

June 1, 2009

**“Happy Fathers’ Day!”**

Dear Friends & Family,

**“FROM ‘STICKS’ TO ‘PICKS’”**

(5/11) Some of you may remember from last month’s newsletter that in the absence of outside preaching engagements, I have striven to make myself available to serve our own local church in any way I can. This service is of course “maximized” every year during Via Dolorosa. However, a recent Sunday evening afforded me an opportunity to “be all things to all people”, so to speak, musically. I often play drums for our youngest son Caleb, who leads worship for our church’s young adults’ group, Flashpoint. On this particular Sunday, however, our son-in-law Nathan, who is our church’s youth pastor, also had need of my assistance. None of his “Warehouse” youth group worship leaders were available that night, so, after playing drums for Flashpoint on our church’s third floor, I then quickly proceeded down to the basement, & switched from “sticks to picks”, re: leading worship on guitar! I’m very grateful & humbled that our Lord has given me some ability in different areas in order to glorify Him & serve His people more fully.

**“A ‘REACTOR’ TO THE ‘CORE’ OF THE ISSUE”**

After attending the Hopewell Network annual Spring banquet/meeting with Kim this past Saturday, I took her on a little shopping excursion to one of her favorite places, the “Philadelphia Prime Outlets”. A somewhat unique distinction about these outlets is that they are located right in the backyard of the Limerick Nuclear Power Station. Here, thousands of people flock on any given Saturday to go about their business underneath the two massive sentinels of the cooling towers of the nuclear plant, which loom over this “consumer locale”. I wonder how many of these shoppers realize or ponder, that while they scurry from store to store, anxiously perusing through the “wares of the world”, that just within reach is enough destructive power, should a meltdown occur, not only to obliterate them, but much of the surrounding region as well! There the reactor sits, quietly (to them at least) producing megawatts of power, that can either be very productive or very destructive, depending on “how it is handled”, by men. The towers can be seen for many miles around. I shall never forget as long as I live one Sunday morning when I, as our church’s children’s pastor in Reading, PA, was asked to preach to the entire congregation on a Sunday morning. My text was Genesis 18, 19, re: Abraham’s meeting with the Lord & two of His angels, & his resultant intercession for Sodom & Gomorrah, after he had learned from the Lord that they were sent to destroy them. In Gen.19, it says after the Lord had rained down fire & sulfur from the Lord out of Heaven, that the smoke from it rose like that of a great furnace (Gen.19:24,28). I went for a walk that morning before I preached. I ascended up to a neighborhood that was on one of the many hills of the Reading area (unlike DE!). From that vantage point, I could see the Limerick Nuclear Towers, many miles away. You cannot help but notice the huge plumes of steam (“smoke”) that rise above the landscape. My mind quickly raced to the scene of Sodom & Gomorrah in biblical antiquity. Huge segments of the world’s population at that time were instantly incinerated! And, as with the people of Noah’s day, they had no idea what was coming until it hit! **“THE LORD, HIS WORD, HIS GOSPEL: OUR SPIRITUAL NUCLEAR ‘REACTOR’”**

Despite decades of controversy re: the advantages & disadvantages of using nuclear power, one cannot deny that nuclear power plants have provided countless people numerous & various comforts via its supply of electricity. Most people are willing to risk the dangers of such means of power in order to reap its benefits. Day after day, hour after hour, the nuclear reactor “quietly” & incessantly, pours out a constant flow of electric power, for the needs, pleasures, & benefit of man. Most humans seldom give a thought to their electrical power’s source; they just keep enjoying its “benefits”. “All is well”, as long as the nuclear fission process is “respected” & “not tampered with”. Should men neglect the proper procedures of handling highly radioactive materials entailed in the use of nuclear power, all goes wrong—& all can go wrong in a moment’s time! As long as the personnel “handling” the operations of the plant do so in the prescribed way, it matters not whether the recipients of the power think of it, revere it, understand it, etc. or not, its beneficial blessing power still flows to them uninterrupted. However, if the highly radioactive mater-

