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YouTube Channel [for dramas, sermons, & puppet shows for kids]: “Michael Robert Guertin”

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June 2024

“A BLAST WITH THE BAPTISTS !”

Dear Friends & Family,



[5/13] Kim & I headed to **Winslow Baptist Church** in South Jersey early yesterday morning. [Kim comes from Southern Baptist background; I from Catholic]. I was asked to minister the Word of God to this precious church family as their pastor of 13 years had recently moved on to another Christian parachurch ministry. It was an interracial church, but primarily comprised of blacks. It has been a personal heart’s desire of mine for many years to minister more in the African American community, especially in light of the horrific racial tension that has been tearing the Church & the country apart now for the past several years. This dream came true yesterday. The head deacon who is for now leading the church & I connected over the phone the week before & immediately our spirits resonated with each other & connected around discussion of the message I planned to give. When I apologized to this brother for going on so long about the greatness & goodness of God’s grace in my explanation, he told me to keep going. “This is good. I need this”, et al. It probably took Kim & me about an hour to setup all of my object lessons.

“BLACK ‘BLACK’ ANGELS”



Most people in America are familiar with the U.S. Navy crack stunt pilot team called the “Blue Angels”. To our surprise, Kim & I ran into the *Black* Angels at this church! After setup, I proceeded to do what I always try to do when possible before I preach in a given place. I go among the aisles or pews & lay my hand on each one, praying for the person who will sit there during the service. Well, while doing so the worship team began rehearsing. The 3 lady singers were all black, & 2 of the 3 were “Black-black”! How so? They were not only sisters-in-the-Lord but biological sisters & their last name was “Black”! 😊 Hence this article’s title. 😊 When they started to sing, the presence of the Holy Spirit quickly filled the room. I began to weep as I walked among the chairs praying & raising my hands. And this was only their rehearsal! Needless to say, the Lord’s presence was rich & sweet during the worship-in-song portion of the service.

“RESONATING WITH WRATH”



In presenting the gospel in very great detail to this group of people, when I got to the portion of the gospel that involves the wrath of God, people in the audience gave audible expression of approval--approval, i.e., of the justice of it & deep appreciation when they realized the full, severe, & unrelenting wrath of God against the sins of His people were laid on their Glorious Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who can fathom the biblical truth that not only did the Father lay the sins of His people upon His Beloved Son, but that it also *pleased Him to do so* [Isa.53:10]. The wrath of God is a very rare topic of discussion, much less exposition from American pulpits these days, nor has it been for several decades. When preachers shy away from this heavy but *glorious* doctrine, they rob God of His glory. Yes-His wrath is one of the many multi-faceted attributes of the panoply of His glory. Remove the wrath of God from preaching, & you remove His holiness & justice from which it proceeds. You also remove the stage & backdrop upon which His even more glorious & unfathomable mercy showcases upon. Mercy is magnified exponentially more in the setting *where needed most*. “In wrath, remember mercy.” [Hab.3:2].

“BALLS & STICKS”



[5/29] I recently was invited by a neighborhood friend, along with two other guys on our street, to be his guest at a **Philadelphia Phillies** game. At present, the Phillies are the “hottest” team in MLB. I didn’t know that. I also didn’t know who their opponent was for the evening. It turned out, they were playing the former *World Series Champions* on this evening, the **Texas Rangers**. My friend has invited me on a number of occasions, more than one of which I couldn’t attend due to the dates always conflicting with my summer camp season. This is the 3rd time I was able to attend. My neighbor, a former elementary school teacher for more than 30 years, treated the 3 of us *royally*. How so? I want to recollect years ago when I first went with him the tickets were \$150 (?) each. Each time I’ve gone, the ticket included a voucher for a very nice meal, not to mention, credit for concessions. While discussing the exorbitant amount of money professional baseball players make, I put my hand on my neighbor’s shoulder & said, “Hey bud? You should be paid so much more than these baseball players.” He looked at me wondering what I meant. I further explained, “*You* are pouring into children, the next generation. *They* are hitting balls with sticks.” He quickly pondered the thought, smiled, & agreed. Speaking of school teachers, a sister-in-the-Lord & friend of mine happened to be watching the game on TV. She spotted me & sent me a screenshot asking, “Are you 3 rows up on the left with a red shirt on?”. 😊 What is so funny about this is that the last time I attended a game courtesy of my neighbor 6 years ago, I had a former Bible School colleague of our daughter do the same! He spotted me too! And I

