

# Simple Way

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Study Given by W. D. Frazee—March 30, 1973

The Lord continues to impress my mind that He wants the way of salvation made very simple. Jesus wants hearts to be at rest. He wants to fill our souls with peace. It is the enemy that seeks to make things complex and hard to understand—hard to get hold of. Jesus says, "...My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:30).

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" 2 Corinthians 11:2–3.

Paul compares the church to a bride about to be presented to her husband. She is getting ready. Does she need to primp? Does she need to doll up? Paul says that what she needs is simplicity.

Jesus pointed His hearers to the beautiful Spring flowers and He said:

"...Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin" Matthew 6:28.

That's the beauty of natural simplicity.

"...As the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" 2 Corinthians 11:3.

It is a wonderful thing to get hold of simplicity. Jesus started the early church with a simple message, a simple program of evangelism, of witnessing, worship. But look and see what happened. See the complexity, the ornamentation, the ceremonies that human wisdom kept adding and multiplying. When we came to the Middle Ages, what professed to be the church of Christ was called the synagogue of Satan. We need the wisdom of the Spirit that we may be kept from the wisdom of the serpent.

God loves to accomplish things through the most simple methods. I came across this interesting sentence:

“God often uses the simplest means to accomplish the greatest results” *The Desire of Ages*, page 822.

We are told that the more simple our methods in our work for God, the more we shall accomplish. Many human hearts are filled with worry and anxiety because so many problems surround them.

“The gospel is a wonderful simplifier of life's problems”  
*Ministry of Healing*, page 363.

I noted a statement that showed the number of things that people considered essential at the turn of the century. It showed how many items they would need to buy in order to set up a home and carry on life. With that, a similar figure was given as life is being lived now. There were several times as many items that have to be had now in order to live. Life is getting more complex. But in the midst of all this, God is going to have a people who learn how to get the joy of life through becoming more simple instead of more complex.

Tonight, I would like to illustrate this in several areas. First of all, a simple faith. Faith is not some difficult thing that only a few can get hold of.

“They need not feel that in order to exercise faith they must be wrought up into a high state of excitement. All they have to do is to believe God's Word, just as they believe one another's word” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, page 83.

In one of the early visions that we're given of the Lord's messenger over a hundred years ago, this sentence occurs: The angel said, “Some tried too hard to believe.”

Faith is so simple. There are some things we miss by looking too *low*; there are other things we may miss by looking too *high*. Jesus took a little child and set him in the midst of his disciples and said:

“Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” Matthew 18:3.

The faith of a little child is what we want to covet.

A friend of mine was telling me about a conversation he overheard between two little girls.

One was jumping up and down and said, “I've got ten cents!”

The other girl said, “Let me see!”

She opened up her hand, and there was a nickel.

"I thought you said you had ten cents. There's only a nickel."

She said, "Here are five cents, and Daddy promised me five cents, so I've got ten cents."

What did she have? She had faith.

Are you happy about the promises of God? If they were only half as great as they are, we would still have plenty to rejoice in. But they are not subject to discount. The dollar on Heaven's stock exchange will never be devalued. His promises are yea and Amen. Everything that He says is true and can be counted on. And faith is so simple. It is to believe His word the way we believe one another's word. Count on it. Do what He says, and believe that He'll do what He says. Oh, let's cultivate the simplicity of faith! What do you say?

Let's not reach out after something complex, something difficult, something hard to get hold of that only a few people can really understand. Thank God He's made it very simple.

"No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should be faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust Him as fully in the darkness as in the light" *Messages to Young People*, page 111.

Number two: a simple education. What a great problem is being made of education today. In the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy, we have some interesting schools brought to view that were called the schools of the prophets. Do you remember who started those schools? Samuel. Do you remember who revived them? Elijah and Elisha, his young helper. There were several of these schools, and they were so arranged that it was a nice days' walk from one to another.

Before Elijah was translated to Heaven, he visited these schools. He spoke to the students and faculty at each of those places. Would you like to know what he emphasized?

"Just before Elijah was taken to heaven, he visited the schools of the prophets, and instructed the students on the most important points of their education. The lessons he had given them on former visits, he now repeated, impressing upon the minds of the youth the importance of letting simplicity mark every feature of their education" *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 512.

