



McCLAIN MINISTRIES

Since 2000 A Monthly Christian Newsletter Publication

March 2009



**THE FRESHNESS
OF SPRING UPON
YOUR SOUL**

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MELVA'S CORNER

INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



Central Thought: According to Jesus, the way to love your neighbor is to take a risk, extend a hand, and do something positive in the life of a person outside your customary circle of friends.

I recently read that a city councilman in Erie, Pennsylvania, has identified an important issue. He thinks something should be done about it.

Jim Casey thinks relationships with one's neighbors is important. In his view, television, computers, and other devices that tend to close us in our houses or apartments have made 'neighborhood' obsolete for many people. Security, civility, and quality of life would be enhanced if people got to know each other.

So Casey put an idea before the Erie City Council to study whether it should require all new homes in that city to be built with front porches. "We need to get out and meet our neighbors," he said. "If porches can help us get back to that good quality of living, then good." We could wish it were that simple!

Thinking that porches will create better

communities is akin to thinking laws could cure racism. True enough, some laws needed to be passed. Those laws established a minimal standard of what would henceforth be regarded as acceptable. But they didn't make a single bigot open-minded and tolerant. Neither will front porches create community and neighborliness. It takes much more.

A verse in the Old Testament says this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). When Jesus referred to this text approvingly one day, a certain fellow in his audience became defensive. "And who is my neighbor?" he wanted to know. So Jesus told what just might be the best-known story in all literature. He told about a Samaritan who came to the aid of a Jew who had been beaten, robbed, and left to die. The same man had, by the way, been sidestepped by two people of his own ethnic and religious group (Luke 10:25-37).

The Gospels aren't anti-Semitic, and the point of the Parable of the Good Samaritan isn't to put Jews in a bad light. Whether it be Black and White, Catholic and Protestant, American and Iraqi, Agnostic and Christian, Straight and Gay, Hip-Hop and Classical — the basic problem in human relations isn't a lack of front porches but a lack of mutual respect.

Compassion is a learned behavior that comes from setting our compasses on Jesus Christ. It is a way of looking at faces, seeing both the many destructive forces that have worked on them and the ever-present love of God that has pursued them. It is a way of remembering—that everyone we encounter is made in God's image. It is a way of confessing—that our salvation is a gift of God and not a well-earned perk.

According to Jesus, the way to love your neighbor is to take a risk, extend a hand, and do something positive in the life of a person outside your customary circle of friends.

In your neighborhood, workplace, or church, you know who and where “they” are. This is your chance to approach just one.

“So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith” (Galatians 6:10)

SPECIAL MESSAGE

A Twenty - First Century Survival Plan



It Rains On The Just And The Unjust

Christians don't get passes on life's most difficult days. Our tires blow out. When there is a terrorist attack in New York, Jerusalem, or Madrid, Christians as well as people of other faiths – or no faith – die (transition) too. When a country's economy takes a blow from war or white-collar crime, Christians lose their jobs or retirement pensions. The Sermon on the Mount conveyed that God causes the sun to rise on both evil and good people? That it rains on the righteous and the unrighteous? And do you really think He was talking only about the weather?

So, you ask, what's the point in praying? First, who can say what tragedies you have been spared precisely because you have prayed for health, prosperity, and your children's safety.

So please continue to pray! Things go on

constantly in the invisible world that our senses can neither know nor acknowledge. Second, surely you believe that many of your prayers have been answered. Most of you that I've seen look like you have had the “daily bread” Jesus told you to pray for. Your sins have been forgiven, and you are promised the evil one cannot snatch you out of God's presence. Third, maybe all of us need to rethink our prayers. Are we praying God's kingdom come or our ship to come in?

Hoping not to be insensitive to the most fragile soul reading this message, I remind first myself and then the rest of you of this quotation from Scripture: “You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures” (James 4:2d-3). The Message Bible puts it this way: “You're spoiled children, each wanting your own way.” Prayer isn't the means for getting my way; it is my access to God's heart for His **empowerment** to deal with life's situations in a way that respects the one in whose image I am created and whose honor I have committed myself to seek.

More often than not, prayer changes the one who is praying rather than his or her life circumstances. If prayer functioned as some of us think it should (i.e., a guarantee of changed circumstances), it would be an evil thing. It would corrupt us, make us shamelessly selfish, and reduce God to a wish-granting genie.

