



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,



*Cast all your cares on Him,
for He cares for you. I Peter 5:7*

This verse could be amplified like this: *Dump onto Him all your reoccurring anxieties and worries, because He is always watching over you with tender care.*



I remember the first time I read that verse. It was framed on the bedroom wall of a home I was sheltering in during a terrible unexpected upper New York state snow storm in 1971. At seventeen, I was the youngest member of a traveling band on a fundraising tour for Teen Challenge. I was unprepared for being stopped cold, literally, by weather. I was unprepared for the demands of traveling outside my comfort zone. And I was unprepared for the demands of the job. I was unprepared, really, for all of life in general. The blasting cold outside the frosted windowpanes was not as daunting as the cold deadness inside of me. I was not close to any of my band

members. I could not find comfort in them. And as the youngest musician, I wanted to appear independently secure. I found inside me a stalemate. The immovable object of boyhood ego clashed up against the irresistible force of my inner anxiety. The result? I was literally frozen emotionally. I simply existed in a terrible dormancy. Teenage ego, hormonal rage, religious and professional pressures added to the confusion of so many inner contradictions within me. This resulted in a sort of inner inertia. The boredom of being stuck indoors in the storm with nothing to do stirred up all this clash of feelings within me. It was a perfect storm for making me face myself. It was much like many of us have experienced in the current shutdown. Being shut in was forcing me to open up. But rather than open up to God, I began to seek self comforts that would later become strongholds of sin in my life. The healing work would take a lot longer and be more painful as a result of not turning it towards Jesus.

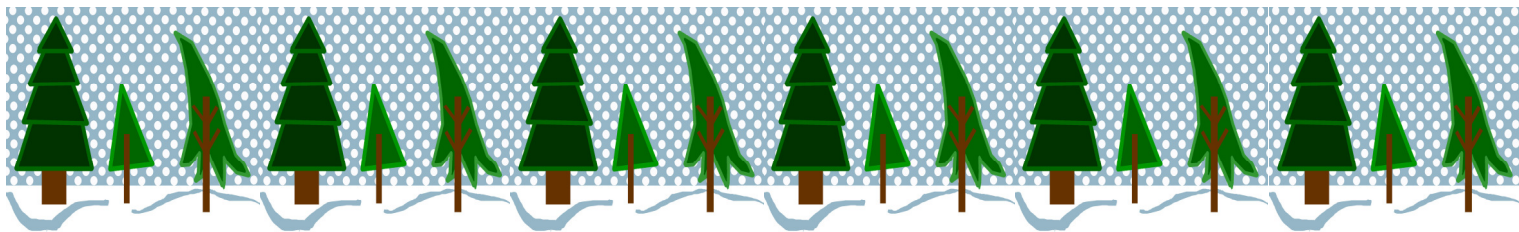
Yet even in that atmosphere, the beautifully crafted lettering of the framed Bible verse which had merely been a bit of religious art on a guestroom wall, lit up for me. *Cast all your care on me, because I care for you.*

I would later read that verse in a hundred translations, soaking up all the various nuances of each Greek word. *Dump it all out to Me, no matter how embarrassing or shaming or stressful, or no matter how often you have to do it, because I moment by moment watch over all that concerns you, and I do that because I deeply personally directly intimately, like a mother for a hungry baby, like a father for an endangered child, like a lover whose heart hurts because His loved one hurts, like all of that, I CARE FOR YOU.*

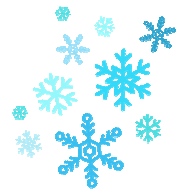
Peter was not writing verses. He was writing a letter to people he loved, just like I am doing now. And when he wrote (a few verses before) about the need to be humble and to resist the temptation to be self-aggrandizing, I bet he was not thinking that he needed to do a little bit here on the virtue of humility. No. I think he was remembering something very personal from his past. Like probably, how the One he truly thought he loved the most in the world had to make him face his own falseness and pride. Peter had thought that pride was courage. He had thought that egotism was faithfulness. His great need was to see clearly the false view of himself. And how grace alone would carry him through the agony of that self-discovery. His heartfelt declaration that he would never fail Jesus was revealed to be false. His true behavior under pressure proved him to be a self-deceived failure. And even worse than a failure. Peter not only failed to be what he thought he was, but proved to be way worse than he ever dreamed he would be! His highest became his lowest. And then fell even lower! That's what was behind his words about humility. Peter was not just sermonizing.

And when he wrote *Cast all your cares on Him, for He cares for you*, it was from personal experience. He was remembering the terrible torture of unavoidable self-disclosure, the claw-in-his-brain recollection of events that led to a revelation of himself that resulted in weeping so bitter that his tears felt like burning acid as they poured down his face. Now fully forgiven, empowered to heal and help others, he no longer suffered under the shame of the event, but he is still able to remember how it felt. And nothing and no one could help him, no one but One. And that One did heal and help him, but only when his pain and shame brought him to the very end of his idealism, with no one to turn to but Jesus. So that is what must have been behind those words: *Cast ALL your cares on Him, for He cares (watchfully and lovingly) for you.*

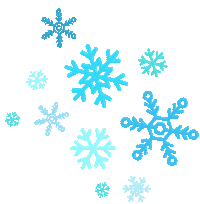
In that room staring out the window at that blizzard, I was afraid of my thawing frozen feelings. I thought I knew myself. I was wrong. I did not. I was being invited into the beginning of the ongoing journey to learn just how weak, failing, mixed up, and unreal I was. It was not to accuse me, but to heal me. I would return to this initial memory many times in the years to come. For many times I was brought, layer by layer, to face myself. My self-discoveries often brought hot tears that burned like acid down my own cheeks. And I could only turn to One. And He was there. He will be there for you also.



Trust Him...



I am standing in absolute stillness,
silent before the One I love,
waiting as long as it takes for Him to rescue me.
Only God is my Savior, and He will not fail me.
For He alone is my safe place.
His wrap-around presence always protects me
as my champion defender.
There's no risk of failure with God!
So why would I let worry paralyze me,
even when troubles multiply around me?
God's glory is all around me!
His wrap-around presence is all I need,
for the Lord is my Savior, my hero,
and my life-giving strength.
Join me, everyone!
Trust only in God every moment!
Tell Him all your troubles
and pour out your heart-longings to Him.
Believe me when I tell you –
He will help you!



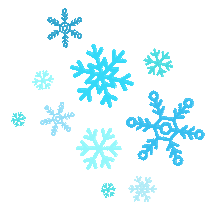
Psalm 62:5-8 The Passion Translation

Closing Thoughts...



By now many of you will have learned the painful disclosure concerning the secret immoral activities of Ravi Zacharias. Though Ravi and I never met face to face, we had so much in common in our aims and audiences, and I owe him a great debt on many levels. His recent death was a great source of sorrow at our house, but not nearly as sorrowful as the disclosure that Ravi was carrying a shameful sexual secret. Only God and those closest to him know how he was or was not dealing with that secret. Let me say for now only this. Notoriety is a phenomenon of our current technology. It can raise people to the forefront who are not capable (and I don't think any of us are) of carrying such notoriety. Ravi's moral failure is a sad reality, but it does not diminish the truth of the gospel one bit-only the integrity of the man who was such a gifted messenger of that gospel. Keep your eyes on the One Man who fully manifests Reality in Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Him, Clay & Mary



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