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YouTube Channel [for dramas & sermons]: Michael Robert Guertin

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FEBRUARY 2020

“PREACHING, PRAYER, PURITY, PROVISION-& PUNTING!”



Dear **Friends & Family**,

[2/7] This month's newsletter is significantly late, as Kim & I had some significant travel to do, vis, seeing our daughter's family in FL whom we hadn't seen since November of 2018! ☺ From there we rented a car & went to visit Kim's mother 4 hours away. We returned home yesterday. Speaking of yesterday, it was a year ago to the day that I had my hip replacement surgery. Yes-it has been a long year recuperating from it due to a pinched nerve [according my doctor] that arose from the surgery. However, both in November at our oldest son's house & last week at our daughter's I repeatedly punted a football with my new hip leg! [The surgeon said this was OK to do as it was low-impact. This was such a relief to me as punting a football has been a joy of my life for decades!]. Speaking of my "1-year anniversary" of the hip replacement, this month & year mark yet another anniversary milestone for Kim & me. It was **20 years ago** this month, **February of 2000**, that we commenced on this live-by-faith itinerant ministry after having had pastored children full-time for **14 years** prior.

“YOU’VE GOT THE CUTEST LITTLE BABY-FAITH”



The desire to live by faith was planted in my heart in **1975**. I read Jesus’ words in the Sermon On The Mount & I wanted to live them. Little did I know He would fulfill them in me to trust Him fully for my daily needs **25 years later**-to the year! After pastoring kids for 14 years as I mentioned above, my heart was beginning to shift in desire, i.e., to bring God’s Word “how I do it”, on a regular basis, both dramatically & visually, to all age groups, either separately or combined. We consulted with some trusted older Elim Fellowship brothers in the Lord who confirmed this new leading. Interestingly enough, 3 months after making this decision, we were interviewed by a pretty big & influential church re: its children’s pastor position, but I told the pastor I felt we were to stay the course of this new itinerant endeavor. A month after that, I was ministering at a camp in MO with a brother who was a pastor from Australia, vis, **Graham Nelson**. He asked me to go for a walk with him one morning. Graham had watched me preach to the youth in the a.m. chapel services [he had the night meetings] & from those observations [I’d assume], he told me he felt in the Lord to inform me that my ministry was to be to the Body of Christ at large & not confined to one particular church. That word from Graham has been such a guidepost to me through the many years when different pastors would ask me to consider joining their church staffs. I was always humbled & grateful by the offer, but the zeal, **fire**, & motivation to perform itinerant work still prevailed in my heart. And, this we have done since **February of 2000**.

"DIVINE DIRECTIVES"



As we were beginning this endeavor, I felt the Lord speak to my heart very clearly re: at least 3 things for it to be fruitful: **#1.** "No man who serves as a soldier gets entangled in the affairs of this life, so that he may please the One Who called him to be a soldier" [II Tim.2:4]. **#2.** "You keep opening up the door of your prayer closet [i.e., keep using it!] & I'll keep opening up doors of ministry for you." **#3.** "You take care of My people, & I will take care of you." In my travels, it has not been uncommon for people to ask me how the "provision" side of the ministry was going, & understandably so. I would always retort, "Provision is the easy part; it's keeping *pure* that is the struggle!". I knew that if I strove for His righteousness, vis, His sanctification in my life, He would care for my needs.

"WHAT GOES AROUND, 'STUNS' AROUND or 'GOD'S 'TASER'"



I was given the honor recently to cover the pulpit for 2 weeks in my own home church, vis, Immanuel Church, here in Wilmington. I hadn't done so in a year. Prior to that I hadn't preached at IC in 19 years, which was my last Sunday on staff as children's pastor. As you can see above, in the past 20 years I have had other things to do, & our church is well-staffed with capable men to bring the Word. In preparation, I would "bury my head" in the Word of God, reading it, meditating on it, delving into the Greek, laying in bed at night thinking about it, etc. This is so crucial for the preacher. God's Word must **burn** in him before it can burn in God's people. So

many times through the years I have been stunned by the life & power that is in the text. John Piper in a sermon once related the story of **J.I. Packer**, an Anglican theologian who has had a huge impact on the American church & church at large across the globe for decades. His volume, "Knowing God" is a must for all Christians. His *preface* to John Owen's **The Death of Death** alone is worth the cost of the book! Well, when Packer was a young man, he would go to hear **Martyn Lloyd-Jones** preach on Sunday evenings. Jones' preaching would leave the young man in a state of shock. O God. O God. A state of shock. O Father! Ever since I heard Piper relate that years ago that has been my ache for my audiences. I want to be a "divine taser". And yet, for one to stun, he must needs first be stunned! Fervent & repeated meditation on the divinely inspired life-giving text of Scripture does exactly that. I cannot come close to explaining it as eloquently as Dr. John Murray [former Westminster professor] did in his preface to Charles Hodge's "**Princeton Sermons**" [this little volume itself is a platinum mine!] in 1957: "Meditation is not detached dreaming. To be fruitful it requires intense application to the riches of God's truth deposited for us in God's Word. **And the reward will be visions of the mountains of God.** Rest of soul will then have reached the summit of its exercise, for we shall behold the majesty of the Lord." [Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol.4, Banner of Truth Trust, 1982, p.vii; emphasis mine]. Dr. Murray referred to "intense application" as a key element in meditation. I often find as I strive to do so with my constantly racing & distracted mind, that I weary myself out. But the discovery of the loadstone of God's jewels of truth while doing so is well-worth it!

