



NightLight

A NEWSLETTER OF McLEAN MINISTRIES

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

Volume 273 • February 2016

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Greatest Discerner 1, 2

Book Review 3

Closing Thoughts 4

Dear Friends,



Many years ago Mary and I were leading a conference near London. As I began to speak, I could see a young man sitting in the back dressed in gothic black with long variously colored hair. And he was knitting. I was concerned that he had those sharp needles. I recall my guarded posture towards him. It was all inside me, you understand. I would never be so un-Christian as to openly express my inner concerns either by word or facial expression. I just simply regarded him from a distance as a potential threat. I expected maybe a demonic outburst any moment. My keen discernment was at work like spiritual radar! No, of course I didn't consciously think such thoughts willfully. They just floated up from somewhere in my inner psyche.

When the session was over, the young man introduced himself to me and began to talk with a depth of understanding about everything I had been teaching. Not only were his spiritual insights apparent, but much more was his humility, and sheer love. We have known and loved each other ever since. I don't think I ever divulged to him my initial inner reservations. In fact, I'm sure I did not. It was too embarrassing to have to confess that I was a self-righteous

prejudiced Pharisee. It is a very hard thing to admit to yourself that you have been absolutely wrong about someone!

I took one of my long English countryside walks to deal with the tangle of emotions I felt. At the bottom of those emotions, one was most pronounced: sorrow. I began to see replayed in my memory other times when I had taken that same attitude, and then worse, tried to not only excuse it but even to sanctify it by claiming some sort of discernment was operating. Yes. There is a real thing as discernment. And yes. At all times we need to have our radar working. And there are times when real evil needs to be confronted or exposed. Bust MOST of the time when we are confronted with

someone very different from us, we are simply not walking in love. **Real love is the greatest discerner there is.** When you love first, you are in the Spirit. And in the power of the Spirit you can discern all things.

As we enter deeper into the conflicts of this age, we will be tempted more and more to call fire down on certain people. Yet we will see His face turn to us and hear the Lord Jesus say again, **“You do not know what spirit you are of. I did not come to destroy lives, but to save them.” (Luke 9:54-55)** What the disciples consciously thought was a demonstration of their zeal for righteousness, Jesus knew was nothing more than a desire for revenge. What they consciously thought was helpful, Jesus saw as murderous.

And I AM GUILTY. A few days ago I happened across a TV review of a certain comedy program in which the comic’s entire plot began with making fun of the mother of Jesus as the ‘2000-year-old virgin.’ And it got worse. He went on to mock our Lord in the vilest way he could conjure. I didn’t have to work up the desire to call down fire. It was INSTANTLY there in me. But thankfully Another Who is also in me said, “I’m not angry, so why should you be? I did not come to destroy him, but to save him.” I sat back for a few seconds and regained the posture of peace and discernment we must maintain in the face of growing willful blasphemy. Do we truly think they will stop just because we are offended by them? Doesn’t anyone remember grammar school? Did mean tormenting kids ever stop being mean or tormenting because the object of the cruelty got defensive? That’s exactly what they wanted to see! Evil always wants to ‘begat’ more evil.

So much of this present evil is the Church’s fault. Until we face that and take it to the Cross and then rise up with a willingness to die if needs be to stand for the truth, we will have no power to bring change for good. **When the salt has lost its savor, it is thrown out as good for nothing and men trample it under their feet. (Matthew 5:13)** Who tramples it under foot? Men, comics...

Yes. There are times we must rebuke. But we can only do it when it is breaking our hearts, not when it is heating our furnaces. I will reread this a few times for my own instruction. In fact I may need to tape it up over my computer for future reference. Because yes. There is much stupidity. And we have made little positive change in it all so far. **Only Love wins.** Hopefully I will one day get it.



Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.
Romans 12:21



We stand against evil because we love those bound by it, not because we are 'holier than thou' or hateful of people. We hate EVIL, because we LOVE God. Keeping our minds and hearts clear on that fact will keep our armor in place, our purpose clear, and our actions fruitful for righteousness, and our hearts loving to all.
Speaking of love...



