

**Christ Community Covenant Church**  
**Simplicity: Freeing the heart and soul from the clutter of fear and guilt**  
**Pastor Dave Scherrer - May 3, 2015**

Ruby Eliason and Laura Edwards missionaries in Cameroon were killed not too long ago. Ruby was over 80. Single all her life, she poured it out for one great thing: To make Jesus Christ known among the unreached, the poor, and the sick. Laura was a widow, a medical doctor, pushing 80 years old, and serving at Ruby's side in Cameroon. The brakes failed, the car went over the cliff, and they were both killed instantly. And I ask you: was that a tragedy? Two lives, driven by one great vision, spent in unheralded service to the perishing poor for the glory of Jesus Christ- two decades after almost all their American counterparts have retired to throw their lives away on trifles in Florida or New Mexico. No. That is not a tragedy. That is a glory.

I tell you what a tragedy is. I'll read to you from Reader's Digest (Feb. 2000, p. 98) what a tragedy is: "Bob and Penny... took early retirement from their jobs in the Northeast five years ago when he was 59 and she was 51. Now they live in Punta Gorda, Florida, where they cruise on their 30 foot trawler, play softball and collect shells." The American Dream: come to the end of your life - your one and only life - and let the last great work before you give an account to your Creator be, "I collected shells. See my shells." THAT is a tragedy. And people today are spending billions of dollars to persuade you to embrace that tragic dream. And I get forty minutes to plead with you: don't buy it.

What I want you to hear today is that every moment of your life matters, from your first breath till your last. You matter to the King and to His Kingdom. We may feel different than that. We may feel useless and unimportant but that is a wrong or bad feeling. We may not experience the possibilities of this being a meaningful life by being encumbered by the world. We may, like George Bailey in *It's A Wonderful Life*, not see how wonderful and meaningful our lives are because of bitterness due to the relentlessness of life and we have lived indifferent to His voice, been self-centered in our lifestyles. But all that doesn't change the fact that your life matters to God and to me.

We have been talking these last few weeks about simplifying our lives; reducing the amount of clutter in our lives, prioritize our spending and giving in Godly ways, carefully spending our time and nurturing important relationships. These are all great. But even excellent work done in these ways can be misspent if our hearts and souls are cluttered and distracted. It is very possible to be poor in this world and still be too consumed with the things of the world. If we think of a simplified life simply as having fewer things and fewer relationships and more discretionary time, then we may have been missing the point. As I noted a couple of weeks ago:

**Simplify: It is not just about saying no, shedding off relationships and throwing things out. A life of simplicity is not having less. It is more of a state of *being* than it is a state of *having*.**

I believe that it is possible to not have much in the way of money or possessions or have many demands on your time and still be greedy and resentful of others. If we are to be truly free, it is not so much about the physical clutter and accumulations of things as it is the clutter of our heart and our souls.

I want to speak to you today of feeling let down with life and seemingly let down by God and how we then handle the clutter of the bitterness and disappointment that can fill our hearts and souls as a result.

**Freeing your heart from the disappointment and bitterness of un-met expectations**

It's real. Sunday after Sunday you hear me speak of the relentlessness of life. It is hard and many times life is not only not fair, but mean. Jesus of course would agree with us. He said so Himself. He said, "In the world you will have tribulations. +He said "If you love me people will hate you.+ People that you love will let you down. They will break promises and they will say mean things in anger. Now here comes the simplicity problem of our heart and soul. If we choose to hang onto that hurt. to carry a grudge, to keep score, to harbor resentment to refuse to forgive - our hearts will become cluttered with pain far more

dangerous and consequential than the clutter in your basement or garage or closet. This kind of soul clutter can kill you like a slow poison.

Don't hear me wrong. I'm not saying just put a smile on your face and pretend it's not there. But there are answers. God has given us several in His Word. I'm going to suggest three this morning that will help to clear out the clutter of resentment and anger from our hearts: Those three are worship, confession and forgiveness. They are medicine for the soul and heart.

### **Worship, Confession and Forgiveness – Medicine for the Soul and Heart**

Let's talk about worship for a bit and how this discipline in our faith changes our lives. Anything done to the glory of God is worship. Singing in church of course we think of as worship and prayers of praise too. But also Christ-centered conversation around the watercooler and over the fence can be worship. Work done as unto Christ is worship. Giving of time and money for the sake of the Kingdom is worshipful. And each time we practice life in this manner we are breaking the hold that resentment and disappointment and anger can have over us.

