



# McCLAIN MINISTRIES

Monthly Newsletter Publication

February 2006

**LOVE** makes the  
World go  
Round



## Melva's Corner

### OUR SPIRITUAL 'DNA'

**Bible Text:** Colossians 3:12-17, I John 3:1

**Central Truth:** We are the community of God! We carry His spiritual DNA.

Someone once said, "There are two things one cannot do alone – be married and be a Christian." They are right. The essence of being a Christian is not an extended set of correct doctrinal beliefs or even well-formed personal character. To be a Christian is to be connected to Christ in such a unique and special way that all other relationships are defined by that union. It means the perfect triune fellowship of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit from eternity past and present has been opened to me by the blood of Jesus at Calvary. But I cannot experience their fellowship in isolation from all others who have been called into it. We are the family of God.

Having others around is not a nuisance but a necessity for families. These interactions shape us. We sing and read, stand and bow, laugh and cry. And yes, we

## Life Events

Happy Birthday



May your Birthday be a Special Time and Wonderfully Blessed.

Sunnye McShann  
Michael Williams  
Mary Simpson  
Ricky Jones  
Jan Smith

## McClain Ministries' Calendar 2006'

February 4 and February 18

Home Bible Workshop  
"God's Power Principles"  
(Featuring Web Conferencing)

March 4

National Bulletin Board Party  
107 Brookside Circle  
Clinton, MS  
6:00-8:00 PM CST

We are having a party to launch our **National Bulletin Board Service**. The entire ministry is invited to meet and greet one another. We want to know those who have services to offer the global community.

certainly eat and drink together. But we do all these things as a network of friends, a gathering of family members, a church whose identity is not contained in itself but is found in the God who has formed it.

We are the community of the children of God! We carry His spiritual DNA. We bear His name. We have a great inheritance. Awareness of these things makes a difference in how we see ourselves and function in this world.

Perhaps if more of us saw ourselves as children of God rather than members of the church, we would claim a nobler family inheritance. If we understood church as persons in relationship rather than names on the roll, we would function differently as the church. If we saw sin as the breaking of relationships rather than the breaking of rules, we would live better and deal with one another more gracefully.

If we really love God the Father, we will create churches that are communities of love, accountability, and nurture where gradual spiritual transformation takes place over time. We will live gently with one another. Listen to one another's issues. Teach and learn from one another.

Does anyone doubt that the church, as a community, would have far greater credibility with our not-yet-Christian neighbors if we modeled this sort of behavior consistently? That these positive relational activities count for more than our abilities to sing or preach or prove ourselves correct to those not-yet-Christians? Have we been our own worst enemies over the years in neglecting these relational demands of our faith?

**“Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord**

**forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.**

**Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col. 3:12-17).**

This description of family life is a call to love and respect, consideration and kindness. It describes the sort of healthy relationships that allow growth and spiritual formation, that confer peace and joy. And it describes a New Church for a New World that puts the heart of God on display in the relational life of His family.

**“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!”** exclaimed John the apostle. (I John 3:1). And that is what we are! There is no greater honor to which a human being could aspire than to be part of the Family of God, to have Him as our Father, to sit at the table where there is always abundance. And where there is always room for others.

**Memory Text:**

**“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col. 3:16, 17).**

## **HALLELUJAH I HAVE BEEN REDEEMED!**

By Melva McClain

**Bible Text:** Deut. 28:7 II Cor. 3:5-9 Romans 12:2

**Central Truth:** The grace of the new covenant is sufficient for anything.

This message is designed to refresh your spirit regarding our Covenant Rights. Revelation of the **Blood Covenant** is an essential ingredient in the appropriation of the "Prayer of Commitment."

When Adam committed high treason in the Garden of Eden, he lost the nature of God and turned his authority over to Satan. Through the cross of Calvary, God has paid the price to buy mankind back from Satan's bondage.

The Christian is complete in Christ because of the finished work of Calvary.

God made His covenant with Abraham. That covenant stated, "**The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways**" (Deut. 28:7). Israel remained in bondage to Egypt four hundred years even though they had the covenant right to freedom. Moses was called by God because of the covenant he had with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God taught Moses how to use that covenant skillfully and the result was Israel's freedom from bondage. As Moses operated his covenant rights, God's power was manifested to bring about deliverance. The important thing to note is that the right to freedom belonged to Israel; they did not enjoy that freedom because they were not proficient in their covenant rights. They did not make spiritual application of their deliverance.

