



# Marketplace Moments

## Bibliophoria

### The Practice of the Presence of God

Brother Lawrence

In our pursuit of the 'cutting edge', whether it is science, engineering, politics, missions or church growth we have a tendency to look at the newest and latest trends to be better or greater than before, sometimes regardless of its' merits. One of my lawyer friend coined it 'chronological pride'.

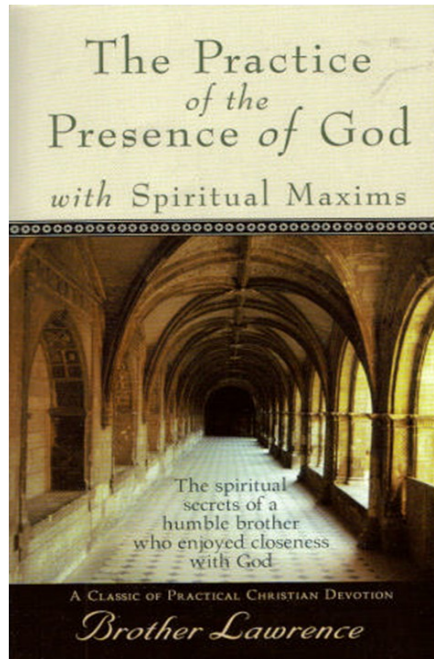
But sometimes, we may have forgotten that perhaps the ancients do have wisdom that are applicable even today. As believers, one thing for sure, the bible, after more than a few thousand years, continue to provide wisdom and guidance to our internet and global world.

Brother Lawrence (1614-1691) was born in France. He fought the Thirty Years War. After an injury that forced him into retirement from the army and a short stint as a footman, he entered into the Discalced Carmelite Priory in Paris.

Though as a lay brother, not having the education necessary for a cleric, his character attracted many to him. He worked mostly in the kitchen throughout his life and as a repairer of sandals in his later years.

Father Joseph de Beaufort, vicar general to the Archbishop of Paris compiled Brother Lawrence's wisdom through his conversations and letters to various individuals after Lawrence's death.

How do we find God in the midst of



our mundane, routine and busy life? Lawrence writes, "Men invent means and methods of coming at God's love, they learn rules and set up devices to remind them of that love and it seems like a world of trouble to bring oneself into the consciousness of God's presence. Yet it might be so simple. Is it not quicker and easier just to do our common business wholly for the love of him?"

We sometimes make our lives more complicated than is necessary. We expect to find God in the spectacular and in the extra-ordinary. I believe with all my heart, that our God is as much concern of our often mundane and routine lives. After all, why would He bother to 'number the hairs on my head?' However, these days, God also require less time than before to count. Sigh...receding hairline.

### Inside this issue:

Bibliophoria	1
Of the Heart and Mind	2
Eyes in a Darkened Room	3
What's Up?	4

### Highlights

- The Practice of the Presence of God
- Information Overload
- Clash of the Titans

## Of the Heart and Mind

### Information Overload

We live in a world of choices. Walk into the nearby megamart or electronic superstore and you are presented with endless choices from tissue paper, coffee to instant noodles. We used to just go buy a color TV with a variation of sizes. Now, we have selection of LCD, Plasma, LED plus selection of regular, HD and Full HD, plus a whole list of RGB, Component, computer, HDMI, SD Card connections and so on.

This is just the tip of the ice berg as we are constantly bombarded with endless stream of email, text or BB messages, Facebook comments, blogs, microblogs, twitters, MSN. Some reports says teenagers texts about 100 to 300 messages PER DAY. Smart phones have greatly increased this explosion of connectivity. But questions remains. Are we more effective? Are we making better decisions?

Conventional wisdom tells us that we need to have information to make right choices. Therefore, the more information that is available, the better the decision. Right? Wrong!

In an article by Sharon Begley in Newsweek 7 March 2001 issue writes, 'The twitterization of our culture has revolutionized our lives, but with an unintended consequence- our overloaded brains freeze when we have to make decisions.'

'Angelika Dimoka, director of the Center for Neural Decision Making at Temple University research found that as information and choices explodes, the decision making process in the brain (activity from fMRI) literally shuts down. The research participants 'start making stupid mistakes and bad choices because the brain region responsible for smart decision making has essentially left the premises. For the same reason, their frustration and anxiety soar: the brain's emotion regions—previously held in check by the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (area responsible for decision making) - run as wild as toddlers on a sugar high.'

The article also mentions that since what we are mostly accustomed to respond to the latest piece of information, the most recent piece of information that we received, though may not be important, will weigh more in the decision than information that was received beforehand. 'Recency' trumps Quality. This Twitter and Facebook culture is literally 'changing the way we think'.

