

## Falling Into Simple

### ...and reduce until there is nothing left

In you, but Him with you always.

Growing up as part of what's described as the 'baby boomer' generation, there was the notion that it was a purpose in one's life to be successful materially. It was pretty important. You had your first job at ten as a paperboy and most of us did a morning and evening route. Girl's included. If you were lucky someone would hire you at twelve to be the construction crew 'grunt', the one who continually cleans up a job site. Then high school brought a variety of odd jobs including a 'steady' employment at one of the fast food chains where you worked thirty-four point nine hours a week after school. Thirty-five was the 'legal' limit if you were under eighteen.

College was an era in life of the two job minimum. Plus you had that other job of getting good grades so you could get... when you graduated... 'the job'.

With that came the first 'company' car, then the first apartment of your own, hundreds of miles north of where you grew up. Then it just became succeed, succeed, succeed...

Because with marriage and kids there was a lot of stuff to pay for!

By the luck of my birth and my parents unwavering belief in faith, love, hope and action within the confines of the Roman Irish Catholic Church; and the saving grace of our One and Only God, I managed not to lose sight of where success was really important.

That was to love Him and love everyone created in His Image and Likeness. This modus operandum served me well when I took companies in trouble and helped the people there find the way to make it successful their way. I always embraced the directive the master or 'boss' should be the servant of all. It worked beyond my wildest dreams.

Then came 'the lesson'. It began when I was forty-three. I am still learning twenty-four years later. Fortunately my financial planning, handled by a great friend, protected my wife and children and still does for my wife. The kids own success has taken that responsibility away as far as they are concerned.

Now I find my 'needs' so incredibly simple. That 'lesson' helped put me on a great diet (plus I lost those things called smell and taste well over a decade ago – believe me it is no biggy). The same lesson also put me into a six day a week physical therapy program, three days supervised. I guess the only 'problem' is the meds and the increasing percentage of my social security they eat up.

But twenty-four years after the onset of 'the lesson' I am a 'burden' to no one except of course to my dear Lord and Master who keeps having to 'refine' me a little bit more every day. I want for nothing other than to wake up each day with my first words being, "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will!" usually adding 'whatever that may be and please help me recognize it!'

As my life became simpler and simpler, material needs down to food, rent, and utilities I understood a tiny bit more, every day, of what our Master tells us in our daily readings. An odd thing happened a couple of years back that was a blessing upon blessing. While reading our Scripture, His Word, I understood more and more about Him. Why He did the things He did, why He stood silent when falsely accused towards the end of his days here.

(over)

Why He allowed Himself to be reduced to death, on a cross, murdered like a criminal though he had done nothing wrong, wearing only a crown of thorns and a loincloth and buried in a donated grave.

This was the kind of Person I wanted to follow, to emulate as best I could. Because with Him, I want for nothing for myself.

Because He gives it all.

Even to the point of forgiveness for all the messes we've made in our lives and even worse, the lives of others.

Lent is a solid reminder of life and what happens when you reduce, reduce and reduce your reliance on material things. You will become like Him, or at least His angels according to Him.

What more can one want?

And pure simplicity is so much easier. It gives you much more time to talk with Him, pray ceaselessly for others, and focus on using those moments He still allows you to...

1. Love Him
2. Love everyone else that is created in His Image and Likeness.

After all there is absolutely nothing better than to serve Him and serve everyone else. At a military graduation from a secrete intelligence school the 'Soldier's Creed' was in the program.

I am an American soldier.  
I'm a warrior and a member of a team.  
I served the people of the United states and live the army values.

I will always place the mission first.  
I will never accept defeat.  
I will never quit.  
I will never leave a fallen comrade.

Would that we all would live our lives as such. It is most important to note that this ceremony began with an invocation. The chaplain stated proudly that we are ***One Nation, under God, with liberty and justice for everyone.***

God still is firm in our armed forces, especially in the fox holes, where life can get really simple.

As in just life or death.

So as Moses said, "Choose life, that you and your descendants may live..."

And this life is obeying His Word.

Pretty simple!

Clement