



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 thought of the victims of violent crime and the survivors of murdered loved ones, and how we've pressured them to recycle their pain and anguish and give it back to the offenders we prosecute. I thought of the many ways we've legalized vengeful and cruel punishments, how we've allowed our victimization to justify the victimization of others. We've submitted to the harsh instinct to crush those among us whose brokenness is most visible. Each of us is more than the worst thing we have ever done. A need and desire for mercy corresponds with a need to show mercy.

Bryan Stevenson (Just Mercy)

Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.
John 1:29

My father didn't say many things I found helpful in life. But one statement he made to me more than once has remained and become more poignant as I have passed through difficult confrontations with the question of justice. He said, "I believe in capital punishment if someone kills one of mine. I do not believe in capital punishment if one of mine kills someone." He never elaborated or tried to justify or explain himself. And that made the statement all the more penetrating to me. For it said without stating it that this terrible struggle over what is and is not just is a vice grip pulling us in seemingly two directions at once. On the human level it

screams for equal justice under the law - an eye for an eye - while at the same time the heart cries for some way to embrace mercy - some means of bringing not vengeance but restoration of peace and the primacy of love. And these two extremes which seem impossible to reconcile can find no place to unite with in us.

Only one Person can accomplish the impossible union of justice with mercy. Only one place can it be found. Is it blasphemous to say that, that One and only person, Jesus Christ, could not accomplish it without the one place - Calvary? God can do anything because He is God, we say rightly. Yet God cannot just do anything arbitrarily. His power does not negate His justice. God is love. He must do according to His own nature and act out of that nature in alignment with His character. So yes, God can accomplish anything, and He did, but at a cost beyond our reckoning: God crashing Himself into Calvary. There are no words. We will not explain it or dissect it or bring it to some neat conclusions we can list in a notebook. We must tremble before it. At the Cross, God accomplishes the satisfaction of justice and expresses it in ultimate mercy. And after we have trembled in the face of the Mystery, *we must ask Him to make it incarnational in and through us*. There is no possibility of accomplishing justice on the human level beyond the mere restoration of lost property or such like. There is no seeing justice done in any execution or severe punishment where loss of human life is concerned. The ultimate justice is found only in forgiveness, redemption, and restoration. And that will take the miracle of the Cross and the Empty Tomb. The miracle has already been accomplished. True justice and mercy became one at the Cross in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. So let us take its power into the depths of human sin and suffering every way we can.



Just Mercy

by Bryan Stevenson

Bryan Stevenson was a gifted young attorney when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending the poor, the wrongly condemned, and those trapped in the furthest reaches of our criminal justice system. This book will hold you in its grip and not allow you to return to a place of indifference about issues of true justice.

His Healing Presence Update

We just completed the 2018 August Black Mountain annual retreat conference here in North Carolina. Once again there were many miracles, many transformations. People always ask the normal question, "What happened at the conference?" We can never tell them. It seems awkward to be unable to respond. But after 30 years of doing them, I finally understand why I can never give an answer. People come, many in deep pain and varying degrees of need. We spend four days in the Presence of God. God moves in the depths of our core issues in invisible inaudible ways while Mary and the team and I just do whatever it is we do as we listen and obey. It is an honor to usher folks into His Healing Presence-Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We do not make anything happen. We may not even see anything occurring that we can describe. And at the end of the week people leave joyful, hopeful, and some deeply changed by the Presence they have been soaking in uninterrupted for four days. So, no wonder I can't tell anyone what happened! Its something you have to experience for yourself. Come join us next year! Dates are August 17-21, 2019.



September Schedule



Clay will be speaking at the Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Dayton, OH the end of this month with JC Studies. His teaching topic will be on grief, presented Saturday the 29th, from 9am to 1pm. If you are interested in attending, please contact thecenter@jcstudies.com for more information.

In His Joy, Clay & Mary



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