Jesus' passion. And these were considerably young children! During & after the message the sweet & powerful presence of the Lord filled the room. My hostess for the evening later texted me that this is a major reason why these young children come every week! Many of them were not from Christian homes! Jesus. Precious. I hated to leave such a precious encounter but my work was not finished for the evening. I scooted out of that meeting as quickly as I could & drove the short distance to the town's community center where both church & town youth were gathered. [I had set up my object lessons there before the children's service.] These youth were rowdy & I wondered how the evening would go. I was somewhat surprised when worship-in-song began how quiet [relatively] they

became. The youth leader after the service told me for months they would be rowdy before worship, during worship, & during the sermon! I commended him that God had honored his labor there & had given him fruit.

### “HOLY HARDBALL”



I heard years ago & have learned by experience that youth today want the hard-core truth. They quickly discern phonies & insincere preachers. I gave them my “The Gospel Elaborated” message. It begins with Creation & covers the Fall, man's resultant depravity & helplessness, God's free choice to have mercy or not, & the unfathomable mercy all 3 Members of the Godhead displayed in the plan of redemption. I elaborate: the exacting demands of the Law & its resultant curse upon those who have not kept it perfectly who are not in Christ. After expounding on these themes, & elaborating on the infinite dignity of Jesus' Person, & His horrific sufferings under the furious wrath of God, which Jesus *willingly* accepted, I strongly asserted to these youth that for all of those who reject such an astounding redemption, **Hell** is well-deserved, & perfectly just on God's part. As I type I recall the look on their faces as they stared me in the eyes hearing these soul-sobering truths. The Lord's presence of blessing descended on the meeting. How could it not? No! It was not because I was the preacher, but because Jesus Christ was exalted, magnified, preached, & given the center of attention, as He so rightly deserves. At such times God *delights* to manifest a stronger outpouring of His presence. It is my ache every time I preach. O God.

### “PIPER?”



From the article above, it was easy for you to recognize why I entitled it as I did: in one meeting I was a puppeteer, a prophet, & a preacher. But what about the “piper”? Actually, it should be capitaliz-ed, as in *John Piper* . How so? I recently saw him in an interview on YouTube talk about his father. He was a minister, an itinerant minister, & an evangelist, & he evangelized through his preaching & elaboration of doctrine. I thought-“Wow! That's me!” I have loved, studied, & preached systematic theology for decades, & use that as my springboard to invite souls to Christ. I am put in awe &

deep-seated love for God via such weighty doctrines of The Word. It has been my constant ache & prayer when I preach that our God would do for my audience in hearing it what He did to me in receiving it. I love to read myself into awe. I long for my hearers to be preached into awe. O God. Please continue to use me in this way!

**“THE FULL GOSPEL @ FULL GOSPEL”**

[11/10] I returned home this past Sunday evening after preaching **3X in about 30 hours, & having driven 547 miles**. The 1<sup>st</sup> of those 3 mtgs. was a combined youth group gathering. After pouring my heart out for about an hour re: *The Gospel Elaborated*, viz, in very great detail, one of the leaders of a visiting youth group told me, “I heard the full gospel at Full Gospel [the name of the host church].”

**“MUTUAL-I'M SURE.”**



[11/18] I returned home yesterday from a 5 day, 6 mtg {w/i 72 hrs.}, 3-locale, 810 mile ministry trip. Before the trip at dinner one night I told Kim that this trip would either “make me or break me”, re: how grueling it would be. To make matters worse, I contracted a debilitating sinus/chest issue [infection? Virus?]. Either way it came with soul-sapping fatigue. When I'm in tip-top shape [I work out regularly & eat right, daily consuming a fruit/veggie/protein drink & many vitamins & supplements!], a trip like this absolutely drains you. But to start off with this sickness, it only increased the challenge. And yet-something in me suspected our Lord was allowing this to increase the odds to greater display His grace & power by “weakening even further” His vessel, to get the vessel “out of the way” & to convince said vessel WHO is doing the ministry! He often does that, you know. Do you know that? In Scripture He often makes things worse so as to greater display His glorious perfections. When I got to my 2<sup>nd</sup> stop on this trip, I was overwhelmed by the host church, a.k.a., *Praise Fellowship*, & their love, hospitality, & encouragement. People would constantly ask if I needed anything, grab me to pray for me, say a kind word, etc. Paul had written in Romans that he was anxious to come to them so they could be encouraged “mutually” by each others' faith. I was very weepy after preaching to this congregation. I felt broken & loved. They said it happens often to people who come there.

