



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,



*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me....
John 10:27*

How many times have I sat with precious people who so want to not miss God's will that they have become paralyzed from doing anything at all? A pastor friend once suggested to me that such thinking about doing the will of God was actually more of a pagan idea than Judeo/Christian. We dare not anger the gods. He did not mean, of course that we are to be indifferent to God's will per se, but that an overweening fear of missing God was not the desire of Yahweh towards us at all.

Dr. Dallas Willard said that when his children were small they lived in a house with a big fenced back yard. There was a swing, a sand box, and a tree house among other things. Dr. Willard said, "I would have been a bit concerned about my children if they came in constantly asking if it was ok if they went from the swing to the sandbox etc. They were in my will as long as they were inside that fence. I would bless whatever they chose to do." The fence is

a symbol here for the relationship. Inside it is the blessing. Certain aspects of life may require more careful discernment. But we should not be trembling with fear over whether it should be the sand box or the swing!

Children who have a close loving bond with their fathers are much freer to be adventurous, to take on life as a benevolent challenge, and to feel assured that they are up to whatever task they may face because they are supported by accepting, affirming affection. They have been welcomed into life by the father who gave it to them. So they don't feel any sense of timidity about moving about inside the perimeters of that life. They see it as part of their father/son or father/daughter enterprise.



But we are still suffering the debilitating after effects of fatherlessness, and that deprivation shows up among far too many church people as a nearly neurotic concern that they may miss God's will. And of course, if they miss it there will be hell to pay, for this exacting God will not tolerate their stupidity. Whatever negative results from their having missed it will only be the just punishment for having been so foolish, deaf, self-willed, or deceived. Then the rebuking self punishing thoughts come, which they unconsciously but automatically conjure for themselves out of their ample supply of their self hating inner vocabulary which they have rehearsed over and over inside their heads in place of the missing words of love, acceptance, and affirmation they should have been given in their formative years. After all, we read in Scripture don't we, that God is a "hard man, reaping where [He] has not sown." (Matthew 25:24)

Is that what Jesus was meaning to communicate in this much misunderstood parable? That God is a taskmaster, demanding that we make capital for him, and when we don't, we will suffer for it? I have heard some dreadful sermons based on that false conception, and even worse scripture twisting for the support of right wing politics. How much bad theology contributes to spiritual deafness? Who wants to hear from a taskmaster? Yet at the same time, this same misconception about God's nature and character generates the very over concern of what will happen to us if we miss His will. So people get

caught between the rock of fearing His voice and the hard place of hearing His voice. They are damned if they do and damned if they don't. But this is all born of their misconceived mental image of God. I meet up with some of the most confused concepts, resulting in all sorts of double and triple minded tail chasing. And often if their chosen path goes wrong, they are certain it is God's punishment because they missed His will.

Not only is this parable NOT teaching us of such a god as the one wrongly portrayed by the wicked and lazy servant, but actually teaches the very opposite, a Father who is hugely extravagant in his gifts! A talent has nothing to do with our talents and how we use them. A talent is a huge weighty amount of GOLD which no one in that or any culture would see in a lifetime. Jesus is making a point about the extravagance of God's gifts, not our talents! It speaks of how wonderfully free He is in His expectations. He goes to a far country and gives them time and freedom to explore their opportunities with what He has given. It is the one who believes that God is a taskmaster, that He is a nose to grindstone bully, and ultimately a thief who takes from those he has no legal right to take from. It is this one the Master calls an evil and lazy servant who ends up in the outer darkness. But sadly it is SO easy for us to believe that this story is actually telling us that God is waiting for the day He can return and make us pay because we missed His will. And even if

this terrible tormenting fear of Him causes us to try to avoid failure by just burying our assignment, in hopes we can just satisfy Him enough to survive the coming examination, even that ends up infuriating Him all the more! Then we get it worse than ever! How many grew up in terribly cruel homes where an alcoholic father could never be satisfied and every attempt to please him became the very infraction that brings his wrath?

Your recorded message is on listening to God. The first thing you must settle is that God loves you. The second is like the first, that He loves you means He wants to both hear from you and speak to you.

The third issue is that what He has to say is good, for His heart is giving and kind. I hope you will hear the invitation and respond with the joy of a child who hears His Abba's voice calling, and not as a rebellious Adam hiding because you heard His voice and hid yourself because you were afraid.

If you would like additional teaching on how to listen to God, check out "A Listening Relationship with God" (6 hours: \$35.00), "Ears to Hear" (6 hours: \$35.00), and other CD sets we offer on prayer. You can find these on our website. Click on Teaching Sets, Drawing Near to God. You may also contact us for more information. ❤️



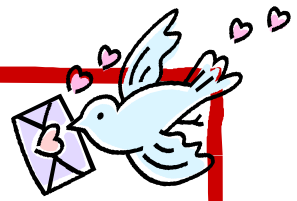
Miami in March

- What:** Miami, FL "Beauty from Ashes" weekend conference
- When:** Friday evening, March 9th, Saturday, all day, March 10th
- Where:** Doral Vineyard Church (305) 482-0147
- Fee:** \$20.00 per person for both days
- Topic:** The Weapons of Wisdom and Peace

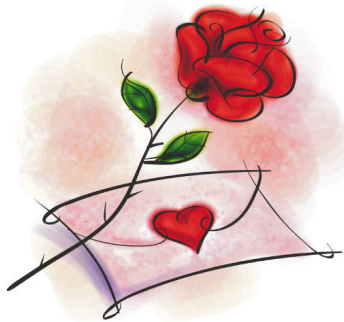


The inheritance of God's people is wisdom in the face of disintegration, and peace in the face of fear. How do we come into that place of wisdom and peace in our everyday lives? Is there really a place to live in the eye of the storm?

Some Closing Thoughts...



"Then they came for the Catholics...." so begins German Lutheran pastor Martin Neimoller's famous lament of how and why Germany was taken over by the Nazis. He goes on to say "but I said nothing because I was not a Catholic..." Well, today friends, I am a Catholic. I stand in full solidarity with the Roman Church which circulated a public response to the onerous Obama administration which has ordered all Catholic institutions to include life destroying practices in their charitable medical services. This order along with many others unknown or ignored by the general public makes a mockery of previous empty promises from this evil administration that earlier stated no such demand would be made on religious institutions. Sadly the Catholic Bishops supported both Obama and his socialist programs only to find too late what they were supporting. The letter, which was to have been read in every Catholic church in the land, states that the Church will not obey these laws which are in the face of God's law. The time is fast coming when we must take our stand on the battle line rather than quietly stay behind the trenches. Today, and as long as it takes, I stand with the Roman Church as long as the Roman Church stands with Christ against the baby killers.



In His Joy,
Clay & Mary



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