



# NightLight

A NEWSLETTER OF McLEAN MINISTRIES

"take heed....as to a light that shines in a dark place." II Peter 1:19

Volume 196 • September 2009

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Bob & Rusty 1, 2

God Uses The Foolish 3

The Simple Gospel 3

Arrows of Love 4

Closing Thoughts 4



*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*

Bob McAlister didn't have to take time from his prestigious world to enter the other world which he had come to care for so deeply. The South Carolina State Penitentiary was only a few miles from the plush mahogany and leather surroundings of his state government office. Yet the two worlds so close in physical proximity could not have been farther apart. Bob served as aid to the governor, but in whatever spare time he could muster, he took a short drive and entered the long corridor that transferred him from the atmospheric heights of public success to lowest depths of individual despair. Bob had led many a prisoner to Christ in the years of his service. He thought he had seen most of the worst. But he was not prepared for the encounter he had one Friday night in October of 1985.

While making his way back through the harsh hallway after an evening of ministry to various inmates, Bob was tired and ready to get home to Carol. But he felt an urge to stop at one more cell. Its inhabitant looked like a pale, cadaverous, dirty, waxen wraith sitting on the cold concrete, surrounded by strewn papers, half-eaten rotting food, tis-

sue paper, and old issues of *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. The cell stank, but its inhabitant reeked more. Long dirty blondish hair and matted beard seemed to be draped over a rubber mask instead of a human face. There was no sound or movement except one- the scurrying noise of scores of roaches which were meandering uninterrupted over the prisoner's head and entire body. Suddenly Bob realized that he had met this inmate before! He called him by name, attempting to rouse him into some kind of response. Though Bob was not from a church background that ever seriously gave attention to such a concept, suddenly he became overwhelmed by a horrifying invisible but palpable presence, as if Bob had entered forbidden territory. This presence would not allow its victim to move or even speak- a demonic prison-keeper within the earthly prison. Bob called on the name of Jesus to break the hold in the cell, then he cried out to its embalmed victim, "Rusty, just say the name of Jesus. Call on Jesus."

Continued on page 2

Nothing happened for a few long minutes. Then the frozen lips moved slowly. "Jesus," he whispered. "Jesus. Jesus." To Bob's amazement it was as if Rusty was slowly thawing. "Son, look at what you are living in!" Bob continued to speak to him, guiding Rusty to ask Jesus to bring him back to life, to cleanse his heart and mind as well as his body. As Rusty nodded his head in agreement with Bob's words, the washing began. For the first time in fifteen years cleansing streams began to pour from Rusty's newly awakened eyes.

### **Who Was Rusty?**

Once upon a time there was a beautiful little blond-headed boy who chased squirrels, watched circling hawks, and laid in the grass near his favorite fishing hole, dreaming the dreams boys are supposed to dream. This was the only reprieve from his father's cruel tirades. As Rusty grew bigger and stronger so did his anger, resulting in his leaving home. He slept in ditches and barns and learned to soothe the ache first with "weed", then liquefied amphetamines straight into his veins. By nineteen he went to state prison for stealing cases of beer. After his release he looked for men of like nature but always older. For even in his drug-induced stupor, he knew what his heart was longing for. He hooked up with Skaar whom he would sometimes introduce as his father. Skaar began teaching Rusty the finer points of making fast money. Reinforced with drugs and whiskey, they set out in a bloody partnership.

On February 22, 1979 Rusty murdered his first victim in order to steal his coin collection. He then entered a nearby house at random where he, alongside his father figure, shot a couple in cold blood. They continued on to Pawley's Island, where they robbed a store and kidnapped the two lady clerks. After raping them, Rusty shot them both. One of the women lived

and functions today without her lower face intact. Rusty and Skaar finished their night in a Myrtle Beach motel where police closed in. Skaar shot himself. Rusty was taken and confessed to it all. Still high, but now descending into the horror that clear-mindedness brings, his soul disintegrated as he contemplated the works of his hands. He was easily found guilty and sentenced to death in the South Carolina electric chair.

### **Rusty Goes Home to His True Father**

In April of 1990 all appeals had run their perfunctory legal course. As the electrician fitted Rusty's head and limbs with the electrodes the warden asked if Rusty had any last words. He thought for a moment, then said simply, "I'm sorry for what I have done. Jesus Christ is my Savior. My only wish is that everyone in the world could feel the love I have felt from Him." The death hood was placed over his head. Two thousand volts of electric power surged to its target. Rusty's body collapsed into death. As darkness fell off of Rusty, he stepped into Light, there to fully encounter the Arms that had been holding him daily in his earthly prison cell.

[This is a mere thumb-nail sketch of the story of Bob & Rusty. For the complete story read BEING THE BODY by Charles Colson & Ellen Vaughn, Thomas Nelson Publishers.]



---

### **God Uses Foolish Things**

I am more and more aware of my weakness. If God delights in using foolish and weak things then I am far more qualified than I ever realized.