'How can you protect yourself from having your decisions warped by excess information? Experts advice dealing with emails and texts in batches, rather than in real time; that should let your unconscious decision-making system kick in. Avoid the trap of



thinking that a decision requiring you to assess a lot of complex information is best made methodically and consciously; you will do better, and regret less, if you let your unconscious turn it over by removing yourself from the info influx. Set priorities: if a choice turns on only a few criteria, focus consciously on those.'

There is a biblical response along the line of these 'decision experts'. It is known as the Sabbath. The modern church has by and large lost some of the roots of our ancient fathers of the faith, practicing a rhythm of engagement and reflection in the world of work.

I have known more than a few who experiences withdrawal symptoms when you take away their smart phones or blackberry. As believers in Jesus, we also need to learn to align our priorities and purposes along biblical principles and our specific calling. Otherwise, we are not only trapped in making bad decisions, but also living to the tune of the false gods of this age.

## Eyes in a Darkened Room

### *Clash of the Titans (2010)*

Clash of the Titans is a re-make of the 1981 movie of the same name.

Clash of the Titans is set in the Greek city of Argos, where a war is about to explode between man and the gods. A narration introduces the three Olympians who battled the Titans long ago: the brothers Zeus (Liam Neeson), Poseidon (Danny Huston), and Hades (Ralph Fiennes). Hades provided the means of defeating the Titans with his creation, the Kraken. After the Titans' defeat, Zeus created humans and ruled them while Poseidon ruled the sea, but Hades, having been deceived by Zeus, was forced to rule the Underworld. Zeus and Poseidon gain power from the prayers of humans, but Hades learns another way: fear. ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com))

Humans rebelled against the gods and as punishment to the leader of the rebellion; King Acrisius, Zeus disguised himself as Acrisius and slept with the Queen Danae. Perseus (Sam Worthington) was conceived and born. In anger, Acrisius put Danae and Perseus

adrift in a coffin. A fisherman, Spyros (Pete Postlethwaite) found Danae already dead and raised Perseus as his own.

Humans once again challenged the gods by destroying the statue of Zeus and set in motion as series of events to release Hades and the Kraken on the city of Argos. Perseus, in getting back at his 'father' Zeus, went on a journey to get the head of Medusa to defeat the Kraken. Most of the movie then is the adventure of this band of 'merrymen' and Io (Gemma Arterton), a woman who does not age as a punishment for refusing to be seduced by Poseidon.

As a movie, the cinematography has much improved since the early days when I watched the 1981 version but at the same time, this felt more artificial than the 1981 version. Especially Medusa, was less 'scary'.

As a basis for a believe system that ancient Greeks has probably adhered to as recorded in the classics of Iliad and Odessy, what a mess! The origins,



ascend to power, forms of punishment are as much corruptible in the divine as in mortals. There is no proper basis for morality and its' genesis of the separation of the spiritual and material is still widely held today.

This is a great movie to contrast the Christian doctrine and understanding of a loving God and other critical matters. Example:

- 1) The immortality of the gods are fueled by the prayers of humans vs. the 'I am who I am'.
- 2) A universe ruled by playboys (seducing beautiful earthly women) with super powers or using women as forms of punishment vs biblical affirmation and dignity of women made in the image of God.
- 3) The divine power struggle and deceit of one another, where Zeus and brothers rebelled

Continue on page 4





**Marketplace  
Christian Network**

Teban Garden Post Office  
PO Box 669  
Singapore 916003



Phone: +65 6872 4732  
Email:  
info@marketplacechristian.net  
Web-site:  
▶ www.marketplacechristian.net

**Kingdom Building  
at the Workplace**

**Coming Events**

For more information check our web-site.

- 14 May Crossings—The Other side  
(For Crossings Alums)
- 14 May Men-in-Covenant Conference
- 21 Jul Crossings 2011 (Young Grads)



against their elders to seize power or in their deceit of Hades to rule the underworld. Versus the Trinitarian community of the God-head, in unity and harmony.

- 4) The self serving and selfish existence of the gods vs. the self sacrificing act of God throughout the bible and climaxed with Christ on the Cross.

It is also very interesting that the movie brings out two fundamental driving force of humankind. One out of love and the other out of fear. It does perhaps brings out two question for all of us. Which is a greater motivator? And which is in reality the operating factor

in the world which we live in?

What then is the Christian response as we consider this whole motivating factor in our own lives and our relationship to God? Do we respond to Christ through love for Him or in fear of the punishment from Him? There is also a debilitating third option, which is apathy; a don't know, don't care, can't be bothered response. I like the movie in the sense that it sets a dark reality when our believe system is devoid of an all loving, just and mighty God. These 3 fundamental characteristic of God is unique ONLY in the Christian faith.

Timothy Liu