



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,



We dedicate this Nightlight newsletter edition to Billy Graham.

You are the salt of the earth... Matthew 5:13



As I write these words, the motorcade carrying the body of Dr. Billy Graham is passing through Hickory on its way from Asheville to Charlotte.

My first encounter with Billy Graham was by accident. As a young middle school kid, I joined a busload of people attending the Baton Rouge Billy Graham Crusade. I somehow became separated from my group. In a panic, I raced through the passageways of LSU stadium in hopes of finding where I belonged. In typical full-speed-ahead adolescent myopia, I crashed right into Billy Graham! I don't think it was as jarring for him as it was for me. I remember looking up to see a quickly recovering smiling face assuring me of no real harm done.

That was the first, but not the most impressive encounter. His impact on me occurred days later, without his direct presence. It was his influence after he was gone from our area that altered me forever. It came in the barber shop a few days after the Crusade closed. The Holy Spirit was dealing with me on many levels of my young confused life. As I sat in the waiting area listening to the conversation of men I had known all my life, I heard these Sunday school teachers and church deacons along with a few regular men, bantering back and forth about current events. It was the mid 60s and most white conversations eventually addressed the current racial strife. This was the murky water I floated in. It was my natural habitat. I was not hearing anything I had not heard before. And since I had taken it in as the normal point of view of my world, it caused no jarring of my sensibilities to hear it all again. But suddenly something did jar me, when a man I had once known as my Sunday school teacher said, "Well, I didn't bother with the Billy Graham circus and all that. He's a real n-gg-r-lover you know."

It is a study in the complex intricacy of human evil to try to untangle all that is represented in this scene I am describing. To most people now it is a real obscenity to read it. But to me and the men in that barber shop, it was a mere passing normal everyday kind of remark. If anyone took exception to it, they did not say so. Billy Graham suddenly was in the room with me. After I left, he remained in my head. It didn't take a moral genius to realize that there was a huge disconnect between the Sunday school message of my church, the racist ignorance of the barber shop, and the message and person of Billy Graham. And the harsh reality of this irreconcilable conflict collided inside me. I emerged from that moment slowly (slowly because I was that thick-headed and hard-hearted) to figure out that I was going to have to choose. Was I going to be a racist bigot white southern church-going hypocrite? Or was I going to embrace the n-gg-r-loving Jesus of n-gg-r-loving Billy Graham? I realized that you could not reject the message of Billy Graham *and* claim Jesus at the same time! It had never occurred to me that these were two positions in total opposition to each other. Bible-belt racism on one road; Jesus and Billy Graham on the other.

I wish I could describe the dramatic instant awakening that took place in me as I turned from my entire cultural milieu toward the true all-embracing gospel. I cannot. This slow burning conviction, which only began that day in the barber shop, would not make any outward transforming in me till I was in my latter teens. Like salt quietly but intrepidly battling encroaching rot, Billy Graham's life salted mine. My impact on him when I ran smack into his chest didn't shake him much. But his invisible impact on me shattered my entire world view. And he wasn't even physically present when it occurred! It was his ongoing everyday **LIFE OF OBEDIENCE TO TRUTH IN LOVE** that caused the salt in him to destroy the rot in me.

I have never lived in a world without Billy Graham. I feel the weight of grief as if I have lost a parent. I must begin to learn to do life without his presence here. Or do I? His salt remains. He, being gone yet speaks. And when I hold my mixed-race granddaughter or my black sons in my arms, I can give praise to God for Billy Graham, who taught me without even being present what the real Jesus is like. May we all be the salt of the earth.

Movie News

Mully (The Story of Charles Mulli)

This story is not a mere movie though it is presented on a typical DVD like all movies. No, this is an encounter. It is a life-transforming event. And it will challenge your status quo way of life. It will change you to watch this film. Please watch every moment of it. If you accept this mission (and it is the story of a real live MISSION IMPOSSIBLE), you will never be the same.

Just as Billy Graham was raised up as a special sign and ministry to first the West and then the world, so Charles Mulli (Mully) was raised up first for Africa and now the world. Pay attention to this sign.



Closing Thoughts...



We have seen the passing of many fathers in recent years: Derek Prince, David Wilkerson, John Wimber, and John Osteen to name the ones closest to me personally. All were giants who left their holy mark on my generation and on me. But though we are never wise to compare people with other people or ministry with other ministries, I believe it is not wrong to say that the passing of Billy Graham is a huge milestone. It is the end of an era and a signal to the body of Christ to take up our Cross and enter the harvest field with a clearer vision and purpose than ever before. In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah saw the Lord. He heard the Lord ask, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" Joshua heard the Lord tell him that Moses was dead. He obviously was not informing Joshua of something he did not already know. It was clear language. Do not dwell too long on the past. Mourn respectfully out of love and honor. Give proper time for grieving. Then rise up and go forward in a life of obedience to truth in love. For you are the salt of the earth.



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