hadn't seen him in *many years!* How was this possible? These \$150 seats weren't \$150 for nothing! We were right behind home plate!

"RICH TOWARDS GOD?"



As was the case the last time I attended, given the expensive seats we were in, I noticed once again a very distinguished-looking man. He was well groomed & finely dressed with bronzed skin & long white hair flowing to the back of his head. You can't help but notice him. My neighbor told me 6 years ago that this gentleman was a very rich & powerful celebrity figure in Philadelphia. I just glanced at him for a few seconds, as his appearance stood out among the crowd. Even if I had not known this information about him via my neighbor, I would have still been impressed by his appearance. He gave off the air of "having it all", the epitome of the "good life". And yet, the way I'm wired, I could not help but think, *is this* the best of the "good life"? Sitting in prime seats in one of **MLB's** most amazing stadiums watching men hit balls with sticks? Even if this gentleman did other things, & I'm sure he did, vis travel, cruises, parties, TV interviews, etc., is this the pinnacle for him? It all seemed so empty to me. I even began to feel sorry for him-to even ache for his soul. The 17th theologian **Matthew Henry** said something to the effect of, "**Whatever the reason is that you say 'No' to the gospel, that is the price the devil paid for your soul.**" Oh God. Oh God. Don't get me wrong, dear readers. Perhaps this man *is* a Christian-I truly wish so! Our Lord Jesus reiterated in no uncertain terms how impossible it

was for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. And yet, of course, the Lord over the millennia has drawn such people unto Himself, since with God, all things are possible. May it be so.

“MY ‘TAKE-AWAY”



While lying in bed with Kim that night musing on the evening, I told her, “If you take away the hype, take away the non-stop music & sound effects, if you take away the massive LED signs & scoreboards, if you take away the team mascot & the **41,000** cheering rabid Philly sports’ fans, all you have is a bunch of men hitting balls with sticks. That’s it. That’s it. The devil is the master of turning mundane things into the spectacular in order to keep human beings “a-mused” (“a”, a prefix of negation, + “muse”-to think, ponder). He strives to keep humans’ minds off of “things eternal”, the brevity of life, death, & most of all, The Lord of Hosts Himself. His non-stop effort day & night is to magnify & exalt & thrust into people’s consciousness *anyone or anything* he can to substitute idols in the hearts & minds of human beings other than the One True God. To get humans to be loyal to them to the end, he must make celebrities, athletes, political leaders, etc., *appear* “larger than life”. And, he’s very good at it. We brag about (“witness for”) these “idols” stats, W-L records, albums, achievements, Oscars, Emmys, etc. We are defensive for them. We argue whose idol is best, even to the point at times of fighting over them [I remember years ago hearing of fans who killed each other in a soccer stadium in Europe-over a soccer game!]. We “wear their t-shirts”. And, once again, when we “take away” all of the hype, glitter, fluff, & flimsy scaffolding that surrounds them, we’re left, again, with people hitting balls with sticks, hitting little balls into holes in the ground, running up & down a field with a piece of leather, people/celebrities acting like another person who they are not in real life, musicians, entertainers singing about subjects that are almost all “horizontal”, of the earth, earthy, etc., in nature.

“TEARS IN MY HELMET?”