Jesus is our surety, or guarantee, of a better covenant (Heb. 7:22). The New Testament is literally God's oath to the born-again believer. It is the covenant of life. In the new covenant a person becomes a new creation through their union with Christ (II Cor. 5:17). This means that the individual receives eternal life (the quality of life God possesses) in their spirit.

As soon as we make Jesus the Lord of our life, eternal life drives the nature of spiritual death out of our inner man.

God has made us able ministers of the new covenant (II Cor. 3:5-9). Not only has God given us His Word, but He has given us His Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth. It is through God's ability in us that we can apply the Word in our lives.

Everything that the believer receives from God, he receives by faith in the Word, by acting on his covenant. The new covenant contains God's power for deliverance, healing and freedom.

Being without a covenant is being spiritually bankrupt—without hope and without God in the world (Eph. 2:12). To walk in our covenant rights, we must renew our mind to what the Word says we have in Christ (Rom. 12:2). As we apply our faith by acting on the Word we are making a demand on the power of God.

The Apostle Paul was a perfect example of a new covenant believer operating his covenant rights. Satan buffeted him at every turn with shipwrecks, stonings, imprisonments and every kind of annoyance. Paul had received the revelation from Jesus of the magnitude of rights in Him. He stood on those rights in the face of Satan and proved the validity of the new covenant every time. Paul said that God's power was manifested to deliver him in every instance. He glorified in Satan's attack because then he was weak, God's

strength was sufficient to put him over. **The grace of the new covenant was sufficient for anything.** Paul learned to be content in whatever state he was in because he had learned the power available to him as a covenant believer.

The New Testament is your blood covenant with God. You are a joint - heir with Jesus Christ. **It cannot fail.** When you uncompromisingly stand on it, it becomes a standard raised against Satan. You are ready for anything through the strength of Christ. Who lives within you (**Phil. 4:13**)! Oh yes, you have been redeemed! **Hallelujah!**

Memory Text:

**Jesus is our surety, or guarantee, of a better covenant (Heb. 7:22).** 📖

### **IN HIS PRESENCE** **6:00 P. M. HOUR OF PRAYER**



Use this wonderful supernatural tool the Lord has blessed us with the **6 o'clock hour of power.** This is the time to intercede for the needs of others, the concerns of the ministry, and to pray for the leadership within our community, our nation, and our world.

Bring all of your cares and burdens to the altar and encourage others to do the same. Lives are being changed. Breakthroughs are happening.

### **HAPPY VALENTINE DAY**



## **HIGHER MOUNTAIN...HIGHER PRAISES**

### **DREAMS DO COME TRUE**

Denise Jones

My son, Carlton was asked to attend the Martin Luther King Banquet. It was held in the Walter Payton Building at Jackson State University.

He was told his band, Provine High School, won the award for best performance in the Christmas Parade.

Little did he know, he would be receiving the "Kermit Holly Sr. Award" for "Band Director of the Year."

Carlton was placed in the "Hall of Fame."

He received the Martin Luther King Banquet Book with a write up of his autobiography, a plaque, and a metal with Martin Luther King's picture on the front and MLK Honoree engraved on the back.

Carlton said, "Momma I've finally made a name for myself".

Isn't God Great saints! Let's give Him a Hand . . . Praise God!

### **MANNA FROM HEAVEN**

Melva McClain

On Thursday night, January 19th, I prayed a specific prayer concerning providing information on free webcam services as well as understandable tools in learning HTML when creating our own website graphics. I asked the Lord to make it extremely clear that the answer I received would be readily recognizable as being from Him. When I opened my email today and saw an Internet link from my niece Kenesha Myers, I lost complete control in giving praise to the Lord because I knew it was my answered prayer. Why? Because

after exploring the link, I saw the specific nature in which God had answered my prayer. What a blessing this link will be to the ministry. I have signed up for the following services:

### WebEx Web Conferencing

### Conference Call Services

Thanks so much for sharing Kim. It's amazing how powerful the sharing process can be.

**\*\*\*\*Higher Praise\*\*\*\***

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU**  
Denise Jones

The last time we talked I was asking you to pray for the success of my Valentine's Baskets and Floral Arrangements.

I am proud to announce as of today I have filled 20 orders that total \$535. Keep those prayers coming saints!

