



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 room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then when your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6:6

Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Ephesians 6:18

[edited version by Clay - 2008]

When people say to you, "I'm praying for you," or when they ask you to pray for them, what comes to mind? Are you thankful they pray for you? Do you really pray for them? Or does it seem like meaningless religious phrases people use with each other? And why are many prayer meetings so boring? Why do they degenerate into anything other than prayer? And what about the many questions that arise in our minds related to prayer? Doesn't God already know anyway? Isn't He already set on what He is going to do? What good does it do to pray? Why bother?

There is no denying that God is sovereign over all. But sovereignty does not mean micro-management. God can do anything He wants, and it is clear in Scripture that what He wants is for redeemed men and women to rule under Him in prayer. **The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the**



world, and all who live in it. (Psalm 24:1) But also, **The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth He has given to man. (Psalm 115:16)** As a result of Adam's sin, he forfeited his rulership of the earth that had been entrusted to him (see **Genesis 1:28**), so that Satan becomes the prince of this world according to Jesus (see **John 14:30**). In the wilderness temptation, Satan offers Jesus the nations if He will bow to him, and Jesus does not contest his claim on them (see **Matthew 4:8-10**). At the cross, Jesus destroys Satan's power over the earth (see **John 12:31**). Yet even after the resurrection, Satan retains the title of 'god of this world' (see **2 Corinthians 4:4**). John says **We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. (1 John 5:19)** And the cosmic forces of darkness remain in place over the entire present system of human activity (see **Ephesians 6:12**).

There are daily battles and earthly losses. We are at war in spite of the total defeat of our enemy. Why? Because God is dealing with men and women in the battlefields of our individual hearts as well as on the cosmic level. So Jesus directs us to pray. He tells us how to pray: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:9-13)**

The earth is still a battlefield. Injustice is in the supremacy. Yet Jesus paints a picture of a widow, the most powerless person of society, demanding justice from an unjust judge who finally relents to her because of her importunity (see **Luke 18:1-8**). But at the end of that parable, He asks a poignant question: **...When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8b)** What kind of faith? Evidently the kind of faith that will stick with importunate prayer in the face of seemingly huge odds and unjust earthly opposition.

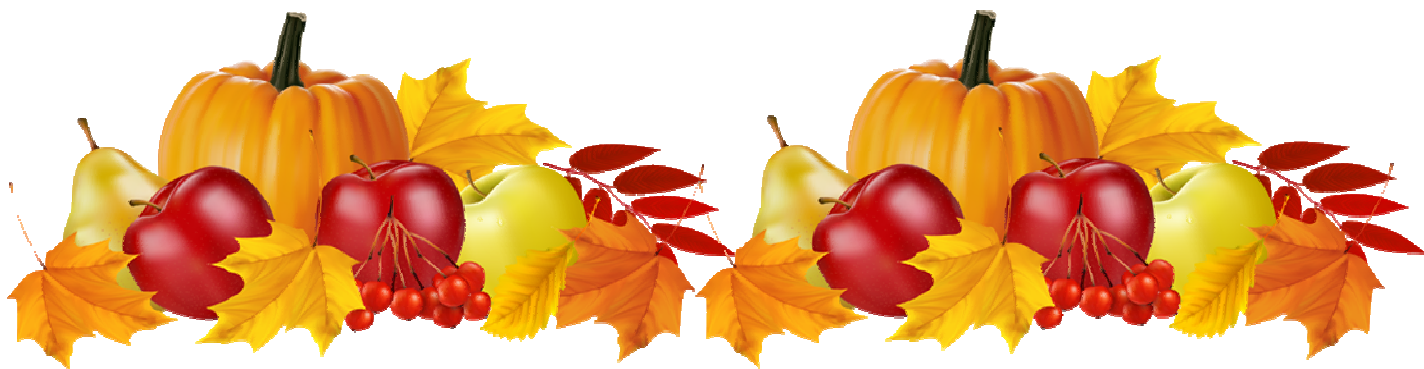
We have been clearly instructed concerning prayer and God's will. It is not a reluctant god our prayers are trying to convince. Our God is not an unjust judge. Prayer is powerless, boring, and confusing when we think it is meant to inform God, or worse, to talk God into something. Rather, prayer is meant to be a means of invoking God's sovereign rule into earthly situations as we join ourselves in union with the Holy Spirit. This release of God's redemptive power can then overcome sin and rebellion that result under the curse of satanic manipulation.

The legal system, the economic system, the medical system, the educational system, the communications system, the political system, etc. are all 'in the hands of the wicked one.' We wrestle, not with people, but with beings who rule those systems (see **Ephesians 6:12**). We are not wrestling with God here.

We are standing alongside our Lord and King, our loving Father. And in prayer we are providing Him the human representation He requires in order for Him to extend the power of His Son's redemptive victory into an otherwise lost situation. We stand in faith, giving glory to God as we pray and not give up, as an act of loving obedience. This faithful prayer declares our confidence in God's promises. We become partners with Him in His kingdom enterprise. We provide Him the means He demands in order to bring mercy instead of leaving things to their own ends. God is actively seeking to strengthen people who will stand in such prayer (see **2 Chronicles 16:9**).

The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16b) But the increase of prayer partners seems to release an exponential principle of kingdom power (see **Matthew 18:18-20** and **Acts 4:23-31**). This is not because God is moved by democratic processes, but because His heart is always for unity and love. We are commanded to pray for all men. Now we know why. We are especially told to pray for rulers so that the church may live in social peace in order for the gospel to be free to spread (see **1 Timothy 2:1-3**). The 'god' of this world is thwarted by the people of God taking God's promises and commands to heart, and earnestly praying (see **Acts 12:1-17**). God tells us when we do this that He will remember us. This means He will sovereignly act to enforce the power provided by the sacrifice of His Son Jesus.

"Oh what peace we often forfeit. Oh what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer..." I grew up hearing those words sung. I grew to appreciate them more as I got older and became more aware of my own great need. But I would have gladly traded the song for the action of older people around me who knew how to pray, who understood the things that I have tried to spell out in this newsletter. I hope this will help you begin, if you have not begun, or to carry on if you have, in prayer. Not just any prayer. But with prayers that are focused and growing, increasing in power, strengthening your faith in the One who is Faithful, growing ever closer to our Blessed Trinity in unity and love.



Closing Thoughts...



An update on Clay personalized from scripture...

Clay does not lose heart. Though outwardly he is wasting away, yet inwardly he is being renewed day by day. For Clay's light and momentary troubles are achieving for him an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So Clay fixes his eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

(2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Thank you for your continued prayers on our behalf.

Compelled by the love of Christ Jesus, one day at a time, Clay & Mary



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