What we think of as “bad” situations often serve a purpose we cannot fathom at the time we are enduring them. They are accomplishing the divine will in an indirect way by refining our character. They are teaching us to trust God through the dark hours. God is not the author of evil circumstances in our life, but He certainly can use them to teach us.

What Drives You?

Something motivates you to get out of bed every morning. And if that motivation were taken out of your life, you wouldn't want to get up. You might not get up. You might even say with absolute truthfulness that you wish you could die. Can you name that thing that drives you? And does it fall under the heading of "flesh" or "Spirit"?

"Flesh" is a biblical category that includes sex, drugs, and revenge. It also includes power and fame, houses and land, great figure and athletic skill, big salary and expensive car. You could also include being a doctor or lawyer, school teacher or preacher, being married and having children, living in good health and having a job. Oh, I mean it! If any one of these things is your sole reason for living, your ladder is leaning against the wrong wall. Every one of them can be affected by the 'world system' or taken from you by a thief or put under the dirt and eaten by worms. If you are depending on one or more of these things to make you happy, you'll experience more sadness and anxiety over them than you will ever receive satisfaction from them. If you were to be and do and have them all, your life would have been wasted unless you discovered the secret to self-restraint, unselfishness and love in experiencing them.

"Spirit" is the life orientation that sees the value of all things in terms of God, His kingdom reign, and the path He has established for you. When our bodies are temples for the Spirit and when His way of thinking and valuing pervade our thoughts and values, honesty is worth more than profit. Humility trumps the desire to be noticed and praised. Faithfulness to a marriage vow defeats her flattery or sexiness, his money or charm. Self-control within the will of God means infinitely more than self-indulgence.

The distinction I want you to see here is the one between primary and secondary motivations. The truth be told, all of are mixtures of the roles and deeds I have just named. Maybe you are a school teacher who wears nice clothes or a preacher who lives in a nice house. Perhaps you are a successful business person who is beautiful or an attorney who makes a fabulous salary. You could be an average person with decent health and two great children – but none of the fabulous "stuff" some people have.

For the purpose of my point here, let's say you are a hardware salesman, your kids are gone from home, and you and your wife have just decided to retire and enjoy life a bit. Feeling good about your decision, you get up one morning with vague abdominal pain. Three days and a dozen rolls of Tums later, you go to a doctor – only to find that you have cancer of the pancreas. You die (transition) three and a half weeks later, without even being able to see your house again or sleep another night in your own bed. That was the dad of a friend of mine.

The week of his death (transition), my friend dared one morning to ask him, "Daddy, do you ever wonder why this is happening to you?" He was lying in bed. His eyes staring at the ceiling tiles in his hospital room. It seemed that a question had been raised he hadn't raised for himself. When he looked back into the eyes of my friend, this was his answer: "Why shouldn't it happen to me? A good friend of mine died of cancer last year, and I've never thought I was an exception and couldn't have the same thing happen to me." My friend's father wasn't a merchant who happened to be a Christian. He was a Christian. He made a good living as a merchant. His primary motivation for living was Christ and work and earning were secondary motivations for his getting out of bed for 76 years.

“Because of the extravagance of [my experiences as an apostle], and so I wouldn’t get a big head, I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan’s angel did his best to get me down; what he in fact did was push me to my knees. No danger then of walking around high and mighty! At first I didn’t think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then he told me, My grace is enough; it’s all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness.

Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ’s strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size – abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become” (II Corinthians 12:7-10).

God isn’t the source of handicaps, accidents, or persecutions, but he is our best and only hope for handling them so they don’t destroy us. And the challenge all of us face in those difficult times is to trust God rather than curse Him, to seek Him rather than flee.

I almost feel like the writer of Hebrews 11 and his list of faith heroes. “**And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about . . .**” (v.32). Neither do I have time to add all the faith stories here.

Jesus on Priorities

Everybody has to settle the issue of priorities. What to value most. What to seek first. Jesus addressed the issue of setting one’s priorities in the Sermon on the Mount. For the sake of being a whole-life disciple, he taught us to measure things by a different standard than unbelievers. Having just said that it is impossible to serve two masters (i.e., God and Stuff). He gets

specific about how the choice plays out in the real world.

