



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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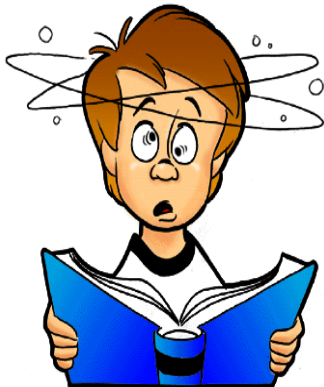
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Dear Friends,

Of the making of many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

Ecclesiastes 12:12



There has never been so much information so readily accessible in all of history. Folks sitting together in a restaurant discussing anything from sports to esoteric philosophy can bring up vast amounts of stuff on their handheld computer/phone! The Amazon book list is well-named because, like the longest river in the world, it carries everything imaginable and some things unimaginable. Trying to read everything just in your own field of interest is like trying to drink the Amazon. Chasing different bible translations down, digging into the details of linguistic minutia, studying different commentary interpretations, checking out the Greek and Hebrew, and considering a hundred different traditions all claiming to have the truth can do exactly what the verse cited above warns it can do:

wear you totally out! And worse than that, it can jade you against reading altogether.

Paul warned that *knowledge puffs us up. (1 Corinthians 8:1)* It can also injure your soul when the aim is mere gathering of knowledge just so you can know. The very opening remarks of *Ecclesiastes 1:18* underscores that fact: *For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.* The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is where far too many of us seek for food. Food is to sustain LIFE, not just feed the brain.

I love learning. But Paul warned of the day when we would be *ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:7)* I could have easily hidden away in the dungeons of university libraries and died there from a poisoned diet from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Knowledge is meant to lead to wisdom, and wisdom to truth. Truth is not a set of facts, but ultimately

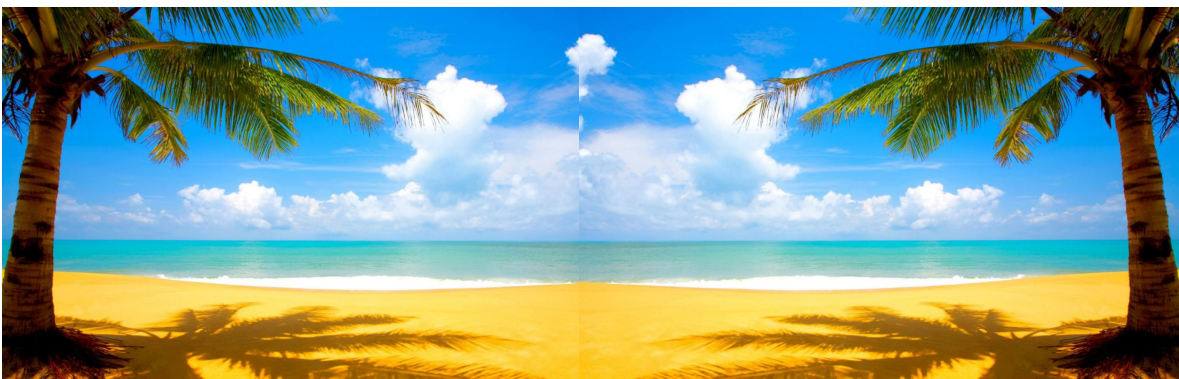
a Person. It is relationship with the Holy One that is real understanding. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10)* Thankfully, the Tree of Life is always offered. *You will show me the path of life: in Your presence is fullness of joy... (Psalm 16:11)* *In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men. (John 1:4)* *In your light shall we see light. (Psalm 36:9)* *In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Colossians 2:3)* We must lay aside our voracious search for information, and seek the Person who is Himself the truth that manifests Life. Only there can we receive what we need for our tiny part in the Great Dance. Blessed is the one who has discovered no study is ever enough, and who then humbles himself like a weaned child and looks to God for daily bread instead of trying to digest the entire bakery!

Please don't misunderstand me here. I am not seeking to place some high value on willful ignorance in the name of pseudo spirituality. I have actually known people who truly believed one shouldn't get any education except from the Bible. I would not want those folks working on my car or piloting the plane I'm in! The Bible is not a book of magic spells. A lot of basic commonsense wisdom is the answer to some of the struggles in our lives. If we refuse that human wisdom, and demand some super-duper spiritual encounter instead of the more plodding mundane facts, we will never grow. *Proverbs 25:2* is a verse far too many super-spiritual folks have evidently never read: *It is the glory of God to conceal a matter. It is the glory of kings to search them out.* Look around us at the vast discoveries of man and the amazing advances in technology, medicine, and industry. Look at the unfolding studies in human development and human behavior. You can't help but note that God intends man to learn, grow, and mature. We personally grow and change in our Christian lives much the same way. This is a huge topic and is partially addressed in this month's CD taken from the series ["How Do We Really Change?"](#) The childlike humility of placing ourselves before the Lord and asking Him to give us what we need just for today will produce a far greater harvest of real nourishment than trying to drink the Amazon or eat the whole bread factory. *He has shown you, oh man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)*



Power to Change

Your message this month is taken from the closing address of a live conference we held in the church led by our good friend Jerry Qualls. It was titled **HOW DO WE REALLY CHANGE?** And it seeks to spell out the danger of over-spiritualizing our need for growth and change at the expense of simply **DOING** the stuff that makes for godliness. We have become Gnostics in many ways. What I mean by that is we deny the good of the physical in the name of being spiritual. This makes for many confused, lopsided, and ultimately dead-end efforts to grow, change, and become more truly Christ-like. We want some kind of spiritual encounter that will zap us into another dimension. But those rarely come. Why not? Because God created this world, invaded it in the Incarnation, redeemed it in His body, and raised that body from death. But **OUR** body is the place where He intends to work out and fulfill that redemptive process. So Mary and I pray you will really digest this message and not just listen to it. If you want to pursue this in more detail, check out the full series in our CD teaching library as well as a few other titles related to Christian growth and living.



Closing Thoughts...

Brain research and our experience both seem to agree with Scripture that being a new creation is both an instant transformation and a process. And in that process we have the freedom to re engage our lowest and worst if we are not vigilant. Or, to say it more positively, we no longer HAVE to be enslaved by old patterns, and as we yield to the Holy Spirit He will uncover layer by layer what needs to be brought to the light. And He who has begun this good work in us will finish it....we shall be like Him....we are now being changed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. And our lapses, which can feel so disappointing, are not the true measure of who and what we are. They are great proof we are no longer our old self because when the return of the old shows up, it makes us so sad. So the sadness is actually a reason to rejoice. We are never left to our old self and every struggle through some lapse is a great move forward. Be encouraged!

With Love, Clay & Mary



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