



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,



There should be no real war between the truth of psychology and the truth of spiritual reality. There is however certainly a war, and rightly so, between the falsehoods of pop psychology and real spiritual truth. But there once was a wrong-headed argument against anything psychological in some Christian circles. For years we have observed certain factions of the Church resisting good and helpful truth from the work of psychologists.

I remember years ago when a then well-known high profile psychiatrist was on a radio program along with a nationally known pastor. The angry pastor was railing at the evil of psychology which had infected the church. The Christian psychiatrist, who by this time had helped thousands of wounded Christians who had suffered damage under the likes of this red-faced pastor, wrote himself a note which he placed in front of his microphone so no one could see it but him. It simply read "Remember the oppressed."



Religion is a mean task master. We needed desperately a wise corrective concerning the workings of the human soul (psyche, from which we get the word psychology). The legalistic rationalistic church system had relegated the emotions and various sexual, relational, and mental struggles to a place of either disdain or irrelevance, leaving millions with no help or worse, with the added burden of condemnation for even needing help. The truth brought by the psychological world was not a false replacement but a needed correction, which helped restore the understanding of the human soul and its needs. There is no contradiction between what is Christian truth and what is psychological truth.

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That was thirty years ago. The pendulum has swung now to a far extreme in the other direction. Why do so many report that after leaving their church services week after week that they feel such a deep and frustrating hunger that never gets filled? What is missing? It seems that in so many cases the messages now are all about how to improve your marriage, your self image, your finances, your attitude, how to reach your goals, achieve your aims, become your best self now... I don't need to go on. When you eat a meal and still feel hungry, it usually means there are needed vital nutrients missing from the meal. What is missing in church?

*The world's own prophets, the unbelieving psychologists (those eyeless seekers who seek for a light which is not God's light) have been forced to recognize at the bottom of religious experience this sense of **something there**. But better far is the sense of **Someone there**. It was this that filled with abiding wonder the first members of the Church of Christ. The solemn delight which those early disciples knew sprang straight from the conviction that there was One in the midst of them. They knew that the Majesty in the heavens was confronting them on earth: they were in the very Presence of God. And the power of that conviction to arrest attention and hold it for a lifetime, to elevate, to transform, to fill with uncontrollable moral happiness, to send men singing to prison and to death, has been one of the wonders of history and a marvel of the world. We must see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, and our hands must handle of the word of life. Nothing can take the place of the **touch** of God in the soul and the sense of **Someone there**.*

A. W. Tozer - The Divine Conquest

The underlines are mine. We are hungering for the WONDER of MAJESTY in our MIDST. It is the awareness of **Someone there** that has come down to us and is manifested to and in and among us. That missing reality is why we leave so hungry!


Let us not criticize our church services when we leave hungry. Those who work hard to prepare the best meal they can need encouragement. But it is God Himself who is depriving us of the glory of His Presence until we reach a place of so longing for relationship that we begin to seek Him above all else. Thankfully He will not accommodate our lower desires by manifesting His highest blessings. He must help us stay hungry until that hunger awakens in us our deepest greatest need: living beloved. He will not leave us orphans. He will come to us. I know theologically He is already with us and will never leave. But are we satisfied with only a mere acknowledgement of theological facts, or do we long for incarnation: the WONDER of MAJESTY in our MIDST?





Speaking of the wonder in our midst...

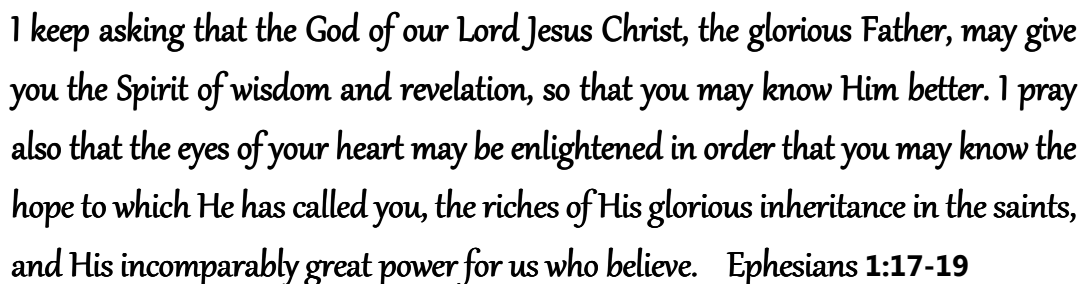
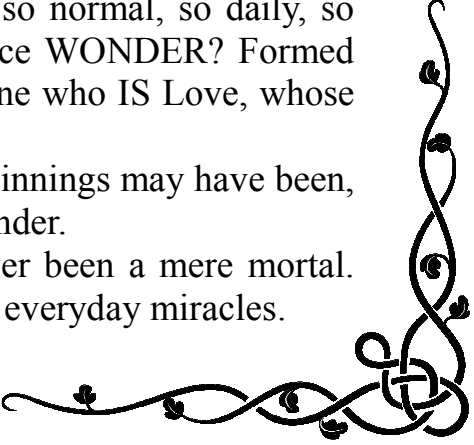
We have a brand new grandbaby - fresh from heaven! And as I held this little miracle, I remembered our first grandchild...

I used to hold Kira when she was a newborn and wonder at the miracle: something that is a someone that was not there before, then BOOM! As she grew, I used to wonder what she was thinking as her eyes silently soaked in objects, colors, and faces. It wasn't long before the silence was broken pretty regularly, and I would wonder what it was she was trying to tell me in a language known only to Kira, God, and her momma. Now, eighteen years later, I don't have to wonder what she's thinking. I get the messages pretty  clearly. She is now a young woman. Now I wonder where the moments went when I used to wonder what she was thinking!

So a few days ago our son and his wife had their newest arrival. BOOM! Arrow Ray, a beautiful boy! He zoomed into our world like a shot from heaven, their number five child and number two boy. And he is... a wonder! I am humbled once more to behold the new beloved of God.

The same miracle occurs over and over all over the world. We have all seen and experienced it for ourselves and with others. But if it is so normal, so daily, so routine, and so mundane, then why does it always produce WONDER? Formed by love, through love, and for love, in the image of the One who IS Love, whose name is Wonderful: that is the only answer.

And every one of you, no matter how deprived your beginnings may have been, was born of that same Love and manifesting that same Wonder. There are no ordinary people. You have never met or ever been a mere mortal. God grant us the right perspective, to live in the wonder of everyday miracles.



I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe. Ephesians 1:17-19

Closing Thoughts...

It's so easy to become out of touch with yourself and then with those around you, and end up feeling robotically controlled by the demands of daily functioning. STOP! Even for a few minutes. Breathe and feel and think. Then turn all that inner energy into a willful act of yielding to God in focused prayer and praise to Him. We want to live in the constant and growing awareness of His Presence. We want to refuse being pulled back into the tyranny of the immediate and away from the gift of God in the present moment. Yet I know how easy it is to suddenly be aware that I have been foolishly unaware. Take time to bask in His presence. Breathe. Rest. Laugh. Love. Worship. Enjoy. After all, those are all aspects of your destination and your destiny, so why not practice along the way to truly live!

With joy, Clay & Mary



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