

Saving Christmas...

Part two: "Simplicity – the answer to complexity"

Reflection and study notes

No matter how you look at it, life is getting more and more complicated. There is another way: **simplicity**. Saving Christmas is about rediscovering simplicity.

"The older I get the more clearly I perceive the dignity and winning beauty of simplicity in thought, conduct, and speech; a desire to simplify all that is complicated and to treat everything with the greatest naturalness and clarity."

Pope John XXIII

"To be simple is to fix one's eyes solely on the simple truth of God at a time when all concepts are confused, distorted, and turned upside down"

Detrich Bonhoffer

What would be the advantages to you to simplify your lifestyle?

In what ways do you make life too complicated for you to live fully and freely?

What do you think Jesus was getting at when ... "He called a little child and had him stand among them? And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me." (Mtt 18:2-5)?

"There are four things that are too amazing for me, four that I do not understand: the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a maiden."

Proverbs 30:18-19

Simplicity is the ability to live in a complex and confusing world. It's anything but simple and refuses trite answers. Simplicity - just is. It transcends all we know and what we don't know. Let's take two really big questions, "God?" and "life?" and see if we can begin to get our head around them. Our guides: the shepherds in the nativity story.

1. Expectant observation

"Keeping watch over their flocks by night" Lk 2:8

Simplicity starts by expectant observation of the ordinary and extra ordinary.

2. Experience

"An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified" Lk 2:9

There are many experiences in life that are too big to get your head around. You can't. The just are!

Simplicity is an experience. It just is. It is beyond explanation.

3. Experimental

"Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." Lk 2:15

While simplicity just is, it's more than that, it needs to be tested. Experience needs to be tested. Is this for real, is it working and can it be trusted?

"Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him." Ps 34:8

4. Explanation

"for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told." Lk 2:20

Every life is lived as an explanation.

Expectation + experience + experimentation = explanation