

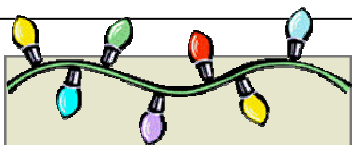


NightLight

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...



It would be so nice to simply write you a happy Christmas Letter. I suppose in all wartime holiday seasons, both writers and readers would desire a break from the stresses of their battles. And it is not a departure from reality for us to take time to focus on the full meaning of what this season celebrates. For what it celebrates is the very core reason for our current battle. So let us look to the words of what has become a Christmas carol. But take note that when it was written, it was not as a Christmas carol at all. It was an anthem celebrating the close of the age at the second coming. ***Joy to the world, the Lord is come, let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room and heaven and nature sing... No more let sin and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground. He comes to make His blessings known, far as the curse is found... He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove, the glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love.***

Though we are not in the final throes of the climax of history, we are certainly no longer in normal times. We are well into the birth pangs that lead into those final moments of this age. So as we celebrate this holy season, may we keep the long-term picture in mind. Maybe these birth pangs can help deliver us from the glitz of what the holidays have become. May we think far more deeply about the first coming as connected to the second coming. Let us embrace the truth that our celebration of Christmas is only complete to the degree that we also embrace the full meaning of His first coming. His love empowers us to put away sin by His Cross and Resurrection. May we grow in love as we lay our lives down for others up to His second coming. May we keep our eyes on Him. For soon, He who has come, will come again.

Until that final event, we have a lot to do. I know the partners of this ministry do not need to be reminded that we are at war, and have been for as long as you have been a part of the *Nightlight* family. I am so thankful that you who have stood by us in this work, know the true nature of the battles we have been fighting over the years. We have faced the slow progressive infiltration of demonic lies into every strata of our culture. These include our educational system, our government and social structures, our arts and entertainment, and our morality codes for sexuality and family life. And let us not forget the latest target. It has ruined even our last bastion of freedom from cultural rot: our sports! There seems to be no segment of life that is not being polluted by the injection of demonic evil. This evil is mindful, strategic, willful, and purposeful. It means to destroy freedom so that the life and love of a free people cannot prosper. Yet this evil cannot destroy what God has established. It shall not suppress what God has anointed. The current pressures have only served to awaken a sleeping giant: the true church. The people of God are more awake, more prayerful, and more willing to embrace hardship than has ever been true in my lifetime. By God's grace, we will not only celebrate the coming of our King the first time. We also, empowered by His love, will advance His kingdom the second time, when this conflict will end and His Kingdom will reign forever. **So... MERRY CHRISTMAS! And MARANATHA.**



Stoop down Adore... Come, see, for He is seeking thee.

PROPHECY



We know in part. We prophesy in part. I Corinthians 13:9
Prophecy is for edification, exhortation, and comfort. I Corinthians 14:3
Don't despise prophecy. I Thessalonians 5:20

If it is true that one of the main reasons for the training provided by learning to pray is to teach us how to wisely rule in the midst of our enemies (as we have covered many times in *Nightlight* teaching) then we are in the best possible schoolroom for that just now. When Daniel read in the scroll of Jeremiah that seventy years of exile had been determined for Judah to be in Babylon, and that after that time God would return them to the land, Daniel did not go into a place of passive satisfaction and stop praying. He did just the opposite. He set himself to fast and pray for the fulfillment of that word. And how was that word fulfilled? If you read the story in Haggai, Ezra, and Nehemiah, it was fulfilled by stops and starts, with much conflict, and with only a remnant of Judeans committed to its fulfillment. It didn't just drop out of heaven. There was no sudden transition of reality where one moment they were in captivity and the next they were free. The divine unfolding of events was through the natural human choice-making and action of believing people.

There are many voices speaking prophetically. And many are in direct contradiction to each other. We must be careful not to despise or ignore them, and not to embrace them passively or superstitiously. We are to take in all we hear, and prayerfully discern what we hear. Then, most importantly, we are to pray with our eyes on the Lord and not on specific outcomes. For it is (and I say this carefully) not necessarily the prophecy itself that is the main issue. It is our learning how to pray in the midst of the seeming contradictions. It is in the mix of all this that we are being trained to discern. We are learning to withstand the temptation to become discouraged or angry on one side, or passive and inactive on the other.

Remember when King Joash came to Elisha to ask for direction concerning his coming battle with the Syrians? (See II Kings 13) Elisha prophesied, "You shall smite the Syrians till you have consumed them." But then he gave those strange instructions for him to take the arrows in hand and strike the ground with them. Joash did, but he struck the ground only three times. Elisha became angry and said, "You should have struck the ground five or six times. Then you would have consumed them. Now you shall have ongoing wars with them." I hope you get the point. Prophecy was given. It would come to pass as spoken, but the **human cooperation with God's purpose would determine the full outcome**. No obedience = no fulfillment. A weak response = a weak victory. A full-hearted response = a full completion of the prophecy. How do we know when we are fully engaged? THAT is the difficult, demanding, and necessary question. So let us keep fully awake to prayer, and humbly listen as the Holy Spirit directs. We are being trained to rule by facing the unknown in faith.



Closing Thoughts

My choice of the best Christmas gift ever? A full awakening unto righteousness. For me, for you, and for all. So for now, stay awake; stay strong in the Lord. Keep your eyes on Him. Remain in His love. Keep your sword sharp and drawn. Stay joyfully confident in the fulfillment of the purposes of God, which is the coming of His Kingdom. Celebrate His birth. Yes! But also His life, death and resurrection, and soon return. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.



*Celebrating Jesus,
Clay & Mary*



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