Simplicity was to mark every feature of their education. “Mark” indicates “to show up,” “to be revealed.” No matter what class you went into in the school of the prophets, you would be struck by how *simple* it all was. That’s the way it is to be in our teaching and our learning. Our educational program is to be simple, for we are getting people ready for the coming of Jesus.

“Only in this way could they receive the mold of heaven, and go forth to work in the ways of the Lord. If conducted as God designs they should be, our schools in these closing days of the message will do a work similar to that done by the schools of the prophets” *Ibid*.

Let's keep it simple. What do you say?

Number three: a simple diet.

“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat” Genesis 1:29.

That is “for food.” Then in Genesis 3:18, the herbs of the field are added. So fruits, grains, and nuts constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. That is a simple diet, very simple. It was the diet given to man at the beginning, and it’s a good diet to help us come back to the Eden life—the Eden perfection.

“You should use the most simple food, prepared in the most simple manner...” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, page 83.

Food is to be simple. The preparation of the food is to be simple. Someone might say we could make it so simple it wouldn't need any preparation at all. That’s carrying a good thing to an extreme. God even in Eden gave Adam and Eve the work of doing what with the garden? Dress it and keep it. There was something for man to do. So God has given man something to do in the preparation of the food. After sin entered, there was more work in the garden and more work for food preparation. That’s all right. But we should keep it simple.

I want you to think of some of the advantages of simplicity. Does simplicity save *money*? Sure it does. Does it save *time*? Yes. Does it save *thought*? In the messages that came to the Madison School, that self-supporting institution that was started by the encouragement of the prophet of God a generation ago, instruction was given on this line:

“We are to learn to be content with simple food and clothing, that we may save much means to invest in the work of the gospel” *An Appeal to the Madison School*.

I was talking to someone the other day and we agreed that there were three reasons that people are economical. One reason is, some people *have* to be economical because they have so little income that they’ve *got* to be. Another reason is that they have sufficient income and choose to be saving in order to put by something for an emergency. A third reason is they save so that they may have something to give. One of those three reasons should motivate all of us.

It is harder to economize when you don't have to than when it is that you do. Someone has said that in order to find out what the average American needs, take his income and add 10 percent. And too many are *fulfilling* it.

I was talking with a banker, and he told me about a man who came in and wanted to borrow some money. The banker sat down with him and went over his finances with him. He showed the man that he had already committed every dollar of his income on installment payments of one kind or another. But in spite of all that, he still said, “I want to borrow some more money.”

God is calling us to the simple life.

Now, another way to be simple is simple in our dress.

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works” 1 Timothy 2:9–10.

Worldly dress usually tends to the complex, ministering to vanity and pride. It tends to absorb means which ought to be used to help the poor or advance God's work. It tends to absorb time which ought to be used in prayer and the study of God's Word and ministry to others. Of course, there is the other extreme. We see many today unwashed, unkempt—not neat—that are proud of that. God save us from either extreme. The Bible is calling for simple, modest, inexpensive dress. This doesn't mean slovenly, and it doesn't mean not beautiful. On the contrary, Christ said, “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.” Let me read a comment on this:

“Christ has warned us against the pride of life, but not against its grace and natural beauty. He pointed to the flowers of the field, to the lily unfolding in its purity, and said, ‘Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these’” Matthew 6:29.  
*Messages to Young People*, page 352.

So Christian dress should have the grace, the beauty, the appropriateness of natural simplicity. What a saving in time, money, and thought! Let's cultivate an appreciation of it for Jesus' sake, for our soul's sake, for the sake of our influence.

“Human reasoning has ever sought to evade or set aside the simple, direct instructions of the Word of God. In every age, a majority of the professed followers of Christ have disregarded those precepts which enjoin self-denial and humility, which requires modesty and simplicity of conversation, deportment, and apparel. The result has ever been the same—departure from the teachings of the gospel leads to the adoption of the fashions, customs, and principles of the world. Vital godliness gives place to a dead formalism. The presence and power of God, withdrawn from those world-loving circles, are found with a class of humbler worshipers, who are willing to obey the teachings of the Sacred Word. Through successive generations, this course has been pursued. One after another, different denominations have risen and, yielding their simplicity, have lost, in a great measure, their early power” *Ibid.*, page 354.