Yes, friends. I confess. I too was caught up in the moment. Being wired on the emotional side, it doesn't take much to make me cry! I remember while playing high school football, again, in South Jersey, of being asked to suit up for a varsity game even though at the time I was a sophomore. I was the captain of the JV defense. The varsity coach also asked the captain of our JV offense to do the same. We both got to play, he at running back & I at left offensive guard (my position I played for years on offense). While I was in the game, we scored. I remember vividly running down the middle of the field *crying* when we did so. The crowds, the thrill of the moment, that I was a part of it, etc., all played into this emotional ecstasy. I'm so glad I had my helmet on so the crowds didn't see this JV middle linebacker & captain of the defense crying! Hence, at the **Phillies** game I stood up & cheered several times. I took pictures & videos & posted them wanting to show the world where I was. I whistled a number of times. I wore my **red** pullover shirt in honor of the Phillies' official team color. It was hard not to, as I grew up in the Delaware Valley, in South Jersey. Even today, I can recount most of the Phillies' starting team of the 1960's & their jersey numbers! And yet, & yet, when the "hype-dust" settles, *one is left with vanity that has absolutely nothing to do with eternity.*

"GOD'S 'STADIUM'"



The regular seating capacity of **Citizens Bank Park**, home of the **Phillies**, is **43,651**. I had heard the night of this game attendance was roughly **41,000**. Perhaps I can count on one hand (2 at the most!) the number of times in my life I have been among so many people at one time. In the midst of the mayhem & revelry, I just sat there & scanned the giant crowds. My heart inside began crying out, "Oh God, Oh God, there are *so many* of them, Lord-so many. Old & young. Oh dear God. And, this massive crowd is not even a *molecule* of the size of the throng that will stand before You on *Judgment Day*." "And I saw the dead, both great & small, standing before the Throne." (Rev.20:12). It will be one person at a time, among the billions to give an account of their lives. Oh Lord, that will take so much time! Please forgive me, my Lord, for the magnitude of my ignorance about such things, knowing, by then, we will all be in *eternity*, where time is not measured & is of no concern, except for the bliss of the redeemed & the horror of the wicked. Oh Father, Oh Father, I cannot take in such great thoughts, Lord. My head explodes. Every single individual in this massive-to-me, *microscopic-to-God* stadium, will be "gathered again" for what one scholar of antiquity called, "**The Great Assize**". This time, the "event" is in "**God's Stadium**", before the Lord Jesus' glorious throne. This pondering, Beloved, is one that overwhelms the mind & plumbs the soul into depths of the fear of the Lord. Thoughts like these, based on the declarations of the **Sacred Text**, sober the spirit, power-wash the mind, swell the heart, & overcome the soul. "...who may abide The Day of His coming? And,

who may stand when He appears?" (Mal.3:2). It is no wonder, in the light of these things to come, that the Holy Spirit, to comfort God's people in this matter, said through the Apostle Peter, "...the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His Coming."

As I enter into my 42nd year of camp work/ministry, in tending to the souls of the young, I pray that same Holy Spirit will keep these soul-stirring & vision-imparting truths ever before my mind-& yours. May it be so.

Yours for Jesus,

Michael



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 Devil covets pulpits. If he gets the pulpits he gets the people. He would much rather have a seminary than a brothel."



Caboose! On The Loose!

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

May 12: Winslow Baptist Church, Sicklerville, NJ: Sun a.m. service

May 17: Morgantown, PA; Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: hsc directors' mtgs.

May 26: Winslow Baptist Church, Sicklerville, NJ: Sun. a.m. service

May 29: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: hsc directors' prayer meeting

May 31-June 1: Mount Pleasant, SC: Nephew's wedding

June 4: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg.//Network pastors' mtg.

June 12: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: hsc directors' pray/plan meetings

June 19: Converge Church, Moorestown, NJ: Elim area pastors' mtg.

June 22-28: Tel Hai Camp, Honey Brook, PA: hsc Sr Hi camp: pastoral director



*Michael is an ordained [Elim Fellowship](#) itinerant Stateside missionary & *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 this link to give directly: <https://elimfellowship.org/missionary/michael-guertin-guertin> Thank you!

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