

**General Topics :: From Simple Living****From Simple Living - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2011/7/8 16:29**

First, thank you to gizzer and HeartSong for your kind posts. In today's world, when you can find something that makes you smile, it's a blessing!

For those who don't know me, my name is Keith and I live in Minnesota. There's more detailed info in the New Guy in MN welcome forum from when I was here last so I won't bore anyone with that. Suffice it to say that about three years ago, I was awakened out of American Cultural Christianity when I watched Paul Washer's Shocking Message. It made me both shake in my shoes as well as fill me with joy. I had previously come out of the damning Word of Faith movement. Not because I desired money, but because I didn't know how to think for myself and blindly followed others. Even when I was in it, I knew it couldn't possibly be right.

For that matter, I was dismayed with churches in general because I never felt that what was happening there (the traditions, the music, the kid's game rooms, the social-ness without truth or sincerity, the politics, the watered down messages, etc.) was real or meaningful. It felt fake. It was like going to an amusement park and the feeling wore off when you got back into your car and reality set in again. Is this what the biblical church is? If I read the Bible for myself, without outside influence, is this what I would have come up with for how we're to do church and the Christian life?

But, I kept my mouth shut because, frankly, who was I? Nobody. I couldn't possibly know better than the thousands upon millions who are living this way. So, I kept silent. Confused. Hurt.

After watching Paul Washer's video, I was scared to death! I sat in my chair trembling -literally. I had allowed myself to remain clueless and let others think for me, telling me how to act and what to do when it came to Christianity. I could have died in my sin at any time! I'm not right with God! This is true, I KNOW IT IS! I repented and wept. (Little did I know that both the repenting and weeping were to become part of my daily life.) I knew there was joy inside me, too, because I always knew that Christianity HAD TO BE more than what I had seen or experienced. And I wanted more. I wanted all of it.

I found Sermon Index while researching men like Charles Spurgeon and John Wesley. I heard those names from Paul Washer. I joined Sermon Index, shared my story and felt true kinship with the family of God for the first time in my life. I was home.

I called Heart Cry to tell them my story. They sent me free resources and told me about John Piper's church, Bethlehem Baptist. I was very, very nervous about attending another church. I had been hurt so, so, so badly by churches. I had scars that ran deep. I was STILL hurting. I went to my first service and walked out before it began. I couldn't do it. It too k time for me to trust again. But, God was there for me. And so was Sermon Index.

I devoured the site and reveled in the fellowship. But soon I found myself posting too much. It felt frivolous and, even though I stayed out of the arguments, many of the old feelings were coming back. The things of God were feeling too casual again. The Holy Spirit took hold of me and I knew what I was supposed to do. Stop posting. Stop with the online sermons. Sit at the feet of Jesus. Read His Word and pray.

And so I did. (cont.,)

**Re: From Simple Living - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2011/7/8 16:46**

Since I left Sermon Index, my life has been turned upside down. Then again. And again. And again. Everything familiar was shaken or taken away - jobs, apartments, belongings, friends, habits, traditions, desires, health, you name it.

In an attempt to cut the rest of my story short (am I too late?), I grew up. I know that the only thing I have that's worth holding onto (or that even CAN be held onto) is Jesus. Everything else, and saints, I do mean e.v.e.r.y.t.h.i.n.g. else, is temporary. That includes people.

Nothing on this earth belongs to us. We spend so much time and energy trying to hold on to things - people, our rights, money, jobs, possessions, etc., But think about it. Just stop reading this for 30 seconds, close your eyes and think abo

ut this: I am the Lord's and He is mine. Everything belongs to Him. I have only to put all of my strength, might, determination and energy into holding onto Him alone. In my life, He will give and He will take away. But I can trust that He will keep FOR ME, the things I am to have. I don't have to fight for them. It's all in His hands. It's a promise I can rest in because I've experienced it. So, time and energy put into doing anything but the will of Him who keeps me is wasted and fruitless.

I'm convinced that this is the rest He speaks of in Matthew 28:11-30: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

**Re: From Simple Living - posted by mama27, on: 2011/7/8 17:03**

Beautiful and precious post, dripping with truth! Praise God for what He has done in your life! Thank you for being transparent enough to share it...

**Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2011/7/8 17:06**

I was just thinking about you again today - wondering if I had missed your post - and now here it is, at the top of the list.

After reading what you wrote, I had an image of God's people trying to get through the narrow gate with a huge ball and chain attached to their ankle. That is what the love of earthly possessions does, it keeps us from being able to get through the gate.

**Re: From Simple Living - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2011/7/8 17:40**

One more thing I'd like to add, if you'll indulge me with more of your patience!

What I have found after these last few years is the joy and contentedness of living life secretly hidden away in Him. A secret life of studying, praying, giving, weeping, agonizing, serving, adoring, worshiping, repenting and loving! The peace and the joy to be had in this quiet life defies any understanding!

This world has become unrecognizable to me, as I'm sure it has for all of us. Life as we used to know it is over. There is a battle going on, not only in the spiritual realm for your soul, but on this earthly realm for your mind, health and allegiance. There are battles over land, politics, oil, etc., but some battles strike closer to home for each of us. Battles over individual control of our habits, food and health. As I read and learn about everything going on in the world, my heart hurts and I can't help but to cry. How do those who don't know Christ get out of bed in the morning? What do they have to hope for? How do they go on? Governments, big business, Hollywood and the media make me so angry that I can barely contain my outrage most days!