**PRAYER NEVER FAILS**  
Margaret Jones

This is a short note to let you know how much I appreciate you praying for my aunt in the hospital. She is home and up and around. I was sorry to hear of your grandfather's passing. Thank you for the newsletter, please don't forget me in February.

**GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN**  
Gloria Wallace

I just wanted everyone to know that my son Derek's hearing went according to plan. And although we don't know the results yet, I am believing God for a total win. Thank you prayer partners for being there for us.

### **AN ON TIME GOD** Sylvia Washington

On Wednesday, January 11, 2006, I noticed that my refrigerator was not cooling well. I thought that maybe the knob had come off of the temperature gauge and was incorrectly put back on. On Thursday morning I got up and there was water on the floor because now the freezer was defrosting. I said, "Okay, I have to buy a refrigerator." On Friday I received my paycheck and I said, "well, I have other bills to pay but I have to have a refrigerator." I vaguely remember saying, "Lord, I need a refrigerator." No elaborating on it, just vaguely expressing what I needed. I was going to go pick out a refrigerator on my lunch break. Before I went on lunch break, my son, Michael called me and said, "mama, you got something in the mail, it looks like a check." Before going to look for a refrigerator I went home to check out the mail. Well, I have a brand new stainless steel refrigerator and I only paid \$3 and some odd cents out of my pocket. GOD knew my need before I even said anything.

HE is always on time!

**PROPHECY REALIZED**  
Lena Williams

I cannot allow the month of January 2006 to slip away into the history book without giving Praise to God the Father in the name of Jesus for just allowing me and my family to see another year. I am so thankful that He allows us to breathe into another day every day. I am looking forward to all the goodness that will be fulfilled this year in the entire Body of Christ.

Last month I prophesied that my Son Jarrett's Recording Studio AIG (All I Got Productions) would honor the Lord.

Jarrett produced a song entitled "Breathe." It captured my heart.



He wrote the lyrics . . . arranged the music did the vocals and the entire production. It is an anointed production-very good and thought provoking. A free copy will be made available for everyone who requests it.

I am so pleased with Jarrett for revealing his talent by expressing himself and worshipping the Father through his music in his generation and their culture. The good work that God has begun in him from the foundation of the world shall be completed. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Jesus is Lord.

## HOME BIBLE WORKSHOP SCHEDULE



Mark your calendars for the **February 2006** dates. Please plan to attend.

**February 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>**

✉ 1050 Ridgeside Drive  
Brandon, MS 39042

☎ Phone: 601-824-7498

## WEBSITE OFFERINGS

(Article Excerpts)  
[www.mcclainministries.org](http://www.mcclainministries.org)

### OASIS IN THE DESERT

Yeah, I see you. Working hard to feed your family at a job that does nothing for your ego. Living with a disabling disease. Caring

for a handicapped child or aging, weakening parents. Fighting to save a marriage that you're not sure you want to save. Trying to stay clean and sober one more day. You aren't living the life you dreamed about, but you deserve a medal for living the one you have to the best of your ability. But frankly, you're tired. You're worn out. Your energy's sapped, your motivation shot. Your spiritual fire is barely a spark. And you wonder: shouldn't life be more? Is this all there is to it?

A downpour from heaven sounds pretty good right now, huh? Well do you know that it's already falling? "If anyone is thirsty," promised Jesus, "let him come to me and drink." (John 7:37) Jesus' coming was the day of blessing Isaiah was looking for. "Rivers of living water will brim and spill out of the depths of anyone who believes in me this way..." Jesus promised further. He's less about giving you rules to live by than He is about giving you life itself. His Spirit comes to live in us when we believe, and when He comes he brings hope, peace, joy, purpose, and mercy. Heaven opens and God's power pours down to wash away the grime of sin, death, guilt, hate, fear, pain, and failure.

"Now it's time to change your ways!" said a man who knew Jesus well. "Turn to face God so He can wipe away your sins, pour down showers of blessings to refresh you, and send you the Messiah he prepared for you..." (Acts 3:19-20, the Message) All in the world He means is, for heavens' sake, stop rushing through life so fast. Your gut feeling's right: there IS more to it. Life will wear you down and wear you out. Sometimes you have to stop the car and stand still so God can soak you in a downpour of His love, His mercy and His forgiveness.

Turn to Him, not to impress Him with how well you know Him or to make promises to Him, but just to open your arms and receive

what He wants to pour out. Is already pouring out!

I promise you, you'll leave the desert far behind.