Freeing your soul from the clutter of unforgiveness and bitterness means putting your eyes back on God and off of the source of your disappointment. Let's look and see how David did this in the Psalms . . .

#### **Psalm 42:11**

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?

#### **Psalm 43:1-2**

Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people, from the deceitful and unjust man deliver me! <sup>2</sup> For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you rejected me? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

#### **Psalm 43:5**

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Worship sets our eyes off of ourselves and onto Christ. Confession does much the same. We confess our brokenness and then it is easier to see God's sufficiency.

#### **1 John 1:9**

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

To have your heart clean from the weight of sin and guilt is priceless. The knowledge that God has forgiven my sin as far as the east is from the west gives me strength to face the mirror. More than that it gives me confidence to speak the truth even when I fail to live it. And here is another joy, confession is more than acknowledging my sin it is proclaiming Christ.

#### **Romans 10:9-10**

Because, *if you confess* with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

### **Forgiveness**

#### **Matthew 7:3-5**

Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?  
<sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, *Let me take the speck out of your eye,* when there is the log in

your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

**“Holding a grudge, keeping score and judging others takes an incredible amount of energy and makes you unfun to be with. Nobody wants that!”**

*D. L. Scherrer, 2015*

I want to set us up for communion with some practical hints to freeing your heart and soul from the clutter of fear and guilt and bitterness . . .

1. Mind your own business and your business is the Kingdom of God. Where you set your mind matters . a lot!

**Romans 12:2a**

Do not be conformed to the things of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind . . .

**Col 3:1-3**

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

**Phil 4:8-9**

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, **think about these things.** <sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

2. Keep Calm and Simplify



In the face of adversity, taking a deep breath and telling yourself the truth about God not only being in control but in charge help me both stay calm and have the wherewithal to continue to simplify the outer and inner parts of my life.

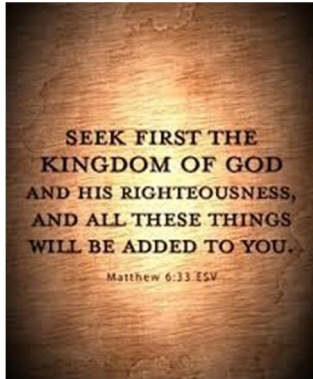
3. Keep short accounts with God, with others and with yourself

4. Give up religion . Yield to and abide with Christ

**James 1:27**

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

## One Thing



### Luke 12:32

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

### Communion

This is the dinner of the Kingdom of God! This is the dinner that frees our heart from the stains and the clutter of a lifetime of guilt and shame. This is the dinner that saves our soul from the burden and the debt of guilt and the penalty of death. This is the dinner that simplifies our lives and allows us to be at peace with our God, at peace with each other and at peace with ourselves. This is the dinner of champions! This is the dinner of the church eternal and this is the banquet of life itself. From this table our souls will never again thirst for love or truth or purpose nor will our hearts ever again feel the pangs of hunger for righteousness and justice. This is because we have been set free from the wages of sin and death. This is the simple table of our Lord's death. Take you and eat and live abundantly!

### Discussion Questions

In the sermon on Sunday on simplicity it was said that

**A life of simplicity is not having less. It is more of a state of *being* than it is a state of *having*.**

Do you agree with this? What is a simple state of being anyway?

Dave talked about worship, confession and forgiveness as medicine for the soul and heart. Do you think our souls and hearts are sick? How so?

Worship is setting our minds on Christ in everything we do. That means we can worship every second of the day! Is this how you understand worship? What do you think is your best worship style or experience?

Confession . There is confession of not only my sinfulness but also God's sufficiency. How do you think that having a habit of reflecting regularly on how God is in perfect control might help us simplify our hearts and souls?

Do you agree with Dave that offering and accepting forgiveness and keeping short accounts would be helpful in uncluttering our hearts and souls? Why is forgiveness so hard? Why do you think it is so important to God that we forgive others (ie; Lord's Prayer)?

Dave used these words to introduce communion:

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Is this how you see communion? How do you see communion?