There is such an innate sense of justice and fairness in me that is repulsed by this world. It's getting harder and harder to stand strong and love others, isn't it? People seem to be going insane, stupid or becoming incredibly and boldly cruel and rude! But, God wants them for Himself. And, without total abandonment of ourselves and a fervent clinging to Him, we can't - we won't - be able to love others.

It's time to put away every selfish thing and seek God as a man in the desert would seek the last drop of water on the earth. Our time left is shorter than most realize. Even the world recognizes this feeling, even if they can't describe it. But they're placated by the world's illusions, trappings, allurements, seductions, flatteries, lies and deception. It's easier and it feels better than admitting the truth and having their comforts ripped away from them.

Your struggles, as a child of God, have been intense these last few years, haven't they? They seem unending and unrelenting! It hurts. You ache! So many are in shock and confused, unable to process what's going on. But this is a blessing from God to those who are truly His. I know it is. Everything we rely on, trust in, desire and hold dear is being shaken. Those who persevere to the end, and release what God would have them release, will be left with His strength, comfort and wisdom. We're being prepared for serious times ahead. Those without utter, total, complete, 100% trust and reliance on Him will not make it. Our decisions, actions, thoughts, words and motives all matter. Don't let those things that are not of eternal value in God's kingdom distract you. Yes, we must live our lives each day and not be pessimistic. But this is our training ground. Right here. Right now. Let God finish the work He began in you.

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2011/7/8 19:07**

Sorry about disappearing like that. I had just finished responding to mama27 and HeartSong when the electricity went out! It only lasted an hour, but, in this heat, I'm glad it wasn't out for long! For all that's wrong with the world, at least someone dear, sweet soul had the innovation to come up with air-conditioning!

Thanks for the kind words mama27. It was God who sought me, woke me up and changed me. To Him, for now and evermore, belongs the glory!

HeartSong - One of my favorite songs is What A Friend We Have In Jesus.

What a friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and grief to bear.  
What a privilege to carry,  
Everything to God in prayer!

Oh, what peace we often forfeit!  
Oh what needless pain we bear.  
All because we do not carry  
everything to God in prayer.

That second stanza is precious beyond words to me. For those who will search out that treasure, the peace truly is beyond understanding!

**Re: - posted by gazzar, on: 2011/7/8 21:14**

your welcome ,,verry incouring

**Re: - posted by MyVeryHeart (), on: 2011/7/9 0:14**

God Bless you Keith, and Peace in Christ,

I was walking and saw the judgement to come when I am called to give an account of my deeds. I tried to speak, to say I believe in Jesus, I trust Him, but I couldn't, I just could not answer, could not say anything at all.

Then Jesus spoke and said "this one is mine, he loves me".

I did not have to say anything at all.  
So I just wept as rivers of his love washed over me.

Travis

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2011/7/9 11:35**

Travis,

And God's blessing to you! There is nothing on this earth so dear that it can outweigh the joy and the peace God has for us when we spend time with him.

**Re: - posted by Nellie, on: 2011/7/9 11:38**

THis is profound!  
It ministered to me.  
I knew it was from the heart of God.  
This is the Rest in Jesus I long for.  
We need to show the World "The Love of God."  
The Love that is shed abroad in our heart. by the Holy Ghost.  
The only way we can love anyone is if Jesus Loves through us.  
Blessings to all.

**Re: - posted by MyVeryHeart (), on: 2011/7/9 22:39**

Quote:  
-----There is nothing on this earth so dear that it can outweigh the joy and the peace God has for us when we spend time with him.  
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Amen Keith

**Re: - posted by MyVeryHeart (), on: 2011/7/9 22:40**

Quote:  
-----We need to show the World "The Love of God." The Love that is shed abroad in our heart. by the Holy Ghost. The only way we can love anyone is if Jesus Loves through us.  
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Amen Nellie.

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2011/7/10 0:37**

Hi Nellie! One of the joys of being back with Sermon Index is the leap I get in my heart when I see familiar folks from when I was here last!

I must admit, Nellie, there are days I feel so far from where I "should" (maybe "want" is a better word?) be with the Father. I think of all the wasted years and my heart aches! But all I can do is repent of them and move forward with Him, making the most of right now.

What could He possibly ask of me now that's harder for me than all those wasted years? That question has given me so much comfort and strength to move forward in faith and the determination to obey!

**Re: - posted by mkal, on: 2011/7/10 1:02**

Simple Living,

Do you know of a good fellowship/church in the Mpl/St. Paul area?

Mkal

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2011/7/10 1:48**

Hi Mkal,

I attend Bethlehem Baptist Church downtown. John Piper is the pastor. When I was looking for a place to worship three years ago, this church was recommended to me by HeartCry Ministries of Paul Washer.

Surprisingly, it's not a mega-church, as one might expect John Piper could build. It's small and intimate.

Here's the church's website: <http://www.hopeingod.org/>

**Re: - posted by mkal, on: 2011/7/10 2:11**

thanks much for your response...we are continuing to search and pray. God Bless.