### **BEEN THERE, DONE THAT**

No more "been there, done that." Enough of stringing together meaningless experiences. Enough monotonous searching for meaning, purpose, or pleasure. Enough living walking-dead lives, just counting off the days until they put you in the ground and mark your time here with words in rock. He'll make you new. He'll change the way you think about your life, and He'll change the way you think about your death. There is no "been there, done that" in Christ.

### **HAPPY HEALTHY HOLY WOMAN'S PRAYER**

God, I thank you for making me a Happy Healthy Holy Woman. You have shown me your presence when I just serve you, Oh Lord. You are transforming me daily and I thank you for making me the new creation in Christ that I am striving to be. Your love, power and mercy are awesome. You are always on time, even when I cannot see it.

In 2006, I know that you will be in the midst of it all. That is why I will have the ability to recognize the things that are unhealthy and unholy around me. Let me see it, and rebuke it! I am ready to Give it Up and to have it All in 2006, in the mighty name of Jesus!

### **THE TWELVE STEP MIRACLE**

By now you know that I love to watch inspirational movies, as well as read inspiring books. Just recently, I purchased the DVD "Men of Honor," with Robert DeNiro and Cuba Gooding, Jr. It's the inspiring story of Carl Brashears, who was the first African-American to graduate Navy Diving School, the first African-American to become a Master Diver, and after losing his left leg in a shipboard accident the first amputee to be reinstated to active duty.

God doesn't change. He'll do the same for you. Even when for whatever reason you feel alone, I can promise that He'll always be there to whisper or shout encouragement. He'll always beckon you on with His irresistible grace and love. Even if you don't allow Him to fully take the weight off you, He'll still provide the strength you need to take your twelve miracle steps. And He'll be there to give you rest when you finally decide to cast your burden on Him.

### **AH! REFRESHING RENEWAL**

(The "anapsookho" Solution)

The pace of life, the demands of work, the concerns of family, and the pain of losses can pile up and have a withering emotional impact on the soul. The lack of courtesy and simple kindness in our world makes this trip through the parched land of soul-drought unbearably withering. All around us are people who need sweet gracious relief. Unfortunately, most never receive it. None in the forecast. None on the horizon. These weary souls plod on, waiting for their fortunes to change, their grief to dissipate, their exhaustion to pass, and their disappointments to fade.

That's where the "anapsookho" solution becomes such a blessing. You are probably not familiar with the " an-aps-oo'-kho ¶ " solution. No, it's not some new imported pillow, massage device, exercise program, or herbal remedy from the orient. No, this gift of sweet gracious relief was demonstrated by an early Christian family you probably don't remember and with a name hard to pronounce. I'm talking about the household of Onesiphorus.

Onesiphorus, unlike most others who abandoned Paul in his first imprisonment, went to Rome, searched for Paul, found him in prison, and ministered to him in his time of need (II Timothy 1:16-18). He was willing to risk being identified with a man who might be sentenced to die because that man was his brother in Christ. But more than just

the effort of Onesiphorus, his whole family joined in the ministry! Paul describes their ministry with the word "anapsookho," one of the two key words in the New Testament to describe refreshing someone's spirit. The other word, anapowoe focuses more on calming someone and letting them rest to be refreshed. While this is a wonderful blessing, Onesiphorus' word is "anapsookho." Onesiphorus' word means to cool off and help someone recover from the effects of heat, to breathe in fresh, cool air. Refreshing renewal!

### **TRUTH TRANSFERENCE**

To put this principle into good ol' cornbread English, we are being challenged to live our faith so that our children and grandchildren have faith! That means we live with passion and urgency for today, but we also live intentionally to pass our faith along onto the future "generationally."

### **FIELD OF DREAMS**

This message has been on my heart for quite some time. It's a message of hope for 2006. Please read it in its entirety on the website. I believe you will be blessed by the content. "Field of Dreams," is the essence of McClain Ministries, for it represents my personal hopes and dreams.

#### **Excerpt:**

We all must hear the voice of our Lord and build fields of dreams in our homes, our churches, our schools, and our communities. It will mean that we'll have to ignore the world's values, ignore the doubters and those who say it can't or shouldn't be done, and ignore even our own worries and fears. It will sometimes demand that we give up some comfort and get more involved with the struggles of others than our flesh says we're capable of. But if we've ever stepped into the places of grace, forgiveness, and redemption that Jesus has created for us we have no real

choice but to listen to His voice and create places like that for other of the world's vagabonds. If we build places like that out of our actions, our words, our generosity, our love, our forgiveness, our kindness, our bodies and blood, they will come. "Just build it and they will come."