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:25-34).

If I am God’s, I cannot be a slave to my credit cards, my ego, your approval, or my job. If His kingdom is first in my life, no one can be as important as He is. If I seek His righteousness above all else in this world, nothing that resembles the unrighteousness of immorality or rage, greed or selfish ambition can be tolerated without grief and repentance in my life.

If you are God’s, you value eternity over time; so struggle, setbacks, and suffering are seen as spiritual character building issues that teaches you to trust God for

grace that will be sufficient. If you are a true-life believer, you respect the “therefore” of this text about God-Yahweh and God-Money; you believe you have a job, income, and possessions to steward rather than hoard, for the sake of being a Barnabas who blesses less-fortunate souls rather than an Ananias or Sapphira who uses money to be noticed and praised. If you are seeking God’s kingdom and His righteousness first, you are increasingly detached from ego, self-justification, and self-serving religion; you are not on a crusade to prove you are right and others wrong but seeking to progress alone your path, live in surrender to His will for your life and affirm every other soul who confesses love for and faith in Him as their God.

Anxiety as Self-Dependence

I’m not sure there is any value in demanding that a hand-wringer quit worrying. Anxiety, worry, tension, stress, hand-wringing – they are not conscious choices of how to react to life so much as they simply bubble up from our perception of how we fit into the cosmos and what we perceive as good and bad. If I believe the world is a cesspool and that history is simply my swirling around in it until I die, how could I help being anxious, frustrated, and angry? On the other hand, if I believe the world is God’s creation and that history is moving toward His announced purpose to bring all who know Christ into ideal community with Himself and each other, can I not find motivation to endure struggle – even persecution for my faith or martyrdom?

Jesus gave two reasons in this text for his disciples to embrace trust over hand-wringing, faith over worry. The lesser motive is the purely practical one that worry does nothing positive for anybody.

“Who of you by worrying can add a single

hour to his life?” he asked. Worry will rob you of your peace of mind, your sleep, and your energy, but it won’t fix a problem. But the greater motive He names is theological in nature. After rebuking our tendency to be preoccupied with health or food or clothing by reminding us that God takes care of wildflowers and birds, He reminds us that men and women in His own image are far more important to Him – and that He hasn’t and won’t forget us. Listen to those words again from a fresh translation:

“If God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers – most of which are never even seen – don’t you think he’ll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you? What I’m trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God’s giving. People who don’t know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don’t worry about missing out. You’ll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.

Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don’t get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes (Matthew 6:30-34).

In other words, the answer to the fretful times in our lives is not guilt over disobeying Jesus’ order against worry. Guilt and shame just make us worry even more! The solution is to be sinking our roots deeper every day in the soil of faith. To remind ourselves from Scripture of God’s constant faithfulness to His people. To deepen our relationship with Christ as Redeemer, Friend, and Brother.

Conclusion

If there is anything positive to be said about worry, it is in these words from Augustine: peace is complete and unassailable.”

So hear these affirmations from the Word of God: "Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall" (Psalms 55:22). "When I was burdened with worries, you comforted me and made me feel secure" (Psalms 94:19 CEV). "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Phil. 4:6). "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (I Peter 5:7).

And hear this reminder in the words of Thomas Merton: "Anxiety comes from strain, and strain is caused by too complete a dependence on ourselves, on our own devices, our own plans, our own idea of what we are able to do." I like the way Merton points to the heart of human anxiety for the simple reason that it takes us back to the thesis of these studies in the Sermon on the Mount. True righteousness is about relationships. It isn't a Pharisees formula – whether ancient or modern – about how to think right, do right, and prevail. It is about two things: (1) a secure relationship with the God who loves His people and whose compassionate wisdom can be trusted and (2) a place within the community of Christ where we can all be honest with our struggles so that others there can come alongside to prop us up until we regain our balance.

The "issues" we have created of economic, social, or religious advantage have made us frantic to outperform one another. To have more. Get an advantage. Be superior. Be vindicated. To live that way only generates constant anxiety that saps strength and corrupts hearts. How ironic that "greater" or "surpassing" righteousness brings such security with God that pressing to have an advantage over others is unthinkable. Lord, may your kingdom come! And that kingdom is within!



