



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,



*When you pray, go into your closet (secret place),
close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen.
Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret,
will reward you openly.*

Matthew 6:6



Most of us are familiar with the above verse. Yet why do we still get caught under the weight of burdens that are beyond us, which we try to carry to God in prayer, but end up taking them back on? Our actual experience of prayer is, for some of us, more an experience of insurmountable burdens of personal responsibility pressing on our minds. Or, we become so overwhelmed with the weight of burdens that we turn the other direction and give up praying altogether.

There is an increase of mental illness according to researchers (even among believers) stemming from the never-ending volume of too much information. Added to the information overload, there is also the spiritual weight of ever increasing relational conflicts. The pressure we feel builds with every bit of added stress. This creates a spirit of urgency in us to somehow deal with each and every scenario. This includes issues not only from our own personal lives, but also from our families, friends, neighborhoods, local communities, nation, and even the world. Everything is demanding something of you, even when you know ultimately the dispensers of some of these messages don't even know your name. Obvious manipulative stuff like that is pretty easy to ignore. Yet the spirit that drives that kind of false urgency is what has become 'normal' in these daily messages. And, depending on your personality, it can weigh on you, even if unconsciously.

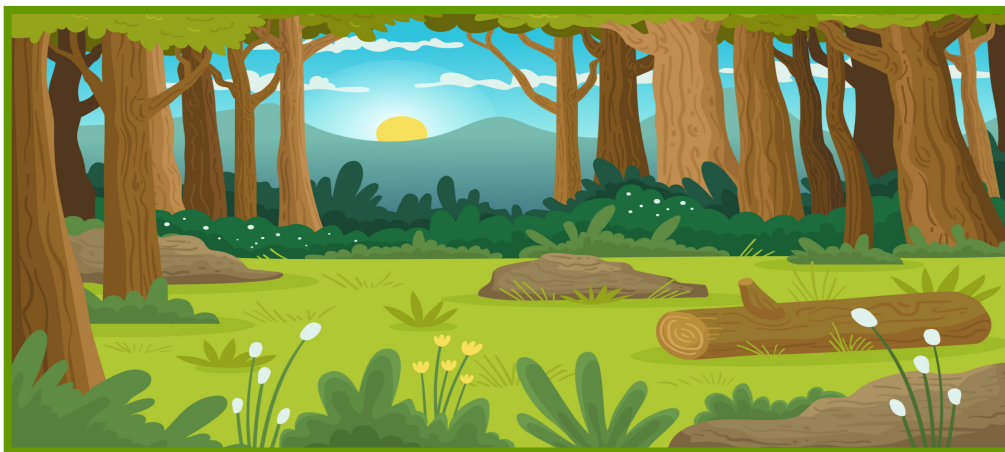
Please stop and consider with me a moment. Lay aside everything you have been told is important, and that is supposedly your responsibility. Now re-engage, not as a spiritual warrior, but as a beloved child. Crawl up into His arms, and begin to tell Him what you feel, what you need, how you ache inside from the noise

and demand coming at you. Let the Quiet speak. He may speak specifically. But if not, then stay in the quiet place until it becomes the solid tangible Quiet you simply soak in. If He is silent, then He knows it is the full silence you most need at the moment.

I am often tempted to make every letter to you a wakeup call to take some kind of action. It must hit a mark. I must sound the alarm. But must I? **...In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength... (Isaiah 30:15)**. These are insane times. But the most important response for us in this or any such insane time, is to first *be* with Him. We learn to quiet our hearts and minds with Him. Then we *can* see; we *can* hear. Then we receive our instructions as needed. Jesus said that **only one thing is needed**. Not the many. Let Him narrow you to what He wants you to bring to Him in prayer, and trust Him with it.

