

Audio sermons: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/caboose-ministriesaudiopodcast/id506049887mt=2>

YouTube Channel for Time Machine Dramas & Sermons: “Michael Robert Guertin”

OCTOBER 2019

“POLAR’ OPPOSITES”



Dear ***Friends & Family,***

[9/12] In the glorious “aftermath” of doing 3 summer camps, one finds that all they want to do is crash for a while, perhaps by staring at a wall & watching the paint dry. Over the course of several weeks you have poured yourself out in every which way. The mental strain is enormous given the huge mountain of administrative & study work involved before you even arrive at your first camp. Your spirit pours itself out to God constantly in prayer as there are so many needs that surface in the rigor of camp ministry. Then you pour out your spirit in preaching, teaching, & orienting staff & campers-not to mention your emotions. Physically, I strive to stay in as good a shape as possible throughout the year. However, even when I’m in the best physical shape possible, by the end of a camp the fatigue hits you hard-very hard-a few days after it ends.



During this “down time”, one wants to “veg”. Kim, on a whim, asked if we could watch ***The Polar Express***—A children’s Christmas movie that came out I believe in 2005. I was a bit

surprised by her request. A Christmas movie in August? But, we *were* just out of camp season, & we did just finish our kids' camp. In the light of these things, I complied. I will admit I grew to hate the movie years ago & virtually vowed never to watch it again. Why? The last time I viewed it I became so deeply grieved & angered at the blatant idolatry of **Santa Claus**. When you immerse yourself in the text of Scripture & the Holy Spirit's presence for any significant amount of time, it's impossible not to become a spiritual bloodhound, zealous to sniff out anything & anyone who competes with Jesus for the affections of the hearts of human souls made in His image [Ps.73:17].

"THE POLAR EXPRESS & THE EPISTLE OF JUDE"



I must admit, however, that my impression of the movie as I watched it just recently drastically changed-especially at the point of the movie where I was most angered & zealous for the glory of our Lord. It was the scene when the Polar Express train finally arrived at the North Pole. There were Christmas elves everywhere, all clad in **red**-a huge throng of them. Each had his or her duty-all were serving Santa. And-all were serving the children of the world under Santa's benign leadership & oversight. The sight of them was overwhelming. The musical score enveloping the whole scene was encompassing & majestic. There was a thrill in the air as this massive throng of loving, adoring, faithful-to-Santa servants "awaited his appearance". They *lived* for *him*. As they anticipated his opening the door to his castle they began to hum in unison one chord. It began to crescendo. The children who "arrived that night" were among the celebrant elves-in the throng-but in a certain sense more important than them. And the elves knew it. The children were Santa's guests of honor-the *believing* children, that is. When Santa finally opened the door the elves went nuts. They roared & cheered ecstatically. The children among them were straining their necks to see the most famous person on the scene. When one of the kids would spot Santa, they would exclaim out loud, "I see him! I see him! There he is!". O God. After having been in the epistle of Jude all of this summer, how could I not make the connection with Jude citing the non-canonical book of Enoch, "BEHOLD [emphasis mine], the Lord comes with ten thousand of His holy ones...". Watching the attitude, behavior, & reverential awe of this massive throng of elves exuded towards Santa, how could I not see the connection with Jesus & His angels? I felt as if I'd received an insight audibly & visibly via this

children's movie re: the unswerving loyalty of the Son of God's "winds & flames of fire" toward Him.

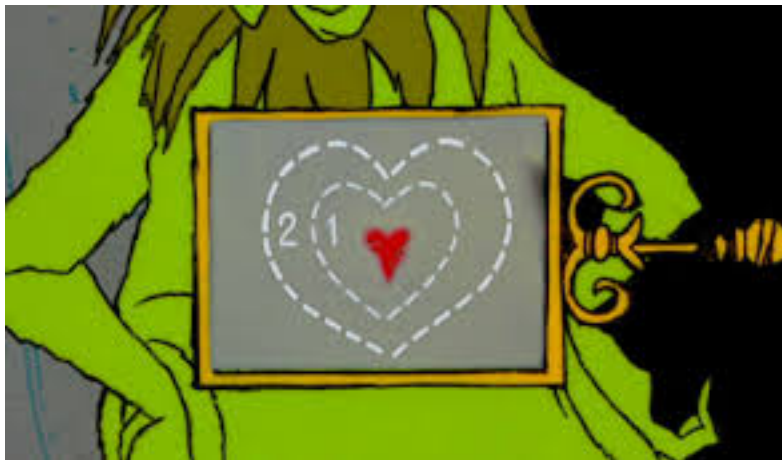


"FACE TO FACE"



What then struck & melted my soul was that in the midst of all of this glorious mayhem at the **North Pole**, Santa, despite being surrounded by a countless number of his roaring, adoring elf-servants, he almost seemed as if not to even notice them as he spoke personally, face to face, with the main child in the story. O God-it was then that I saw in a whole new light like I had never seen before, this is *exactly* what the Eternal Son of God is going to do with each of us-His children & servants, on that glorious Day of the Lord that Jude speaks of! Just think of it, Beloved-each one of us is going to have our turn staring into the face & looking right into the eyes of Jesus Christ Himself! It makes me want to right now get on my face! It is beyond comprehension-& yet, again, I felt as if I perceived it just a little more clearly watching this movie made for...children. Jesus.