ials are mishandled, disaster is inevitable! Of all of the doctrines, beliefs, teachings, traditions, etc. of The Church, by far, the most precious & delicate & “nuclear” is The Gospel itself! Preach it accurately, preach it fully, preach it reverently, & all is well. But, if you tamper with it, by diluting it, adulterating it, toning it down, preaching only “one side” of it, etc., you run the risk of having a meltdown! Sadly, as in a nuclear reactor having a meltdown, the general public would not be aware of it for a considerable length of time, before it was too late! If we remove the pure, unadulterated gospel from the “core” of our preaching, we have no reactor! We are left with a massive, visible structure, both irrelevant & unsightly, i.e., church programs, activities, etc., just as the two cooling towers would be all that was left & visible in the beautiful Pennsylvania countryside should Limerick’s reactor be removed! Our God is that way, Beloved. In His beneficent character, He incessantly pours out His rain on the just & the unjust. The vast majority of men give no acknowledgement of Him for doing so. They just keep receiving it & its resultant benefits, & often just take it for granted. But, as with a reactor, one cannot tamper with God for long before things will “go wrong”. He is beneficent, but incredibly dangerous. In C.S. Lewis’ THE LION, THE WITCH, & THE WARDROBE, one of the children asks the Beaver if Aslan is “safe”. The Beaver’s startled reply is, “Safe?! Who said anything about ‘safe’?! Of course He isn’t ‘safe’! But, He’s *good*”. Almost all one ever hears these days in America with its “version” of the gospel is how “loving” God is. No one wants to know the love of God more than I. I am finding it so by disciplining myself to keep focused on the cross, instead of my circumstances & feelings, which so often “scream” that God is otherwise! And yet, our God, like Limerick, has a “reactor” too. While John 3:16 declares God’s love, & His greatest proof of it, a.k.a., the cross, The Scriptures also *repeatedly* assert that His wrath is upon those who don’t believe (Jn.3:36)! They exhort us to flee from the “wrath to come” (Mt.3:7); to “save ourselves” from the wicked & perverse generation (Acts 2:40); that Christians are those who have “fled for refuge” (Heb.6:18); that Christians & Christians alone are out from under His wrath, due to the expiation of their sin by Jesus’ atoning, wrath-appeasing death (Rom.3: 24-26). Many across our land never mention this. They believe “it’s not love”. It’s a common demonic ploy for Satan to accuse his enemies of the very thing he is guilty of! In essence, it is not love to omit these truths from our preaching! Jesus didn’t! “But Michael, won’t our focusing on God’s wrath cause us to be afraid of Him?”. Not if we do so in the biblical context of it! I guarantee you, Beloved, that your love for God will *increase* ! You’re more aware of what Jesus saved you from—what was poured on Him instead of you! Remember, if we remove key “radioactive” elements from the gospel, we no longer have “*the*” **gospel** ! May our God help us to remember to treat Him reverently, delicately, according to His prescribed way, if you will, as a “Divine Nuclear Reactor”, that we might “safely” benefit by Him!

Sincerely & gratefully for His enabling grace, to do His impossible work! **Michael**

**Michael & Kim Guertin** 3 Windsor Rd., Wilmington, DE 19809 (302) 764-0490 [guerty@juno.com](mailto:guerty@juno.com)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

[Please make all tax-deductible gifts payable to: **Elim Fellowship**, 1703 Dalton Rd, Lima, NY 14485. Thanks!]

[Michael is an ordained Elim Fellowship itinerant home missionary, endorsed by his local church. He makes his living & supports his family & ministry by preaching God’s Word & through faith in the Lord & His provision through His people.] **Ministry/events for JUNE & those not listed in last month’s newsletter:**

**May 22: Hopewell Network Camps directors’ meeting, Glen Mills, PA**

**May 27: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Tabernacle of David worship leader**

**June 2: HWCF, Elverson, PA: camp board mtg.//Tel Hai Camp: directors’ mtg.**

**June 3: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Tabernacle of David worship leader**

**June 6: Parkview Nursing Home, Wilmington, DE: minister/// p.m. Caleb Guertin Band concert:drums**

**June 11: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: Tel Hai Camp’s summer staff orientation: drama**

**June 14: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: HNC “Columbus” camp promo drama: director/actor**

**June 18: New Covenant Church, Audubon, NJ: Elim area pastors’ mtg.**

**June 20-26: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: Hopewell Network Teen Camp: pastoral director**