Higher Mountains... Higher Praises

A THANKFUL HEART
Anitra Williams-Bender

I just want to thank God for allowing my mother, Denise Jones and Aunt Sylvia Washington, to sell all of their Valentine's Day Baskets!

ALL I CAN SAY IS "GOD IS GOOD!"
Denise Jones



I want to let all of you know about the very successful Valentine's Day sale I had on Saturday (2/14/09). I was going out to sell the baskets and gifts on Friday but, it rained all day and I couldn't, but that didn't stop anything, because when I pulled that PENSKE truck on the lot Saturday morning the people were ready! All I can say is GOD IS GOOD!

My baskets were a SELL-OUT! I SOLD EVERYTHING I HAD! The people were looking for more but there was none. I made over \$4,000! I was able to catch up on my bills because I was behind; and enough to go to the after Valentine's Day sale I'm ready for next year!

Thanks for thinking about me. Pray for me. I am now getting ready for EASTER

A SHOUT OF PRAISE!
Jannice Horton

"A divine consciousness that God by the Spirit never comes to a man's life to whitewash him over or smooth him over or clean him up, but God comes to him to make him NEW and give him a new heart,

and a new mind, and a new spirit, new blood, and new bone, and new flesh, and to send him out with a new song in his mouth, and a new shout of praise in his heart and a new realization of holiness – a truly REDEEMED man.” (Author: John G. Lake)

WONDERFUL WORKING POWER
Evangelist Bonnie Gordon-Forrest

God is so good. He just keeps right on Blessing us over and over again in the midst of our neglecting to do the things He is requiring of us.

My praise report is that there's a couple of ladies in the Scott County Jail who the news media says are responsible for a child/toddler death by starvation. I went into the jail on a Monday night and they wanted to be saved.

They confessed their sins and wanted to be baptized. I baptized these two ladies and two other ladies received salvation and wanted to be baptized. God is still working Wonders and Miracles. I Praise Him for Favor. Love you in the Lord.

THE OIL OF GLADNESS
Melva McClain

For about a week I experienced a dull pain from the right side of my neck to my right shoulder. The enemy tried to convince me that it was a pinched nerve.

As I prayed about it the Holy Spirit instructed me to apply oil to it each morning. I have developed a habit of anointing my hands every morning and so I just started to anoint my shoulder as well. Initially when I anointed my right shoulder with my left hand the stretching action would cause further pain. However, I noticed the pain was decreasing after each anointing. On the fifth day, February 27th as I reached over to anoint my shoulder – there was no pain. NO PAIN. Praise God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark your calendars for the month of **March 2009**. Please join us and take the next step in your walk with God.

Home Bible Workshop Schedule



March 14 & 28

Home Bible Workshop

5:00 P.M. CST

“Faith Moves Mountains – Doubt Creates Them”

The Power of Partnership

I am so thankful our paths have crossed. In fact, I believe it was a divine appointment. Over twenty - five years ago, an encounter with God changed my life forever, and I believe He'll do the same for you. I consider it a privilege to have the opportunity to share the truth of His life-changing power and grace with you.

God called me to teach the truth of the Gospel to the body of Christ with special emphasis on God's unconditional love and the balance between grace and faith.

At McClain Ministries we are working diligently to fulfill that call by training others and by developing ministry materials designed to help you in your relationship with the Lord.

Your interest in partnership is evidence of the fact that not only has this ministry affected your life, but you also have a desire to help someone else and believe this message can provide that help. Together, through partnership, you and I can reach thousands of people with the good news of the Gospel.

I believe the message the Lord has entrusted me to deliver will change the way the body of Christ perceives God. However, it doesn't matter how important the message is or how well I deliver it, until the message is sent, no one will hear. Partnership makes the delivery possible.

The Apostle Paul understood his role as the messenger, but he also understood that partnership was not only about what he received but what the partners received as well. In **Philippians 4:19** he wrote, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." This was written by Paul to his partners.

The Philippians were the only ones who supported him after leaving town. In fact, they wanted to give more but didn't have the opportunity. Paul was saying that there is a special provision for those who recognize the power in partnership.