“DAVID & JONATHAN-& THE GRINCH”



[9/14] David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake? [II Sam.9:1] In the light of my upcoming {at the time of this writing} Sunday a.m. service at a dear brother & sister's church in PA, I felt moved to convey the following which once again I am experiencing even now as I type. There is a phenomenon that I have observed occur in my own heart for many, many years, both in the sphere of personal friendships & in children & camp ministry. In a past newsletter, I wrote about how I received the nickname "Grinch" from a high school football coach because of my love for children's Christmas specials, both then & now. 😊 There is a scene near the end of that animated Christmas special where the Grinch's heart "grew 3 sizes that day". In a very real sense, that is what occurs when I am around children, but especially when I'm around children of my dear friends. This is what surely happened to David's heart when he first met Mephibosheth, David's dear friend Jonathan's son. David's love for Jonathan was greater than that of the love of women [II Sam.1:26] & David loved him as he loved himself. When Jonathan was gone, David's compassion & love swelled for Jonathan's son Mephibosheth. This is what happens to me as well in the presence of the

children of these close friends of mine. I love them as if they were my own. I can't explain it fully, but it is very real. It has recently happened exponentially in a sense in the context of this past August's *Hopewell Network Kids camp at Tel Hai Camp*. I had so many children of former campers attend I could not count them all! When I saw their children my heart "grew 3 sizes" & swelled with love & joy. I can think of few honors lavished on me than this-that I would be entrusted with the children of children once entrusted to me by *their* parents. This is one of the many benefits of staying with a ministry long-term. Prior to my tenure with Hopewell camps [this summer was my 29th year] my average time in a children's pastorate [I did 4 altogether] was approximately 3 years. To add to this joyous blessing I had the privilege of having by my side as one of our camp "gophers" [just like it sounds-they "gopher" this & "gopher" that whenever we need them] the son of a former camper-I met her when she was 13! And this promising young man feels called to the ministry-hence, I felt to have him deliver one of the early a.m. staff devotions to give him some experience. He did very well. It's an honor beyond description to have the opportunity to love on & pour into young people such as this. I pray it continues for years to come. Speaking of pouring into young ones, once again, I had a number of former "little boys & girls" in kids church with me decades ago by my side helping me to minister to the next generation of the young. Words cannot describe this blessing, Beloved.

"EVA ELIZABETH GUERTIN-FROM LIZ'S WOMB TO JESUS' ARMS"



Our son Caleb & daughter-in-law Elizabeth were due to have their 3rd child in the middle of this month. However, 5 weeks before "*Lil' Eva*" was due to arrive, our all-wise & loving Savior chose to take her straight to Him from Elizabeth's womb. Yes-all of us were stunned & crushed. We're human. Our Lord even encourages us to grieve & for His people to grieve with us. And yet-soon after Kim & I were awakened in the middle of the night by our youngest son Caleb's phone call that Eva's heart had stopped beating, I was trying to "come to" & collect my thoughts & "find God" in the midst of this startling news, I found comfort from thoughts I had never had before. Eva went from the warmth, comfort, security, nurture, & loving environment of Elizabeth's womb straight to the arms of Jesus. Even though she wasn't afforded the blessing of life in this world, in a very real way she may have been even more blessed by being spared from it! Eva was spared from actual sin, from the accompanying feelings of guilt, shame, condemnation & fear that always come with it. She was spared from ever having displeased the Lord-ever. Eva was also spared from the sins of other men-their criticism, harshness, rejection, mean-spiritedness, etc. She will never know physical malady-pain, sickness, disease, aging of the body & all that comes with it, vis, depression, anxiety, despair, etc. She most likely met her

angel too, who always beholds the face of God the Father [Mt. 18:10]. She surely met my father-in-law, Al Deck, who arrived Home a little over two years ago. Caleb & Elizabeth named her “Eva”, a form of Eve, who was the mother of all the living, because of the new life in her.

ELLIOT’S REQUEST



Several weeks ago Kim asked our grandson **Elliot** [that is him on the right in my Time Machine with two of his cousins] who is Eva’s oldest brother, if the new baby was going to be a boy or a girl? Elliot quickly responded, “A girl.”. Kim asked him how he knew, to which he retorted: “Because I asked.” Out of the mouth of babes.