**“2 ANGELS-IN JEANS!”**



While kneeling at my air mattress [I slept at the church via my preference] Sunday a.m. before the service {I had preached *3X in the past 36 hours & had driven 300 miles* & unloaded all of my equipment, plus, again, I was sick!}, 2 men in jeans drinking coffee came into my room [church conference room], & upon doing so said, “Your prayers have been answered!”. They laid hands on me & prayed for me. I know angels oftentimes in Scripture took the form of humans. For the encouragement these 2 brothers brought me, I almost would have believed that's what they were!

**“ASK THOSE WHO HEARD ME”**



To describe this whirlwind tour of ministry, it is probably best to do what the Lord told His inquirers: “Ask those who heard Me”. For my 1<sup>st</sup> 3 mtgs. at my own church's men's retreat [my 1<sup>st</sup> ever], I wanted so very much to give the brothers from the Scripture the precious doctrines that awe, stir, stun, sober, & melt my soul. My ache not only for them but for the 3 mtgs. that followed in PA & NY that weekend was that God would do to my hearers what He did to me in receiving them. He was so very gracious & kind to do so. The emcee of the retreat, when he tried to comment on the sessions, said, “I'm stunned; in awe; my spirit is shaken”, et al. Another brother came up to me w/tears in his eyes, staring into mine: “My life is changed-forever.” He also texted me later: “I continue to break out in uncontrollable sobs as ...I continue [to] marinate in His glorious presence...the value of my soul {my opening message}...and if the Father doesn't draw us we are lost {part of session 2 message}...Michael...I will never be the same! My sons were shook to their core too [one of them just sat there in the front row long after the mtg was over, crying for a long period of time]. The Lord was glorified...high & lifted up!!!” Another brother who sat alone in prayer later wrote me: “Thank you for your ministry. The Lord used you to speak to me.” The pastor of the church in NY hugely humbled me when he came up to me afterwards & asked me to pray for him to impart some of what I had. He later texted me: “Blessings to you. Every once & a while I'll say, 'I want some of what he's got'. That happened this weekend so thanks for being authentic. Love ya.” Two women who were at one of the

mtgs. said, "We never hear this" [re: the fear of the Lord]. Another woman came up to me in tears w/a face emoting brokenness right after I preached re: Judgment Day & said in desperation, "Can we talk?"

"THE LIFE IS IN THE TEXT"



J.I. Packer, the famous **Anglican** theologian, said as a young man he was stunned on Sunday evenings when he attended Martyn Lloyd-Jones' church & heard him preach. Jones said decades ago, "Preaching, is theology on fire." If *I* was the source of these people being stunned as they were, then it was all human emotion & entertainment. Nothing eternal will come of it. I told the young pastor whom I quoted above that "The life is in the text". And so it was. It is *truth* that sets people free. I knew & told the brethren that *anyone* could stand up there & they still be stunned & put in awe because the power to do so is in the *message-not the messenger!* Humbled to be one of His messengers.

Kim & I sincerely pray you have a **Christ-centered Christmas** in the midst of our culture that won't.



**Ministry/events for December & those not listed in last month's newsletter: Caboose! on the loose:**  
**Dec. 1: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc mtg.//pastors' luncheon & mtg.**  
**Dec. 4: IC, Wilmington, DE: IC Seniors' Christmas luncheon: speaker**  
**Dec. 20: Hockessin, DE: Hockessin Evangelical Community Chinese Church: a.m. service**

\*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 via

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If your church would be interested in ministry by Michael, please feel free to contact us. [www.cabooseministries.org](http://www.cabooseministries.org)

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