For me, it has never been about "you" supporting "my" ministry. If you're a partner, then consider this our ministry, and together we will accomplish God's will. In fact, I'm an extension of you and your obedience to God. Like Paul, I'm just the messenger that God has called for a specific purpose. If I fulfill that call, the fruit will be evident to everyone, and if I don't, then God will find another messenger and direct your support to that person.

Although I am committed to doing my part to bring revival to America, we have an awesome opportunity to make a big difference in people's lives around the world. Our current projects must be funded by those of us who are more blessed.

Do you remember when you first began to partake of the message from this ministry and how it affected your life?

There are thousands just like you all over the world, waiting to hear the truth that will

set them free. Will you help us? Together, we can do it.

You may never realize what your gifts accomplish during your life on earth, but I can promise that in eternity, people from all over the world will thank you for your investment in their lives. I want to thank you in advance for your consideration and response.

Please make your gifts payable to, "**McClain Ministries.**" All funds given for Community Outreach projects will be used for that purpose exclusively until the projects are fully funded. Any surplus will then be applied to the McClain Ministries general account.

HERE ARE OUR CURRENT PROJECTS:

Computer Clinic



Tutoring Classes



Community Pantry



National Bulletin Board Service



Internet Radio Station

We are pleased to offer the ability to make donations to McClain Ministries online using your credit or debit card. As you all know we have five (5) ongoing projects at this time. And all of our projects are funded through donations. Thank you so much for your support.

Just simply use the link to go to our website at:

<http://mcclainministries.org/>

Then Click onto the **DONATE** button
Enter the amount and update

Thank you for your Support!



WEBSITE OFFERING

(Excerpts)

IS THERE GRASS ON YOUR PATH?

Native Americans have an old saying: "Don't let grass grow on the path of friendship."

We ought to spend so much time with people we love that there is plenty of evidence of the relationship. The Native Americans are talking about the many ways to knowing good friends. I like that. Relationships need to be nurtured – relationships with people and with God.

When I was a young girl I often walked a path. My mother and grandmother lived two streets apart and many of the people in the area created a shortcut to get to the two streets much quicker.

The folks in the area walked it so often that over time we made a trail. Eventually anyone could follow the well worn path. We actually named it, "The Path."

This can be true of friendship and it can also be true of prayer. Prayer is a trailhead to friendship with God, a pathway to the controlling influence of God's character, the junction where we merge with His grace. Prayer leads us to God. So we need to be familiar with a time and place for prayer. Prayer is a way to intimately know God.

We need to say this often, "I will not let grass grow on my path of prayer."

If you are not experiencing a consistent prayer life there is always time to begin. Start today. Trust me in this - no one feels 100% satisfied with their prayer life. We all wish we prayed more often and we long to make deeper connection when we pray.

When it comes to the journey of prayer no

one has arrived. So begin where you are right now and see where you are in a week, a month, or even a year.

I am pleased to report that through meditation my Christian prayer life has taken on a deeper meaning. I have always used the noon and 6:00 P.M. hours as a staple in my prayer arsenal together with the special times the Holy Spirit quicken me to pray during the day. But in the past year I find myself setting aside much more personal time to work through articles and thoughts with prayer and fasting. Now I create my entire day through prayer. It truly is a life of praying without ceasing. I can say like Paul, "Whether in the spirit or out of spirit, I can not tell."

Some of the early converts to Christianity in Africa were so attentive to their prayer time that they found their own special place to pray in solitude. These sacred spots were away from their village. As they walked to their prayer place they would create their own private footpaths through the brush. When grass began to grow over one of these trails, it was evident that the person to whom it belonged was not praying very often. When a brother or sister noticed an overgrown "prayer path," they would lovingly go to the person and say, "Friend, there's grass on your path!"

Is there grass on your path today?

Pray for our Troops



Give thanks and praise to God for the dedication and service of our military troops as they safeguard our freedom around the world. Pray for their protection and well being, asking God to cover each one with His extraordinary blessing and care.



The first **100** days



CONTINUE TO PRAY

Pray for President Obama as he seeks the best candidates for the open positions on his cabinet, asking God's wisdom throughout this process. Pray for God's choice for candidates to lead the Departments of Commerce and Health and Human Services.

As President Obama's cabinet level leaders now move forward with key plans for their departments, pray for humility, for guidance and for help for each leader as they provide direction. Pray for the members of each department to seek and desire godly wisdom, and pray for God's will to be done in and by our government.

