



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,

*"Never attempt to be a profound person....
God became a baby."*

Oswald Chambers



One of the great contributors to mental disintegration in our current electronic entertainment soaked world is the feeling of being alone in a crowd, yet surrounded by noise. Yes of course it has been possible to feel that way throughout history, but we have a deepening sense of it due to our false technological hopes. The more electronic platforms for individual expression there are, the less listened to people seem to be. Facebook grows daily by the thousands, but people feel faceless still. It is becoming another ignored truism that we now have heard so often that we agree with it while we reject it's importance: ***technology is providing more and more means to communicate and it is making us feel less and less met.*** The more we talk, the less we feel heard. The more we connect, the lonelier we become. The panic seen when people have forgotten their phones or misplaced their ipods underscores it. It reminds me of Bilbo Baggins when he suddenly realized he could not find the ring.

What is behind this? The electronic device of choice offers a false promise of always being connected, of always being in touch. "With my phone I am not alone." The fact that it never produces what it promises doesn't disenchant us, but only seems to increase our addiction. Of course, there are certain advantages to having a ready phone in hand when some situation arises that requires immediate communication. I am so happy for my phone when I am away from Mary and the kids or it is raining, I am late, and lost, and have to be at some meeting I can't find. I well remember the days of trying to find a pay phone in such situations. Miserable. Still, as happy as I am to no longer have to get wet making a phone call, I am even more unhappy at the rising tide of 'staying connected' while real sharing communion is disappearing.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

There are vitally important human interactions being transpired via texting. Breaking up relationships, attempting to begin relationships, offering sympathy, sharing joy, offering support, or asking forgiveness. (I wonder if that one is ever done via phone? People who are losing ability to relate rarely even consider asking forgiveness, so..... I don't know about that one.) None of these aspects of human interaction are even for telephone conversations! If we are sentient creatures with a functioning brain and a feeling heart they are certainly not for a text message!!!

Then there are the electronic Christmas greetings. (I hope I don't offend any who may have sent me one of these.) It is so much easier isn't it, to sit down, make up a 'Christmas card' on line and shoot it to another scadillion computers in one flick of the finger. But what exactly has that communicated? That we are thinking of people we want to express our love to, or that we can shoot out a whole bunch of pseudo personal impersonal messages in one finger flick? It might be far more meaningful to write ONE person a real heart felt communication than to send a trillion electronic bleeps on a screen.

It is a natural human tendency to become intoxicated with things that do more faster. And it is more intoxicating when it offers a false sense of communication along with it. But when doing more faster

reaches a saturation point, the water that was refreshing you begins to drown you. We are dying from lack of touch, eye contact, and the humanity expressed in the presence of another. We are no longer being helped by what was at first, helpful. Remember call waiting? It was ok when you needed to take a phone call but didn't want to miss your daughter's call at the same time. But then it became a means of stopping one conversation in order to take another. That is rude. If the person you are talking to is important enough to talk to, why do they become less important because "I have another call coming in?" Then there was the answer machine, voice mail, junk calls, and menu driven answer programs. "Push 1 if you want department X, push 2 if you want department Y.... Push 22 if you want to blow up this phone system..."

Then there is the sheer overload of sound itself. Last month I quoted Screwtape as he celebrated the demonic weapon of NOISE. He seems to have perfected that weapon electronically. And it is at this season of the year that he enhances the regular noise level with a thousand additional accoutrements euphemistically referred to as 'sights and sounds of the season.' Yet the true description of the real Holy Days is found in the lyrics (next page) from the real *sounds of the season*...

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*How silently, how silently the Wondrous Gift is given,
So God imparts to human hearts the blessing of His Heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still the dear Christ enters in...*

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand,
Ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth, Our full homage to demand...*



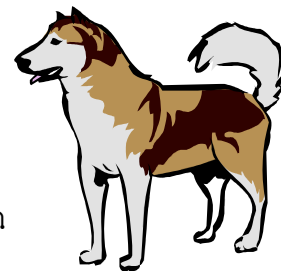
*Silent Night, Holy Night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child, holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Sleep in Heavenly Peace...*



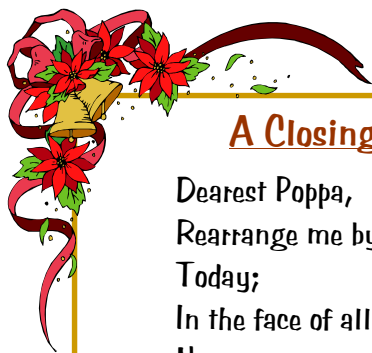
For the sake of all that is precious to you, find a place this season and throughout the coming year to shut out the noise and to listen for the Silent Word. Nothing we do is more important than humbling ourselves in the Presence of the One who, when he wanted to communicate to us clearly, came silently. His presence is the greatest of all presents! 

Hachi: A Dog's Tale

(2009 - Richard Geer)



I had never been around an Akita breed until Tom Wright introduced me to his. After watching that dog and his constant vigilance over the family he loves, I could understand easily how this story of Hachi could happen. Though moved to an American setting from Japan, it is based on a true tale of a man who finds an Akita puppy and raises him. That's the most I can say here without spoiling it for you. But what a picture of the bond between animal and Man—a foretaste of what is to come! Kleenex necessary.



A Closing Prayer

Dearest Poppa,
Rearrange me by Love.
Today;
In the face of all my fears,
Now;
In the midst of all my circumstances.

Come, Dearest Poppa,
Rearrange me by Love.

May I receive your Love
To my ultimate capacity;
May I share your Love
To my fullest ability;
May I become like
Jesus, Your Beloved Son. Selah.

Thank you, Dearest Poppa.
Thank you for revealing Your Love to me
By sending Love in the Flesh.

During this season of giving,
I come to receive
With my gift of surrender;
I come to share
In your glorious kingdom of Love.

Dearest Poppa,
For Your Glory alone,
Rearrange me by Love. Amen.



NOEL



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