



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,

*I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation
for everyone who believes....*
Romans 1:16

Chuck Colson tells of his early experience as a truly committed Christian- how he was often hounded by certain church types who wanted to examine every detail of his doctrinal position in order to determine his 'true condition.' On his way out of a certain church where he had just given his testimony, he and his wife became surrounded by one such self-proclaimed 'committee' asking all sorts of probing questions. They finally turned towards Colson's wife, Patty. "So, Mrs. Colson, when did you become born again?" Her simple honest reply was, "I don't know. I just know that I believe deeply." On several occasions, not just one, this sort of gaggle of pharisees would be overheard to say something to the effect, "Isn't it a shame? Mr. Colson is burdened with a wife who is not saved..."

Our friend Michael Kelly Blanchard had just completed a concert at a certain Christian College. If you don't know Michael's music you should. He is a story teller, poet, musician, and evangelist all in one. His songs focus on the mercy of God especially for those who have been deeply injured by life and cast aside. But because his message is not a clear 'get born again' style, he has often been asked if he is "born again."

I painfully remember after the death of Mother Theresa sermons were glibly preached in some pulpits (often by men who had no time to care for the poor and disobeyed Matthew 25) examining if Mother Theresa was "born again." The word **ludicrous** isn't quite strong enough to describe this view.

In all these cases "Are you born again?" does not mean, "Do you know the Lord and belong to Him?" It means "Are you like us? Do you smell like us, think like us, do your spiritual stuff like us???" It is the height (or depth?) of simplistic small-minded spiritual pride. It reeks of unloving preoccupation with keeping everyone under our magnifying glass in order to exalt ourselves and control others. It refuses to discern the body and therefore in the name of doctrinal unity, does the very opposite of unify-it destroys. It not only has nothing to do with being born again, it is the exact opposite of what the real new birth is about.

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I write this as a preface to your audio message because in this message I am painfully honest about the condition I see many in the body of Christ moving towards.

There is an ever enlarging gap between many so-called believers today and real Christian faith. There is even an increasing tendency, if not to deny the Atonement, to so soft pedal its meaning as to result in practically the same as denial. Every faithful follower of Jesus should be ready to stand fully against such deception and to lift up the Cross with all our might. BUT....May God deliver us from becoming in any way like what I described above!

My good friend Fred Hutchison has wisely pointed out that due to a great lack of understanding of the theology of the Blood Atonement, Mother Theresa suffered unnecessary mental anguish which she expressed privately in her letters. Thankfully our salvation is a Person and to be in union with that Person is salvation. How many of us have broken places in our souls where truth has not fully taken root? How grateful we should be that our eternal destiny is in our relationship with God through Christ's shed blood, and not by our being able to define every aspect of our souls or of theology.

BUT... we now face a time when a subtle deception rooted in worldly-mindedness is seeking to deny the atoning blood of Jesus. Such is not a mistake or misunderstanding that could be corrected by better instruction, but it is a **willful rejection of the Cross**. This is the mindset Peter refers to as those who bring in **damnable heresies, denying the Lord who bought them**. Paul speaks with tears of **those who are enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose god is their fleshly desires, and whose mind is on earthly things**. Jude warns with **strongest language of those who seek to creep in craftily and offer a false gospel, turning the grace of**

God into license denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

May God give us the grace to humbly respect the differences in the body of Christ, and the same grace to stand without compromise under the Cross **by which the world is crucified to us and we to the world.**

1934: Truth for Today

The following poem by T.S. Eliot was sent to us from a Minnesota Nightlighter. Don't just read it once. Let it sink into your soul.

The endless cycle of idea and actions,
Endless invention, endless experiment,
Brings knowledge of motion,
But none of stillness,
Knowledge of speech,
But not of silence,
Knowledge of words,
And ignorance of The Word.
All our knowledge brings us
Nearer to our ignorance,
All our ignorance brings us
Nearer to death,
But nearness to death no
Nearer to GOD.
Where is the Life we have lost
In living?
Where is the wisdom we have
Lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we
Have lost in information?
The cycles of Heaven in
Twenty centuries
Bring us farther from GOD
And nearer to dust.

T.S. Eliot (1934)

Is It Reasonable to Believe We Are at the End of the Age?

It is disturbing how easy it is to sell almost any book related to 'the end times.'

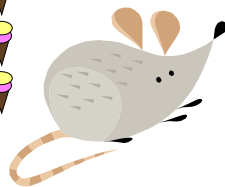
Trying to sort out the identity of antichrist seems more popular in some circles than trying to know and obey the true Christ. The sad fact is that speculation about the end of the age doesn't require much of us, does it? We can conjecture and feel the fascination of it all without it costing anything in blood, sweat, or tears. Yet, if we were to remove all Scripture has to say concerning this subject our Bibles would be much smaller. It must be that the subject is high on God's priority list- but ONLY in order to supply His people with necessary insight so we can carry on with the real work till He comes. In our audio teaching ministry there is a three hour study on the question stated above. It was offered shortly after an author I really enjoy, Dr. Richard Swenson, who does NOT focus on end times events (in fact he states that in his entire 10,000 book library he has not ONE book on end times other than his Bible!!) was jolted awake to the many factors which all point to a soon climax of history as we know it. He wrote a book from this awakening called HURTLING TOWARDS OBLIVIAN. I found this little book on the heels of my own rather dramatic awakening. Signs point to a destination and get more common the closer we are to our appointed place. The signs are everywhere and many we are not seeing because they do not fit the stereotypical prophetic scheme. Yet they are loud and clear to anyone looking and listening. Get Dr. Swenson's book. Then listen to our CD series, "End of the Age." (You can purchase this on our website.)



Website or Mail?

Thanks to all of you who have already returned the pink slip marked with your choice of *Nightlight* via our website or *Nightlight* via traditional mail.

For those of you who have not responded, please do so in the next few weeks. It helps us to better serve you when we know what you want!



**Black Mountain Retreat Conference: *His Healing Presence*
August 22-26**

There is still plenty of space. Pray about coming, and/or pray about sending a friend. We would love to see you there as we join together unto Him.

Some Closing Thoughts...

Once several years ago a very good man with a good heart who rarely showed a bad temper seemed a bit upset. When I asked him why, he quoted the lyrics of a popular Christian song being played at that time. The song was by Keith Green, whose life, ministry, and music I greatly respect. But my friend quoted the line that said (speaking of the Church) "How can you be so dead, when you've been so well fed..." My friend said, "I understand what he is trying to say. But I don't know that the church in the West has been all that well fed." He then pointed out, based on his very large experience of ministry to people, that most church people have been fed a weak diet of denominational pabulum mixed with a fair dose of humanistic poison disguised as dispensational orthodoxy. The power and presence of the living God has rarely been demonstrated in a way that might truly feed the deepest hungers of people. I sadly saw his point. That was nearly 30 years ago. Now there is awakening all around the world (and seemingly finally reaching us) a revelation of the Love of God, the Presence of God, and the Power of that loving Presence. Our desperation and awareness of our deep poverty is not meant to injure us, but to awaken and invite us to come to the table and finally BE well fed. Beating people up for their sins is just as detrimental as excusing them. People do not want either a beating or a license for sin. What they long for is Reality. The desperation of our times may soon be for all of us "a door of hope" right in the middle of the valley of Achor.

With Love, Clay & Mary



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