When I consider the degree of deep suffering in the world, and when I contemplate even for a moment, the terrible price Jesus paid in order to redeem men and women from that evil, I am filled with confidence, not in myself or my ability to argue well, but in HIM and what He accomplished at the Cross. There are lots of Bobs out there who leave their comfort zones to enter the pain and suffering of others in order to bring healing and salvation. But we tend to celebrate them when we hear of them because there seems to be so few that we know about. We fail to follow Bob's example because we have been duped into thinking we need to know more before we venture into the battle. We have fallen for the lie that it takes intellectual agility to minister the gospel successfully. But Rusty's encounter with Bob shows another view.

Yes, the story of Rusty is unusually dramatic, yet not really. The only difference in Rusty and all of us is the degree of outward manifestation of evil in that cell produced by Rusty's inner condition. But if we could see with spirit eyes the condition of people without Christ, we would see *Rustys* all around us. And if we saw things as they really are- the inner prison cells people live in- compassion would overrule our fear of inadequacy. We would depend on the perfection of the gospel, not our abilities, to bring the effects of the Kingdom into the lives around us.

### **We Don't Have to Know ALOT**

Bob McAlister was not a theologian, nor even a preacher. He may or may not have the philosophical tools to successfully argue points of theology. Rather he entered a demonic stronghold in Jesus' Name, and pointed to the shed blood of Calvary. The Holy Spirit

reaped the harvest. Rusty's cell could no longer hold him. To quote Wesley's great hymn, "His chains fell off, his mind was free..."

Western arrogance prides itself in cynical debunking of anything it cannot reduce to the sum of its parts. Media often shreds lives then celebrates the broken pieces. The gospel does not boast of great wisdom. Even a little child can own it. Yet it can take those same broken pieces and resurrect them into LIFE. I have the greatest respect and appreciation for those who are called to wrestle with the academic community over questions of faith. They are evangelists to that world and they are needed. But I grow more and more tired with brain-to-brain wrestling matches. And though a childlike posture angers the great and mighty doubters who constantly demand proofs which never satisfy their argument, the simplicity of the gospel is increasingly becoming all I want to think of or speak of. For it can hold its own ground. Stuart Townend's great hymn sums it up well in *How Deep the Father's Love for Us*:

*I will not boast in anything,  
no gift, no power, no wisdom;  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,  
His death and resurrection.  
How can I gain from His reward?  
I cannot give an answer.  
But this I know with all my heart:  
His wounds have paid my ransom.*



Only the childlike rejoices in the presence of the Mystery. The great and mighty hate it. But in our attempt to reach the great and mighty we have lost our own childlike awe at the Mystery. We inadvertently become like those we are seeking to reach-stuck in our heads, and devoid of joy and wonder. We enter the dark stronghold equipped with many arguments-good ones, valid ones, but devoid of the simple power of the Spirit's confirmation. C.S Lewis said he never felt more empty of joy than he did five minutes after soundly defeating an atheist in a debate.

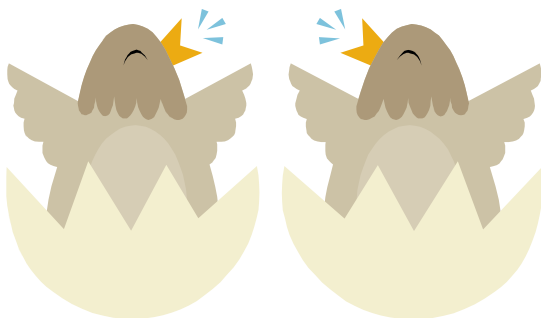
God is stripping us of our Saul's armor. Maybe if you are feeling weak, unqualified, empty, and ignorant, you are being prepared to become an arrow of love in God 's hands. As Gandalf said to the war counsel: (Lord of the Rings by JRR Tolkein),

***"The enemy is looking for a show of strength. He will never suspect the greatest danger to his cause lies in the hands of two little hobbits wandering into peril."***

## ***Some Closing Thoughts...***

Did you hear of the mental patient who was trying to convince his doctors that he was dead? They finally proved to him scientifically that a dead body cannot bleed, then pierced him with a pin. When the crazy man saw himself bleeding he shouted, "Well I guess that will overthrow your theory. See, a dead man DOES bleed!!" I am not saying argument never bears fruit. Paul contended with the Jewish leaders at the close of the book of Acts. But mostly, the Kingdom comes in less strident ways. May God help us to love, to laugh, to give, and as St. Francis said, "when necessary, use words." A demonstration of the heart of God will open wide doors to share the gospel. And there are ever increasing ways to demonstrate that love as our economic idols continue to fall. Pray for creative ways to love in deed and in truth and not merely with words.

*With Love, Clay & Mary*



## **McLean Ministries**

**P.O. Box 5187 • Hickory, North Carolina 28603 • 828.322.5402**

**website: [www.mcleanministries.org](http://www.mcleanministries.org) • email: [claymcleanministries@pobox.com](mailto:claymcleanministries@pobox.com)**