

January 1, 2008

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

{2007 “Caboose!” YEAR END REPORT}

Dear Friends & Family,

God has graced “Caboose!” with another year of traveling ministry. This month marks the completion of my 22nd year of ministry, with 14 of those years in children’s pastorates & the last eight years being involved in full-time itinerant work. I ministered in 2007 approximately **67 times** in six different states: **DE, PA, NJ, NY, OH, & FL**. Travel to & from these ministry sites encompassed almost **7,600** miles of driving, plus thousands more for “non-preaching” ministry related meetings. Ministry settings included Sunday morning family services, youth retreats, youth group services, a children’s retreat, inner-city children’s meetings, retirement community Sunday a.m. services, camp services for staff & for campers, camp staff devotions, Bible school classes & chapel, a Christian school spiritual emphasis week, Sunday School classes, a youth small group meeting, a camp staff reunion banquet, & a camp fundraising banquet.

“On the Home Front”

When not on the road, I try to serve our own home church in whatever capacity they need me. This included leading worship for their Tabernacle of David midweek prayer & intercession meetings, playing drums for Sunday morning worship services, & assisting our pastor with dramas, particularly at Easter, with our annual “Via Dolorosa” event, which encompasses several days of setup & tear down, & two actual evenings of dramatic ministry, where I portray Pontius Pilate roughly 35 times over the course of those two evenings, & once again on Easter Sunday. I provide many of the costumes & props for it, which is an additional blessing. This past Christmas, once again I assisted pastor & our worship director by directing/acting/costuming a “Magi” skit two evenings in a row. **“The Body of Christ At Large”**

The different denominations/fellowships/affiliations, etc. where the Lord sent me in 2007 included Elim Fellowship, The Hopewell Network, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Methodist, Urban Promise, Praise Chapel Fellowship, Church of God, Assembly of God, Calvary Chapel, Baptist, & Independent Charismatic.

“Watch Your Life & Doctrine Closely”

A major theme of my preaching this year encompassed the veracity, indispensability, & infallibility of the Word of God. This was introduced by a “Time Machine” drama portraying trial of Martin Luther for heresy at the Diet of Worms in 1521. Some others included “The Value of the Soul”, “The Three Major Imputations in Scripture”, Bible Study Methods, The Two Tabernacles, i.e., Moses’ in the wilderness compared with the Heavenly Tabernacle in Heaven, Sovereign Mercy, & “Against Idolatry”. All of my messages, given what the Lord has been doing in my life the past several years, are replete with God’s sovereign grace, both sovereignly provided *and* applied.

“Numbering Our Days In The New Year”

Years ago, when I trained children’s workers, I would strongly advise that one of the most beneficial activities & habits a young person could involve him or herself in was to visit a cemetery, at least once a year. Consciously or subconsciously, I don’t know, but youth seem to have a built-in assumption that they will live forever, & hence, live accordingly. Two places the Scriptures cite as to sources of wisdom are the fear of the Lord (Pr. 1:7), & the discipline of numbering our days (Ps. 90:12). Visiting a cemetery is one sure way to obtain heavenly wisdom via the latter means. Gerald Foster, a 90 yr. minister here in the Wilmington area whom I have had the privilege of ministering with recently, told me years ago when I first met him that we are “living in the hyphen”. He was referring to a gravestone marking. These include the year of birth, then, a “hyphen”, & the year of the deceased’s death. For those of us still alive & walking upon the surface of the earth in the land of the living, we are presently in our “hyphen”. Our “hyphen” is God’s predetermined (Ps. 139:16) amount of time for each of us upon this earth. Not only is the duration of our life spent on earth previously determined by God, but also what era in human history each of us will

live & also where on the earth we will live (Acts 17:26). Just a brief pondering of this awe-inspiring truth can bring us to our knees, particularly when we consider how incredibly blessed we are here in the United States, when we consider its relative prosperity, security, & above all, saturation of the gospel. God could have easily chosen to have any one of us be born during the Black Plague in Europe during the Middle Ages, where several hundred thousand died. Two ways that are especially poignant & sobering for me re: numbering my days, is to peruse thru the "People" section of a yearly almanac. I have done it often & I am almost always guaranteed of being sobered by the brevity of life, the tragedy of one dying in their sins, despite their success in the world, & the fleeting glory of human fame. The past couple of weeks in particular, I have been entering celebrities' names into the search engine of my computer. I then go to the imdb.com website. It lists their date of birth & the date & cause of their death. It then lists virtually every work/movie/tv appearance, etc. they have ever been involved with. Given my timeless love of children's Christmas specials & Christmas movies, I have been looking up celebrities associated with these. I always ponder when I do, if this or that actor, or singer, who has blessed me through their talent, died in his or her sins. On earth, they may have had tremendous fame, wealth, worldwide travel, celebrity parties, adoring fans, & the envy of millions. They may have won such awards as the coveted Oscar, Tony, Grammy, Golden Globe, or the Vince Lombardi Super Bowl trophy. They may have "gone platinum" with their recordings. In the perspective of the world, these are accolades & achievements to be coveted, touted, paraded, etc., & Access Hollywood & ET do just that. However, in the divine perspective (Ps.73:17), things that are highly esteemed among men are detestable in the sight of God (Lk.16:15) & all of these positives become "negatives" before the Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ. Kudos here on earth, become *liabilities* & *evidence* on the Day of Judgment, to be used against them! Books, CDs, movies, TV shows, websites, blogs, "My Spaces", etc. will both indict the lost on that great day & also be used as incriminating evidence in the courtroom of God. Anything on this earth that was not "produced" for the glory of God will surely burn in His fiery "examination room" (I Cor.3:13). I especially tremble in my soul when I think of myself, how often I have done *ministry* for the praise, glory, & accolades of men instead of for the glory of God! Only God can keep us from such evil, impure motives. In a society that is drunk with a "party spirit" (Gal. 5:21), with no fear of God before their eyes (Rom.3:18), I pray for myself & for you, dear reader, that the Holy Spirit would so grip us this year, that we would be more consistently conscious of our "hyphen", that our God would purify our motives as to "why" we do what we do, & cause us to yearn more earnestly for God's praise, pleasure, & glory, than man's. By His grace, we shall. The Lord Jesus bless you & yours in this new year. May He make it fruitful by keeping us connected to the True Vine. Amen. **Michael**

Michael, Kim, & Caleb Guertin 3 Windsor Rd., Wilmington, DE 19809 (302) 764-0490 mkguertin@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 supports his family & his ministry by faith.]

Ministry/events for JANUARY & those not listed those in last month's newsletter:

Dec. 9: Hope For The Nations Church, Reading, PA: Sunday am family service

Dec. 19: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Tabernacle of David worship leader

Dec. 23: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: "Magi" Christmas skit//director & actor

Dec. 24: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Christmas Eve service-"Magi" scene

Dec. 26,27: Northern Virginia: visiting with family for Christmas

Jan. 4: Concordville, PA: (a.m.) Camp directors' meeting

Jan. 4: Flemmington, NJ: (p.m.) Caleb Guertin Band concert: drummer

Jan. 8: Hopewell Christian Fellowship, Elverson, PA: camp board mtg.//Network pastors' mtg.

Jan. 16-19: Merritt Island, FL: Michael & his sister visiting his parents

NEWS&NEEDS: a car for our very gifted son in law, who has been using my ministry truck to commute in the meantime.

Open doors of ministry//Health for Kim & me//A job for our son Caleb//Closeness to the Lord & to each other//Direction