



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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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Reach of Poetry	1-2
The Holy Land of the Broken Heart	3
Closing Thoughts	4

Dear Friends,



Nothing endures except Aslan's own country.

For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland...They desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city. Hebrews 11:14,16



Michael Kelly Blanchard is an old friend whom we never get to see. He is with me going down the road very often, but only in my car stereo speakers. The first time we ever heard Michael's music, Mary and I were moved by the musical artistry, and gripped by the poetry of his lyrics. Sadly, a lot of people in our era miss out on the penetrating power of poetry. They think of *roses are red; violets are blue...* or worse, some vague lines that are mostly meaningless. Yet listeners are supposed to nod and pretend this poetry is profound. Michael's lyrics are not like that. Many of his songs tell stories that are very deeply moving. His lyrics often cut to the heart, and move me on levels I cannot explain.

Here at the close and opening of one more year, I wrestle with what I most want to communicate to you. There are always so many issues that I could pursue. But I am not inclined to address any of those issues today, important as they may be in their context. Forgive me if I indulge myself in a very personal way. For when I read (and hear sung) many of Michael's best lyrics, they bypass my mind. These crafted words send shafts of light into my heart, moving me straight to the core issue within me. These lyrics direct me to the heart of the matter, the central issue above all issues, deep inside. And I believe they will reach that core place within you as well. When this happens, the poetic becomes prophetic, which great poetry often does. I believe what speaks to me will also touch you. Simply let it touch you in your own way.

You don't have to be my age to identify with the message that speaks of loss, faded glory, fallen pride, etc. Things are being shaken on such a wide scale now that it is unavoidable for our private small worlds to remain untouched by hurt. Even some of my young students, as well as my own kids, speak of their awareness

that we will never pass this way again. We must set ourselves to focus on what is ultimate if we are to endure what lies ahead.

I am feeling the evaporation of many once secure systems. And I am painfully aware of things in myself that are still incomplete. **We have here no continuing city. But we seek one to come; a city not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God. (see Hebrews 11:10)** I won't stay in this contemplative posture very long. There are always trash cans to empty, letters to answer, and dragons to slay. But in order to have the energy and clarity of mind to do those things, I must take time to review WHY all these things matter. I must take the time to know I matter. I need to feel, then think about what I feel, and turn it all into prayer. I need to BE with the One who is Life Himself. I need to be immersed in His love, and empowered to love. I have found that the words of others sometimes express for me what I am needing to say, but can't quite find the words or contact the feelings. That is what the Psalms provide for us in Scripture. And sometimes it is the psalms of old friends, like Michael, that sound the clarion call of my heart. As we begin this new year, may we all go beyond wishing 'Happy New Year' to each other. May we also add to that phrase, 'Next Year in Jerusalem' or 'Maranatha.' Till then, **let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus...Consider Him, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds. (see Hebrews 12:1-3)**



THE HOLY LAND OF THE BROKEN HEART

(from the album **Mercy in the Maze**)
lyrics and music by Michael Kelly Blanchard

*Jesus in this life of mine, more and more Your grace I find
in the kingdoms I decline...in the battles lost.
All that I would hold on to, hide away and keep from You
fade like diamonds made of dew...underneath Your Cross.*

*All the useless ways of my will, claiming peace while peace-less still...
All the dreams so unfulfilled. Bitter empty air.
Hollow brag, ambition's boast, haunt the heart like tired ghosts...
Leave their lessons and their yokes and their cold despair.*

**JESUS LORD OF ALL I AM, HOLD ME WITH YOUR WOUNDED HANDS.
KEEP ME IN THE HOLY LAND OF THE BROKEN HEART.**

*Victory's an empty word, success simply seems absurd
When compared to You my Lord and Your hope that heals.
No conditions but the truth, all the shackled shame let loose
Forgiveness the living proof...that Your love is real.
Oh the eyes of human kind, show the pain that numbs the mind,
search the sorrow for a sign of mercy in the maze.
Then there in tears of our sin confessed, wrapped in humble blessedness,
Lord You live the honored guest of Your peoples' praise.*

**JESUS LORD OF ALL I AM, HOLD ME WITH YOUR WOUNDED HANDS.
KEEP ME IN THE HOLY LAND OF THE BROKEN HEART.**

*And when my dance of days is through,
when my oldest hour seems brand new,
When all desires are for You, may my story be
That my treasures weren't of gold, that my pride lost all its control...
To You, oh love of my soul, Jesus to all Thee.*

**JESUS LORD OF ALL I AM, HOLD ME WITH YOUR WOUNDED HANDS.
KEEP ME IN THE HOLY LAND OF THE BROKEN HEART.**

Closing Thoughts...

Asaph wrote my biography three thousand years before I was born. Whenever I read these words of Michael's (see page 3), Asaph's words come to me also: When I was full of hard questions, I was like a brute beast. But You held me with Your (wounded) hand, and guided me with Your counsel, and You will bring me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And beside You, there is nothing I desire. My heart and my flesh, they fail. But You are the strength of my heart, and my inheritance forever. (see Psalm 73) Dying, we shall rise. Everything is working together for your great good, which is His glory.

Maranatha,
Mary & Clay



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