



NightLight

A NEWSLETTER OF McLEAN MINISTRIES

"take heed....as to a light that shines in a dark place." II Peter 1:19

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Dear Friends,

Moses endured by seeing Him who is invisible...our outward man is perishing, but the inward man is renewed day by day...while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen...for the visible things are temporary, but the invisible things are eternal.


Hebrews 11:27; II Corinthians 4:16,18



Blaise Pascal is famous as a mathematician and scientist, but also as a Christian apologist. Yet he never found arguing over the gospel to be an effective means of changing minds. He said it is better to paint a portrait of reality which makes your opponent *wish* your message to be true, rather than to seek to *prove* it by argument. Make them hungry, not angry. Appeal to the heart, not the head. (The heart always wins over the head.)

This I believe is the reason there is a satanic hatred for Christmas. The **real** Christmas season will make people hungry. It is certainly true that satan might seem to be allied with the commercial orgy in which gluttony, avarice, excess, and materialism abounds. Yet in spite of that, demonic forces are working overtime to wipe out the season. Why? Because the potential for this season to *awaken longing* in the human soul is far more hurtful to hell's purposes than debauchery of the season is helpful. What happens when the last package is opened and the stack of unneeded stuff is laid aside once again? What happens when the anticipations of childlike hopes have been temporarily satisfied, or more often never satisfied? Where does the hungry, disappointed heart turn? Food? Drink? A ball game, or party? Sex? Drugs? Shopping? The list goes on and on. And yet...





What if in the midst of the soul's relapsed disappointment, the Real Reason for the season slips in between the discarded wrapping paper? What if a passing phrase from an anointed Christmas carol dances through your mind? What if a poignant scene from that Christmas movie you love dances before your eyes? Maybe a line from a Christmas card, or a fragment of that Christmas sermon, or one of a million other seeds of goodness? What if that one thing germinates inside your imagination? Then, quietly breaking through its tiny penetration, the invisible Real comes present to your longing heart? What if the let down is just sad enough for the empty worldly realism of material death inside to respond to The Deep Magic? The danger of such a possibility for hell's army is enough to sound the fire alarm in hell to fight off any such dangers with all its resources. "Don't let them even think of Christmas! It has that dangerous *word* in it. Make it a winter festival. Call it the shopping season. Remember our first lady, the White Witch. Make it always winter but never Christmas."

Many of my dear Jewish roots associates make a good argument for the gentile church to lay aside its adaptation of 'pagan' replacements for the Jewish feasts. I have made the same arguments to some degree. We are missing great treasure by not understanding the rich imagery and message of our Jewish roots. And Tabernacles has yet to be fulfilled, so we should certainly be looking there. But in spite of all that, valid as it may be, I cannot help but remember this and share it with you.

As a boy growing up in the comparatively spiritual desert of southwest Mississippi, I easily recall the hunger pangs I experienced now and then, seemingly from out of nowhere. I was hungry for a Purity, a Love, a Meaning I could not find and knew I was meant for. My eyes still get wet when I recall how the Holy Spirit took full advantage of any moment Christmas offered Him. He would lovingly lay hold of its various sounds and images, no matter how hokey or pedantic, and still would bless them in order to turn my heart. First to the Music, then to the Manger, and finally, to the Majesty of Messiah Himself.

Any of the White Witch's crowd who might have been watching me then, would not have heard the Music or seen the Wonder or felt the Magic or been ravished by the Majesty. They would have looked down the nighttime streets of our small town, and only seen bulbous red and green lights reflected off the wet December pavement. They would have looked up at the fifteen foot tall Christmas pine tree at the head of Main Street, and not seen the wonder beyond its evergreen tip. The fat old jolly mechanical Santa Claus that stood laughing in the hardware store window, would

not have evoked any sense of the transcendent for them. They would not have heard the sounds of angels' wings or Love calling them by name. If they shivered, it was from the intrusion of winter chill rather than from an inner trembling of holy awe. But I heard. I saw. I was shaking, and not from cold air.

I learned early how NOT to be disappointed by any seeming failure of the hoped-for joys of the season. God gave me Himself for Christmas. So I never lose sight of what is really going on every year at this time. I *can* see. I *can* hear. I *can* taste. And that's why I am never disappointed when the big day has come and gone. The Wonder never dims. The Music never fades. The Magic never ends. Love shines down on each one of us 365 days of the year from our true Father Christmas by way of the Cross. Look beyond the tip of the tree this year, and see Him who is invisible. The Best is yet to be!



Glorious now behold Him arise
King and God and Sacrifice
Alleluia, Alleluia!





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Merry Christmas,
Clay & Mary



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