"ONE LITTLE WORD WILL FELL HIM"



This is a line of Martin Luther's most popular hymn, "A Mighty Fortress" [though Luther wrote a plethora of hymns], describing what our Lord Jesus will do to **Satan** upon His 2nd Coming. However, it has come to have another application to me in the realm of biblical meditation. As I'm reading, meditating upon, pondering repeatedly, examining the Greek nuance of a certain text or **word**, etc. in the biblical record, all of the sudden the Holy Spirit's illumination & insight re: that word overwhelms me with the glory of one or more of the perfections of God's character. It may stun me re: the ferocity of His severity, or melt me with the unfathomableness of the love that the **Members of the Trinity** have for Each Other, or for lost & depraved souls. It is at such times that I have to stop reading, put the Book down, & either literally get on my face on the floor or at least get on the "floor of my heart". Like Packer, I have been put into a state of

shock. "A little word has felled me". Concerning this "glorious slaying", Dr. Murray also wrote, "... the study of prolonged thought & meditation by which our hearts & minds may become **soaked** with the truth of the Bible & by which the deepest springs of thought, feeling & action may be **stirred** & directed; the study by which the Word of God will **grip us, bind us, hold us, pull us, drive us, raise us up from the dunghill, bring us down from our high conceits** & make us its bondservants in all of life, thought, & conduct. **The Word of God is a great deep...**" [Collected Writings, Vol.1, 1976, p.3; emphases mine].

"GOD'S 'TASER' PHASED HER"



Given the aforementioned, you can now understand why I often pray before I preach, "O God, would you do to them [the audience] in hearing it what You did to me in receiving it? [i.e., stunning me] I would be a contented man." Well, recently our Lord heard my cry re: this. The following is what a sister/friend in the Lord shared with Kim after one of those sermons where I "spewed out" [that's what it feels like when you've been stuffing yourself with The Word for many days. It's like an erupting **volcano!**] the glory of the Lord Jesus via His divinity in Hebrews 1: "...**Please tell your hubby that I'm still feeling the effects of his presentation of the gospel this morning. I can't begin to explain how deeply I was touched. I know the gospel & I know that my Redeemer lives but today I caught a little glimpse of His power, His majesty & His absolute right to be worshiped! I hope that last phrase makes sense to you, I have such a full heart right now & words just don't seem to express it. Thank you for opening up another door of understanding & awe to me, Michael. I so appreciate you & Kim. May He give you energy & strength to carry on the work He's given you to do for a very long time! My soul doth magnify the Lord!...You know how Moses' face glowed when he came down from the mountain? I feel like my heart is glowing from my encounter with my Lord yesterday. I'm still in awe of Him, as I know I will be all my days. [We] were talking together on Saturday about how the gospel message never gets old! It truly is the power of God unto salvation. Praise His holy name! (I, too, am greatly humbled).**" This is most of the message on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/YEqCxqsOrzo> I know my fellow preachers [who are truly called of God-*many* are not!] all ache for the same thing to happen to their hearers, which of course, is not always guaranteed! Paul frequented many prisons because of *his* preaching!

"GOD & THE SUPERBOWL HALFTIME SHOW"



More than enough has been written, blogged, tweeted, etc. re: the immoral debacle of this year's Super Bowl halftime show. I watched neither, but one can't avoid such things if one is on social media of any kind. My commentary is this: God's kindness-& severity [Rom.11:22]. Late last year I read in the late **Dr. Donald Barnhouse's** Romans commentary as he expounded on chapter 5 of that epistle re: a military officer in the Middle East decades ago who did absolutely ruthless atrocities to his opponents' prisoners. They are so vile & morbid I cannot even relate them to you in detail here. Why did Dr. Barnhouse do so? To elaborate upon the magnitudinal depth of the love & grace of God! How so? Barnhouse asked if the Lord foreknew before the foundation of the world that this depraved example of a human being would do such atrocities before He chose to send His Son to die for such people? And the answer was a resounding "YES!". The same principle applies to **Shakira, J-Lo**, etc. who degraded themselves & women in general, sexually aroused countless hoards men & boys across the globe, & provided a worst-case scenario & example to young girls re: godliness & femininity. They both, along with all of the other people involved in the production, were used of the devil to entice & stumble countless multitudes of people-& **young people** at that, which is even a more highly egregious offense in the sight of God! And yet, and yet, as with the vile & wicked military general above, our Lord foreknowing this of course, STILL sent His Son to die in horrifically sinful, depraved human beings' places. Should the Lord grant these women & their entourage the gift of repentance, He WILL freely & abundantly forgive them! O wonder of wonders! This is God's kindness.