Pray for the health and recovery of our economy, as many are hurting and struggling under current conditions. Pray for those who are unemployed and need jobs, for those who have lost their homes and need housing, for those whose business are suffering because of the economic condition, asking that we, as a nation, will return to God, seeking His wisdom and will.

Pray for all those impacted by the tragic crash of Continental Flight 3407 near Buffalo, NY in February, asking God's comforting presence for those who lost loved ones, help for those who lost property and strength for those who must manage the aftermath. Pray for the speedy rebuilding of the devastated neighborhood.

Give thanks for answered prayer as Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has returned to the Court following surgery for pancreatic cancer. Pray for strength, healing and grace from God as she continues to serve our country on the Bench.



Pray for those military veterans who have returned to civilian life and are now seeking meaningful employment, asking God to open doors of opportunity for them. Pray for encouragement, guidance and help for those facing genuine hardship due to these circumstances.

President Obama has said he is reviewing the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and has, the last week in February, called for the deployment of 17,000 additional troops to help the rapidly deteriorating situation there. Pray for the success of these troops in defeating the Taliban, and for their protection as they do so. Intercede for continued stability in Iraq after the elections there. Pray for godly wisdom for President Obama as he consults with his military advisory team as well as America's partners in making further plans.

Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the nation that keeps faith. You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, is the Rock eternal. Isaiah 26:2-4 (NIV)

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe. Ephesians 1:15-19 (NIV)



WORDS FROM PRESIDENT OBAMA



President Obama spoke to a joint session of Congress and to the American people on Tuesday, February 24. He highlighted several areas of concern and sought to provide hope and a rallying cry for the nation in the face of the worst economic recession in decades.

On the Economy:

I know that for many Americans watching right now, the state of our economy is a concern that rises above all others. And rightly so. If you haven't been personally affected by this recession, you probably know someone who has—a friend; a neighbor; a member of your family.

On Energy:

We know the country that harnesses the power of clean, renewable energy will lead the 21st century. And yet, it is China that has launched the largest effort in history to make their economy energy efficient. We invented solar technology, but we've fallen behind countries like Germany and Japan in producing it. New plug-in hybrids roll off our assembly lines, but they will run on batteries made in Korea.



On Health Care:

We must also address the crushing cost of health care. This is a cost that now causes a bankruptcy in America every thirty seconds. By the end of the year, it could cause 1.5 million Americans to lose their homes. In the last eight years, premiums have grown four times faster than wages. And in each of these years, one million more Americans have lost their health insurance. It is one of the major reasons why small businesses close their doors and corporations ship jobs overseas. And it's one of the largest and fastest-growing parts of our budget.

On Education:

In a global economy where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge, a good education is no longer just a pathway to opportunity it is a pre-requisite.

Right now, three-quarters of the fastest-growing occupations require more than a high school diploma. And yet, just over half of our citizens have that level of education. We have one of the highest high school dropout rates of any industrialized nation. And half of the students who begin college never finish.

Tonight, I ask every American to commit to at least one year or more of higher education or career training.

On the War:

As we meet here tonight, our men and women in uniform stand watch abroad and more are readying to deploy. To each and every one of them, and to the families who bear the quiet burden of their absence, Americans are united in sending one message: we honor your service, we are inspired by your sacrifice, and you have our unyielding support.

On Hope:

Those of us gathered here tonight have been called to govern in extraordinary times. It is a tremendous burden, but also a great privilege one that has been entrusted to few generations of Americans. For in our hands lies the ability to shape our world for good or for ill.

I know that it is easy to lose sight of this truth to become cynical and doubtful; consumed with the petty and the trivial.

But in my life, I have also learned that hope is found in unlikely places; that inspiration often comes not from those with the most power or celebrity, but from the dreams and aspirations of Americans who are anything but ordinary.



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McClain Ministries
1050 Ridgeside Drive
Brandon, Ms 39042
601-824-7498
melvamccclain@bellsouth.net
www.mcclainministries.org



McCLAIN MINISTRIES

Deuteronomy 16:17: Every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee.

This Ministry has been such a blessing to me I want to share in reaching others with a **monthly gift** of:

\$30 \$40 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Enclosed is my ministry additional financial donation of: \$ _____

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