### **HOW TO BEGIN TO SEE AGAIN**

Using the coming months as a learn-to-see time challenges each of us to view reality more spiritually. Yes, we pray for the Kingdom to come. But we can do more in the meanwhile than just tread water. We can submit to spiritual discipline in the same way athletes accept physical training and conditioning.

Take a sticky note and print these words in bold letters: "Your task today is to honor God in all you do!" Put the note on the first thing you will see in the morning — coffee cup, makeup or shaving mirror, computer screen. When you see that note every morning, breathe this simple prayer: "Heavenly Father, let my eyes be open to your presence and your will throughout this day."

### **THE LEARNING TREE**

#### **PUBLIC VERSES PRIVATE EDUCATION**

(A biblical perspective)

Once again **McClain Ministries** weighs in on both a contemporary and controversial subject.

On January 6<sup>th</sup> the Florida Supreme Court struck down a statewide voucher system that allowed children to attend private schools at taxpayer expense.

In a 5-2 ruling, the high court said the program undermines the public schools and violates the Florida Constitution's requirement of a uniform system of free public education.



Chief Justice Barbara Pariente said the program "diverts public dollars into separate private systems parallel to and in competition with the free public schools," which are the sole means set out in the state constitution for educating Florida children.

The U.S. Justice Department filed a friend-of-the-court brief in support of the state. Voucher opponents included the state teachers union, the Florida PTA, the NAACP and the League of Women Voters.

So the question is; should you send your children to public school, private school or home school them? Should government funded vouchers be used to support private schools? These issues are addressed in this timely article.

### HOME BIBLE WORKSHOP REMINDER

A new study manual will be introduced on February 4, 2006 entitled "God's Power Principles."

The truth of the Gospel is two-fold. First, it is the Word of God as revealed in the Holy Bible. To know the Scriptures you must study, understand, and apply them.

But the truth of the Gospel is more than the Scriptures. It is also the power of God. To know the power of God you must understand and apply power principles. The power of God must become a reality in your life through experience.

The world is not interested in what you have done for God. The world is attracted to Jesus when they see visible results of the power of the Gospel that has changed your life. The world is attracted by the demonstration of spiritual power as the Lord works with you to confirm His Word with miraculous signs.

Power principles taught in this course will enable you to experience the spiritual power taught in the Bible. This course answers the

heart cry of those who have hungered for reality instead of religion. It will move you from being a spectator to a demonstrator of the power of God.

### MULTI-MEDIA FEATURES

I CAN ONLY IMAGINE

HE WILL BE

GLORIFY HIM

GIVE IT UP IN 2006'

IN YOU I FOUND ME

PEACE, LOVE, FAITH & HOPE

ART GALLERY-PHOTOS

ART GALLERY - BEAUTIFUL SCENES

ART GALLERY-AFRO-AMERICAN ARTISTS

We have added to our collection in all three art galleries.

### PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENT

**THANK YOU** partners for doing your part in 2005. You are truly a blessing to McClain Ministries. Your faithful commitment and support is greatly appreciated. If you have not yet made a commitment to partner with us for 2006, please ask the Holy Spirit to speak to, and guide your heart about it. If you will do your part God will do His part.

### HOW TO CONTACT MELVA

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# McClain Ministry Direction 2006'

This year the ministry will address three areas:

## 1. SPIRITUAL WARFARE HAS BEEN DECLARED 2006'

There are really only two sides in the battle for the souls of men and women: you obey God or you belong to the evil one.

## 2. REFRESHING THE SOUL

The pace of life, the demands of work, the concerns of family, and the pain of losses can pile up and have a withering emotional impact on the soul. The lack of courtesy and simple kindness in our world makes this trip through the parched land of soul-drought unbearably withering. All around us are people who need refreshing renewal.

## 3. GOD'S POWER PRINCIPLES

You must not stop when you get to a point of blessing in your life. You must break through into the spiritual realm of power. If you do not do so, you will continue to wander in a spiritual wilderness of dry, powerless existence.

You must move beyond the point of blessing into the realm of power. You must become a demonstrator instead of a spectator; a doer instead of only a hearer. When you do so, you will experience the true flow of God's power. You will experience a life force and anointing within you that you have never before known. You will experience life after religion.



