



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,



How precious it is to know You are thinking of me constantly....and when I awake You are still with me. Psalm 139:17-18



When I was a high school freshman, I had a young football coach I would have followed into hell with a water pistol. If he would have told me to bite a brick wall, I would have tried. This was at the height of my unclean lips stage of life. At fifteen I was a veteran cussing poet except when my coach was around. Not only did his presence in the room restrain my garbage mouth, but my entire behavior was altered for the better. It was not because I was simply afraid of ramifications should I break a rule of conduct. That would have been a very weak inhibitor, almost inducing me to act out worse. No, I simply did not want to displease him. I didn't want to injure whatever relationship we had. This is very similar to the biblical meaning of what it is to live in the fear of the Lord. As one old seasoned preacher taught me, the fear of the Lord is not about being afraid. Rather it is a wholesome dread of displeasing God, borne out of love for Him. That's how I felt about my coach. I had a truly wholesome dread of ever seeing him look at me with disappointment. It was a very good life-giving and life-affirming tension that was set off in me any time he walked in a room. I would have been a much better man had I not lost that influence. As good as that was, it only went skin deep. When he left I was my old self. And when he was replaced, I not only reverted to my old ways but went berserk with even worse language and behavior, greatly due to my rage at his dismissal.

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Living with the Lord has all of the good of this story plus one huge advantage. He not only lives with me but IN me. He not only inhibits wrong behavior by His righteous influence without, but is ever working from within to transform my very desires. And He cannot be replaced. And most importantly of all, HE NEVER LEAVES. **“When I awake You are still with me.”** I like it that David says it that way. For it is when I awake, the first thing every morning that I have to push away all the thoughts, concerns, and/or negatives that seek to rush in at me to try to hijack my mind and heart. I can choose to become habitually mindful of the Lord’s Presence above all other considerations. And from that place of joy/strength, I live day in and day out with the awareness that He is always right here with me. It becomes no longer a mere exercise in behaving better, but an ever deeper sense of union of two hearts, until mine is beating totally in sync with His. This is far better than just trying to behave better. It does away not only with the sloppiness that gives way to periodic wrong behavior, but becomes a constant comfort when you recall over and over that you are never alone, always loved, and being carried, no matter what may come, to the place where His invisible Presence will become your full and present visible Reality forever.

My improved behavior as a football freshman didn’t come from rule-keeping, even if that’s what it might have seemed outwardly. It came from Love. And as underdeveloped and tentative as it was, it set the stage for the greater Relationship that has carried me every second since then. **“He who has begun a good work in us will finish it, and when we awake He shall still be with us.”**



Schedule Update



Toledo, OH “Healing Anxiety”
October 25th
Gerry Soviar 419-349-0384

Clanton, AL “How to Address Same-Sex Marriage Issues”
Oct. 29-30th
Rhett Barbaree 205-280-1073

Akron, OH “Only the Lover Sings: Art and the Healing of the Soul”
Nov. 7-9th
Adam Keeler 330-271-0698



Movie News

The Perfect Wave

(The story of Ian McCormack)



I was excited when we learned of this project, because many of you will remember on two occasions over the years we sent Ian's recorded testimony out as a Nightlight, and have followed his ministry over the years with great appreciation. The film version of his powerful testimony was a demanding and difficult task. I want to give respect to the hard-working faithful people who made it finally reach the screen. I don't want to discourage them. I want to support them. They know their craft and the audience they are trying to reach. And once they got to the heart of the story, they presented it faithfully and fairly well.

But I have to say honestly that it was difficult for Mary and me to sit through. We kept waiting for the part of the story that forever changes Ian. We waited, and watched surfing and beach parties. We waited and listened to songs, and more songs. We waited and watched a boy-girl relationship form, sizzle, and die. Did I say we almost gave up waiting? (Well actually I almost gave up, not Mary.) The conversations were comic bookish in places, and the force of the potential emotion of the story seemed to never be accomplished.

Harsh as that sounds, I understand the attempt to use the 'perfect wave' motif, so well known in the surfing world, as a vehicle for meeting God's perfect wave. The fact that Ian is played by Clint Eastwood's son Scott is a good thing, in that his name and reputation are now identified with Ian's story and testimony. Ian is uncompromising, clear, and faithful to the gospel. And with all my heart I want to support their efforts, honor their vision, and not be a discouragement to them. But it could have been a much better film with much stronger impact. I am a bit shaken that if this had to be so worldly in order to be able to reach its audience, then we are in far worse shape culturally than even I feared. Still, Ian's story is so powerful and so needed to be shared in whatever medium, I ask you to watch it. And let me know if you think I have been unfair or critical in inaccurate ways. Maybe I'm just OLD. Do be sure you watch the special features. Mary did. She said they will give you a deeper appreciation for the movie.

Book Review... Holy Fire

by Dr. R.T. Kendall



Many of you have been exposed to my periodic rants against hyper Calvinism. I have not altered my concern that it is a dangerous, even blasphemous error, one which has shipwrecked many and is in danger of resurgence in parts of the body of Christ. I need to be just as vocal to affirm the goodness of Reform theology, especially regarding the Sovereignty and Holiness of God, the Authority of Scripture, and the desperately needed restoration of hymnody by which right doctrine is kept and communicated from generation to generation. In this landmark book by R.T. Kendall, he has built a much needed bridge between two estranged parts of the body of Christ, and provided the much needed link to secure a proper relationship between Reform thinking and the work of the Holy Spirit. All the writings of Dr. Donald Bloesch did the same, but Dr. Kendall has made it more readable and accessible to the average layman.

With Love, Clay & Mary



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