*Happy Valentines
Day!*



Heaven: the Heart's Deepest Longing



by Peter Kreeft

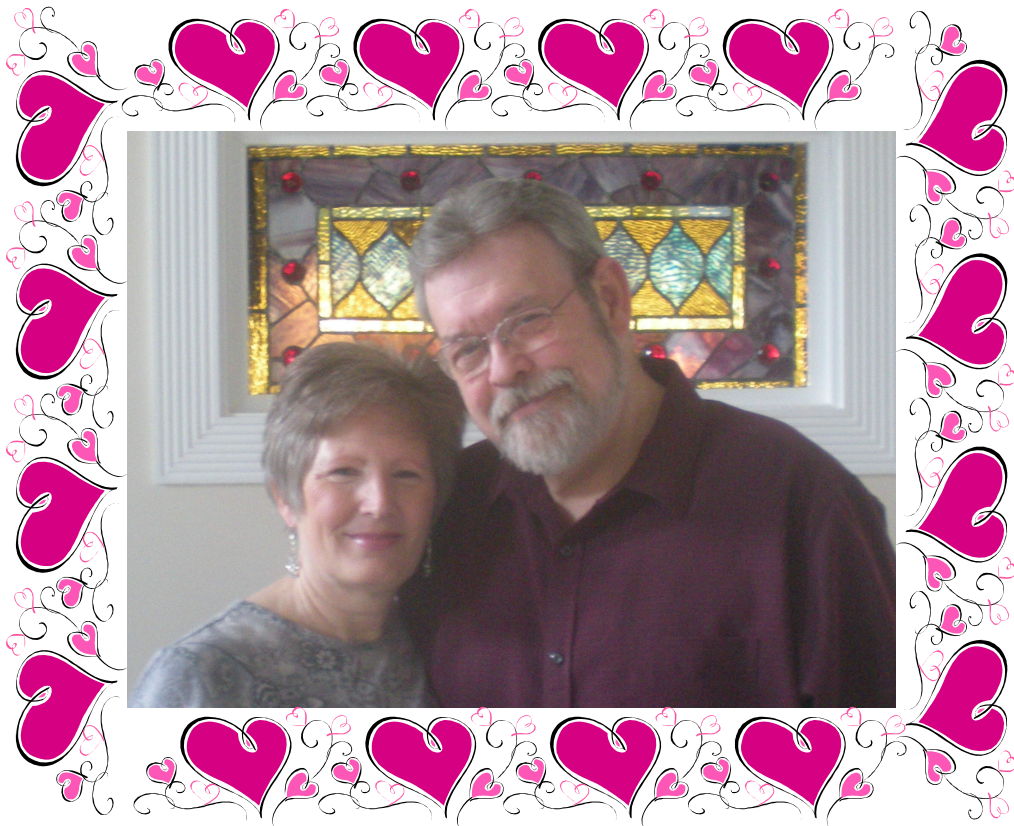


This book has been on my shelf for a decade. I had every intention of reading it when I first got it. And maybe if I had, it would have had the same deep and nourishing affect on me then as it is having now. But if you have the patience to stick with him when he lapses a bit into his philosophy professor mode and get what he is communicating, it will be worth every effort. This book sharpens and clarifies the logic and magic and wonder of what it is in us that is always calling to us to come further up and further in. Why are we never truly happy? Why are we never completely present to the moment? Why do we feel such strange longings more in happy moments than in sad ones? Where is my true place? What comes next? This book will feed the best in you and help enlarge your hunger for heaven, not because you are having a lousy day and want to escape, but because heaven is your true Home.

Some Closing Thoughts...

Why point you to a book on heaven when the recorded message is about occupying earth? Because it is the clear vision of heaven that gives us what we need to occupy earth. I am often sad when I realize I have spent more time in this letter and recording pointing out troubles and issues than I have awakening our holy imagination to the ever increasing wonder and glory of our true destiny and our true Home. It is that vision that will empower you and me to stand, to speak, and if needs be, to die. For we are already dead. And our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our Life shall appear, then we shall appear with Him in glory. So if you then be risen with Him, seek those things which are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your imagination, mind, and affection on things above and not on things of the earth. *(Colossians 3)*

In His Joy, Clay & Mary



McLean Ministries

P.O. Box 2088 • Hickory, North Carolina 28603 • 828.322.5402

Visit our website: www.mcleanministries.org or email us at claymcleanministries@pobox.com