"BABY TALK?"



Speaking of “babes”, on a ministry trip this past weekend where I had planned for weeks to preach my ***Gospel Elaborated*** message [I virtually always preach this message when it’s my first time with a group or church], I learned the day before that all ages would be present in the service. And, I mean, *all* ages. I’ve ministered to children for decades. It’s a delight of life. However, this message had some severe & hard-hitting biblical truths in it that must be preached in order for grace to be once again seen as “amazing”. This includes man’s horrid depravity, the exacting nature of God’s Law, & the severe eternal punishment one incurs if they die in their sin. Kim & I spent over 3 hours setting up the day before. After the Time Machine, object lesson tables, & other props were in place, we proceeded to walk up & down among the chairs, laying hands on each one, praying for the person who would be sitting in it the next day. I had much fear in my heart as we did so, re: the ages of the children who would be there, & some other things I was dealing with. Once again, I heaved my cares onto the Son of Man, the Master Communicator, Who always powerfully & effectively communicated God’s truth to massive crowds with all ages present. I did “delete” some object lessons I typically use for older ages & used “less-intense ones”, shall we say. Also, I had not preached since the Sunday after Kids camp in late August. Hence, God’s fire from His Word that I had been storing up for weeks was all bottled up within me. Well, when the service began the next morning, I sensed, once again, His Spirit’s precious enabling & flow well up from within me. Kim told me later I had preached an hour, which also included the Time Machine drama. Only one infant was taken out of the service. The rest were riveted on the front row. God gave me what I always long for whenever I preach: a camp-like service. His presence was once again deep, thick, rich, & sweet in the service as the audience responded to His Word. What was especially precious re: this church was that the pastor & his wife both counseled at camp for me years ago. They now have 5 children, 4 of which attended camp this past summer! And the pastor’s wife first started coming to camp with me when she was 11! She texted me the following after Kim & I arrived home: **“So humbled that both you and Kim came to be with us even over the significance of this weekend while your family was grieving. I have been praying for months over our children and families coming to know the Lord and for salvations. The message for us today was wonderful.”**

After the service during the potluck dinner, one of the men in the church came up to me & said he was put in awe, wonder, & adoration of God via the message. This is what I ache & long for every time I preach. This also confirmed what I told the church before I started preaching. “If you leave the service before the message is done, you’ll be depressed for 6 months” [via the depravity of man/condemnation of God section], “but, if you stay to the end, I guarantee you’ll love Jesus more” [via the elaborate grace that was poured out upon God’s people despite their horrific depravity]. I then immediately proceeded to tell them, “And it has nothing to do with me. Anyone could preach these same texts & the result would be the same. The power is not in the messenger-it’s in the Text.” I couldn’t have asked for more. All praise goes to our gracious, enabling Lord.

“KEEP ON TRUCKING? I HOPE SO!”



My ministry vehicle is a **2000 Nissan Frontier** which has served me well & has taken me & my ministry equipment many miles since I acquired it in 2006. It soon will be 20 years old. I have traveled to many different states & ministry locations for the Lord in it. My mechanic, who is a friend & brother in the Lord & who has worked on vehicles for over 50 years recently told me: “Your truck needs a magic wand-and I don’t have one.” During camps this past summer the truck would lose power while trying to climb hills or trying to accelerate. Since then I had two of my four catalytic converters removed [this was legal as they were CA-required, not DE] & also a new distributor installed. This totaled about \$400 altogether. These repairs did help some. However, coming home with a full load yesterday from this ministry trip described above, I could feel it once again losing power, much like it did before. If you happen to know of or learn of a great deal on a 4-door, 2-wheel drive truck, please let me know. I trust our Lord has many more miles for me to go before my itinerant work for Him is done. May it be so. 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]: "One day, God will pull back the curtain of His mystery & show the wonders of His sovereignty."



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

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

Sept. 18: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: Tabernacle of David: worship leader

Sept. 26: All Saints Cemetery/Ogletown Baptist Church, Newark, DE: "Eva" Elizabeth Guertin

funeral/internment

Oct. 1: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg.

Oct. 11-13: Camp Haluwasa, Hammonton, NJ: Converge Church "Boot Camp" youth retreat

Oct. 16: New Covenant Community Church, Audubon, NJ: Elim area pastors' mtg.

Oct. 20: Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, Colora, MD: Sun. a.m. family service

Oct. 24: Chase Center, Wilmington, DE: Urban Promise Children's presentation: "Time Machine

Operator"

Oct. 31: home: handing out candy & gospel tracts to Trick O' Treaters 😊

Oct. 16,23,24: my bd, our 42nd anniversary, & Kim's bd, respectively



*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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