# Underestimating Spiritual Warfare

## (Satan's Power To Allure)



In the past you were dead because you sinned and fought against God. You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God. (Ephesians 2:1-2 CEV)

A team of Jews who were traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus. The incantation they used was this: "I command you by Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!" Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, were doing this. But when they tried it on a man possessed by an evil spirit, the spirit replied, "I know Jesus, and I know Paul. But who are you?" And he leaped on them and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and badly injured.

The story of what happened spread quickly all through Ephesus, to Jews and Greeks alike. A solemn fear descended on the city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was greatly honored. Many who became believers confessed their sinful practices. A number of them who had been practicing magic brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire. The value of the books was several million dollars. So the message about the Lord spread widely and had a powerful effect. (Acts 19:13-20 NLT)

We live in a day that discounts the power of evil. Our world can talk about it when people fly planes into skyscrapers killing thousands or when they blow themselves up on subways, busses, and enter mosques killing and maiming dozens. Those clear acts of evil are readily and publicly denounced. Somehow, however, we suffer an unfortunate and dangerous disconnect in the Christian community between sin and evil. We have opted for the modernist preacher's definition of sin — "missing the mark" — and separated sin from the power of evil and lure of the evil one — this point of view was of grave concern to New Testament witnesses.

When was the last time you heard a preacher seriously talk to Christians and warn them the way the Holy Spirit does in the book of Hebrews?

**"Take care, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we share in Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end...." (Hebrews 3:12-14)**

Grace was given to us to rescue us from this power, not to give us a free pass to play with sin and become entrapped by Satan's power once again. Jude reminds us about this distortion when he says:

**"Some godless people have wormed their way in among you, saying that God's forgiveness allows us to live immoral lives. The fate of such people was determined long ago, for they have turned against our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." (Jude 1:4)**

Peter's words to early Christians are intentionally harsh and ugly because God wanted to shock them away from playing with the darkness and its false allure:

When they learned about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they escaped from the filthy things of this world. But they are again caught up and controlled by these filthy things, and now they are in worse shape than they were at first. They would have been better off if they had never known about the right way. Even after they knew what was right, they turned their backs on the holy commandments that they were given. What happened to them is just like the true saying, **"A dog will come back to lick up its own vomit. A pig that has been washed will roll in the mud."** (II Peter 2:20-22 CEV)

There are really only two sides in the battle for the souls of men and women: you obey God or you belong to the evil one. (Ephesians 1:1-2) The evil one exerts a great deal of effort to distort that truth and muddle people's minds about this clear choice. (II Corinthians 11:14; John 8:43-44) However, his intent for those that belong to him is made clear in Mark 5. See what evil powers had done to this man: he had completely lost his identity and his life to Satan. We know him only as Legion — not his real name, but his identity as one controlled by Satan and a legion of demons. He was isolated from others, injured himself, was incredibly strong by evil's power, and lived a hideous life in the place of the dead. (Mark 5:1-9) The memory of this man was not lost on the apostle Peter, who later warned Christians, **"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour."** (I Peter 5:8 NLT)

When people first came to Christ in Ephesus, they were taught that they had to make a choice about their allegiances — it was either God or Satan. Paul wrote to warn them that to go back and dabble in sin was to open the door to Satan in their life. He reminds both them and us that God has made us for something far better; **"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."** (Ephesians 2:10 NLT) We have the power to resist Satan's attacks and temptations in our lives, (James 4:7; Ephesians 1:18-20; Ephesians 3:14-20) but we must realize that to seek that power means we know that playing with sin makes us an enemy of God. (James 4:4) We understand that we are in a real struggle; a war with unseen and vicious powers. (Ephesians 6:10-12)

So what's the point?

Let's realize that when we face temptations we are in a war. It is a battle for our souls between heaven and hell.

Let's commit to the Lord that we won't piddle, dabble, or play with sin because we don't want to have anything to do with honoring the evil one.

Let's be honest with ourselves about our hearts, and let's call ourselves away from a lifestyle that seeks to "play in the gray" and see how close we can come to sin without actually committing the act of sin. Sin is far more than missing the mark; it is offering our heart to the evil one and inviting him into our world to exercise his power and his control.



# WANT TO ADD SOMEONE TO OUR MAILING LIST?

Fill in the information below and mail using the self addressed envelop enclosed.

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_Zip Code\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number( )\_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address\_\_\_\_\_

**Send To:**

**McClain Ministries  
1050 Ridgeside Drive  
Brandon, MS 39042**