"ARE WE BEING RECORDED?"



However, there is another side of God which is no less glorious-His severity. FEW preachers elaborate on this side of the Lord's multifaceted perfections, for fear it will drive people away. And they're right. By constantly preaching man-centered sermons you can fill a church. Decades ago, when **Kate**, one of my 4 sisters was about to go on a date, she asked my mother for advice re: what to talk about. **Mom's** reply had more in-sight than she probably realized: "Get him to talk about himself-men love to talk about themselves." And, men love to *hear* about themselves! This is why seeker-sensitive churches are typically so big. Did God "watch" the Super Bowl halftime show? He did. "But, Michael? His Word says His eyes cannot look upon evil"! [Hab.1:13]. Yes. That is accurate-"look on evil" with any kind of *approval* or *enjoyment* of it. The Scriptures also declare, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place-beholding the evil & the good." [Pr.15:3].

God beholds, so that He can "record". The deeds, thoughts, imaginations, etc. of men are all recorded in "the books" [Rev.20:12]. Yes. Our Lord saw & heard & recorded everything. If you could turn down the hype, music, & roar of the crowd to a volume level of zero, you would have heard the sound of countless "heavenly quills" recording in the books the deeds of everyone present in that stadium in Miami that Sunday evening. God is not mocked.

"ANGELS ON ALERT"



From my recent study, meditation, & preaching of Hebrews 1 mentioned above, I was startled & stunned yet once again re: verse 14 of that chapter where the author, in comparing Jesus to angels, cites the latter as merely being *servants* of those who would inherit salvation! “Why the exclamatory expression, Michael?”. If you take even a cursory trip through the book of Revelation, you cannot help but marvel & be in awe at the number, majesty, & diversity of the angelic beings described therein. They are countless in number, & O, how very diverse both in constitution & duties! The **4 Living Creatures** surrounding the Divine throne [4:8], one who carries a *sharp* sickle [14:17], who carry & pour out bowls of judgments [16:1ff], one who is “in charge of the fire” [14:18], another who stands in the sun [19:17], another who stood on the land & on the sea [10:5], another who *effortlessly* threw & bound Satan into the Abyss [20:3], yet another mighty one who was clothed in a cloud & had a rainbow over his head [10:1], etc. The list seems endless. It should. The prophet Daniel in his vision of the heavenly assize said the angels surrounding the throne of God were 10,000 x 10,000! [Dan.7:10]. Not to mention the angel who slew Herod for not giving God the glory after a pompous speech the earthly magistrate delivered [Acts 12:23]. What of the 12 legions of holy angels our Lord could have summoned to rescue Him during His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane? [Mt. 26:53]. “Michael? What does all of this have to do with the Super Bowl halftime show?” Plenty. IF the actors, dancers, producers, advertisers, promoters, script-writers, directors, etc. are unrepentant of their sin & are alive when the Lord Jesus returns?? Angels will have EVERYTHING to do with it! How so? Paul wrote in II Thes. 1:7,8 that when God’s Christ returns to earth He will come in **blazing fire-with His holy angels** {& He said in Mt.25:31 **ALL** of His holy angels!} [O God. How can one not ponder those 72,000 who were **drooling** to come rescue their incarnated Lord when He was apprehended by His enemies in that olive garden?! NOW is “their time”!] to deal out retribution on those who do not know God & who disobey the gospel...”. What will they do? Jesus said when HE sends them forth, they will **weed out** of His Kingdom ALL those who offend, who stumble others, who cause others to sin, etc., & those who practice lawlessness, & said angels will cast them into a fiery furnace where there will be weeping & gnashing of teeth. [Mt.13:41].



Many of you will remember that terrifying scene from *The Wizard of Oz* where the Wicked Witch of the West's flying monkeys fill the overcast sky as they head straight toward Dorothy & her 3 friends to apprehend her. I have often pondered that scene as I've meditated on the angels' involvement in our Lord Jesus' **2nd Coming**. Something very similar to this will happen to the lost on that fateful day, yet exponentially more terrifying than any special effects from a **1939** movie could ever convey! It is in the light of these things we Christians are supposed to conduct our daily lives [II Pet.3:11]. May our gracious Lord help us to do so in this new year & decade. Amen.



****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: "The severity of the offense is proportionate to the dignity of the offended." [MRG Jan.'20-re: the magnitude & severity of even "little sins" against the Most High]

“We Christians need to ‘dry our Bibles off’. They’re dripping with grace. Every page shows God exercising huge patience with men.” [MRG Jan. 2020]



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

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*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 gift no matter how small would be greatly appreciated! Thank you! [click here](#)

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