

Steeple News

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'Tis A Gift To Be Simple

When talking to people these days, I have observed so often that peoples' lives are filled with so many distractions and their lives seem to be frittered away with detail.

There is much to be said for having bodies that are lean and trim, and it is so good for physical health. It is also good to have mental and social lives that are also lean and trim. Too many of us overload ourselves with "extra baggage" and then wonder why we live lives of "quiet desperation." We should convince ourselves to choose simplicity over complexity.

Learning "how little rather than how much" we can get along with will help us to develop inner and outer harmony. It doesn't take long to learn what extraordinary spiritual freedom and peace such simplification and harmony can bring. Yes, even in spiritual matters, we can find strength in simplicity. Remember how simple and how direct the Ten Commandments are. Thou shall love the Lord, thou shall not steal, thou shall not kill. These rules are not that complicated. Everyone who wants to obey them should be able to understand them. But, even in biblical times, there was a tendency to complicate life and thereby excuse oneself from God's laws.

In his book, Things as They Really Are, the author, Neal Maxwell, wrote, "We like intellectual embroidery. We like complexity because it gives us a reason for failure. It provides more and more refuges for those who don't want to comply. Thereby increasing the number of excuses people can make for failing to comply."

Simplicity should be a universal goal - not only for all people, but also in all aspects of our lives: It involves seeing every day as it is, not idly dreaming about what we hope it could be. It means finding peace of mind within us, not on a sunny make-believe island beach in the South Pacific. Happiness does not come through material and financial prosperity and instant gratification, even though we live in a society of "buy now, pay later." The more we pamper our desires and let them rule us, the more they will demand. We will always be chasing the, "one more thing!"

It is far better to focus on simple needs, simple pleasures and simple guidelines for life, rather than carry the heavy yoke of a cluttered existence. We would all do better to make simplicity a state of life and mind so we can retain a true awareness of both spiritual and temporal matters.

Rev. Hans Lillejord