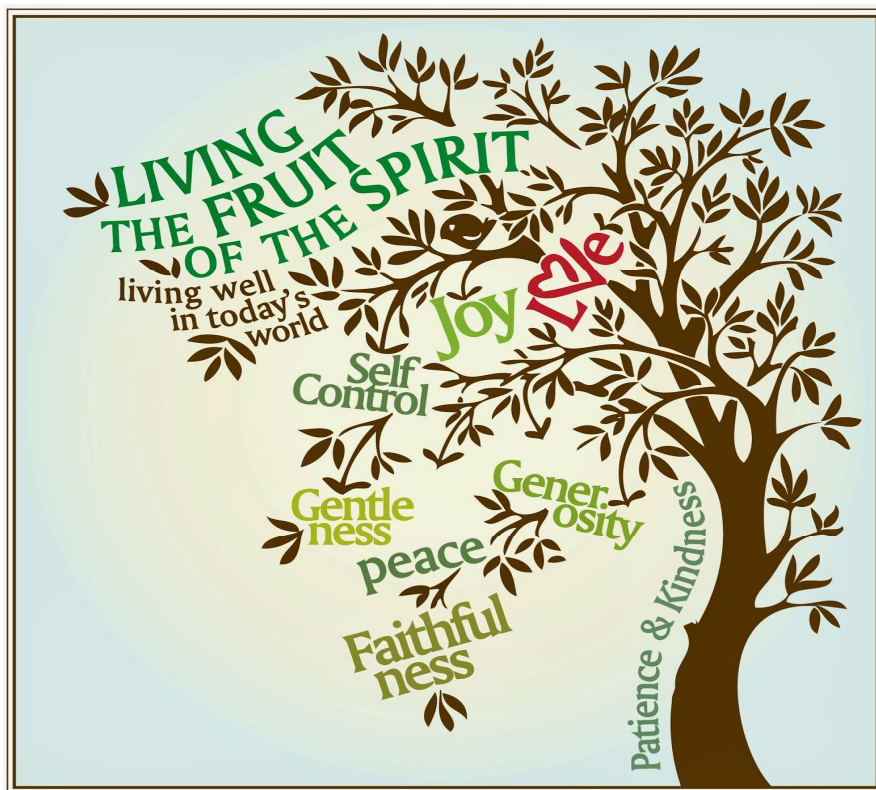
What your deep heart desires above all is to just be with Him: to cry out and know you are being heard. IF that cry is not being met, nothing else will matter. To be united with Jesus, to grow more and more like Him by gazing into His Face, sets in motion a movement of grace into *your* world. Not into the whole world; that's too big. It is your world that He wants to touch through you, and it is you in your world, that He is encountering. It is accomplished in your secret place with Him. Where He meets you as you; where He knows your real name; where He understands you better than you ever do yourself. That is what you and I always most long for when we come to Him. But if we come gorged with the indigestible mental stuff of our self-imposed burdens, we leave having never reached the place Jesus describes. And it won't be long before we misinterpret prayer as the burden.

How long has it been since you had no agenda except *to be*, and to let the Wisdom of Silence set the agenda? In **Luke 10:38-42**, Jesus speaks to Martha, **you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed**. This seems to be a common problem: the urgent demand to stay busy. Funny how it never settles down or goes away by itself. Whatever 'it' is, it can wait. For now, stay quiet, stay close, stay childlike. You will be amazed at the fruitful result of just being in the secret place.



When to Take Action

There are many examples in Scripture of situations which call for urgent action. These are not proof texts to support a spirit of drivenness, but a measured clear directive that demands decision. Always when reviewing our situation in life, we have to exercise prayerful discernment between when to humble ourselves in holy quiet, or when to stand and act against what is evil. There is a place for both kinds of action. But of the two, it is far more common to find an overheated drivenness disguised as godliness, especially in this current technocratic jungle. Where there is earnest seeking for God's presence and direction, out of that will always come an empowered spirit of decisive action. *True listening will always produce true acting.* It is in that place of earnest listening that we are able to discern what is real spiritual warfare from what is humanly generated fleshliness. And it is rare that the evidence of right action is clear at first. From out of the place of true holy quiet—one that is not merely inactive passivity, but rather, the place of humble listening silence before God— we will hear the voice of clear, sound, well-ordered reason that will produce the fruit of the Spirit.



Closing Thoughts...



Thank all of you who so kindly contacted us by text, email, and phone regarding the passing of Mary's Dad. And a very special thank you to those of you who sent such thoughtful sympathy cards with such comforting messages. Mary keeps them in a folder so she can reread them. She has her good days and not-so-good days. Thank you all for your continued prayers on her behalf.



With our love, Clay & Mary

McLean Ministries

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