Is this what happened to the early church? Is this what has happened to one after another of the great protestant denominations? Think of the warnings and close instructions that Charles and John Wesley gave to the Methodists as they led out in the revival in England. How plain were their instructions! And there was a time when to be a Methodist meant to be very plain and simple—Puritan plainness and simplicity. My dear friends, God is calling in the remnant church for a return to apostolic simplicity and purity in all these lines.

Number five, simple homes. Simple houses and simple lifestyle in those homes.

“Puritan plainness and simplicity should mark the dwellings and apparel of all who believe the solemn truths for this time. All means needlessly expended in dress or in the adorning of our houses is a waste of our Lord's money” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 189.

The king of Judah received the ambassadors of Babylon and showed them all through his house. He showed them his riches and treasures. What did the Babylonians eventually do? They came and took it all. There are those who have the idea that the way to impress the world is to match the world in wealth or at least the *appearance* of wealth. Nothing could be farther from the truth. God has called His people to be a simple people. Simplicity should mark the dwellings and apparel of all who believe the solemn truths for this time.

When we are tempted to put money into our homes, let's remember: God wants us to be comfortable and neat, but He doesn't want us to put out one dollar for

extravagance or that which *looks* like extravagance. Why? Because He is hard on us? No, because He is easy on us. The simple life is the easier life. He wants to be easy on us, so He says to avoid the complex.

The medical missionary program that God has given us to share with others teaches the simple life. I was thinking about exercise. In the last few years more attention has been given to exercise. It is interesting to watch the different ways it manifests itself in different places and minds. There are people who get all stirred up over exercise and go and buy all kinds of expensive equipment in order to exercise. Do you think it would be possible to exercise without that? I see people every day on these roads and trails getting exercise with equipment that doesn't cost anything. Do you know what it is? It's their muscles. That is what needs the exercise. What are we told is one of the best forms of exercise? What are we told that nothing can take the place of? Is it available? Thank the Lord.

If I stay indoors, I don't hear the birds sing. I don't see the flowers bloom. I am so glad for the beauty of the out of doors. I can get all that exercise, the beauty of nature, and the joy of communion with God. The simple life is the happy life.

So in our home program, let's avoid the complex. Even with good things, let's not have too much. Music is good, but to have music piped in the home all the time could not be simple. Do people need time to think? Do people need time to commune with one another? Some people are trying to carry on a conversation while the radio or TV or tape recorder or record player may be going on. Is that simple? No, it's distracting. I've sometimes suggested to people, "Would it be all right to turn that off while we talk?"

I am trying to encourage everybody tonight to get back to more simplicity in everything in life. In our family worship, let's avoid a stilted routine. Let's be informal and free. Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Sixth, simple soul-winning. I'm so glad that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. That leads me to simplicity in soul-winning. The early church in one short generation went to the ends of the earth, and literally millions of converts accepted the message. What was their method? Prayer and witnessing. There is no substitute for it.

Do you want to be successful in soul-winning? Do not be thinking of some new gadget, some new plan, some new method, and grab onto one after the other as you chase after some new butterfly. Settle down to a steady program of prayer for definite souls and witnessing to them. We are given that wonderful promise:

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven" Matthew 18:19.

Get a prayer partner and pray together from time to time, simply claiming the promise, presenting the names of those for whom you are laboring, and pleading with the Lord to give you those souls. Then, as you come into contact with those you are praying for, God will give you His Spirit.

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,  
shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his  
sheaves with him” Psalm 126:6.

This is what is happening on this campus and in this community. As the flowers of springtime are blooming, and as the leaves of springtime are appearing on the trees, I see something happening in soul-winning right now—just as quiet as the bursting of the buds, but it’s happening, thank the Lord.

Do you want a part in it? Be simple in your faith, simple in your life, simple in diet, simple in dress, simple in education, simple in prayer, simple in claiming the promises, and simple in keeping on doing what God has told us to do. The harvest is as certain as God's promise. Be not weary in well doing, for in due season, we shall reap if we faint not.

So I pray that God may anoint our eyes that we may see the beauty of simplicity in all these areas of life. And the Holy Spirit will suggest to you many applications of these divine principles that I have in mention. Remember, it’s not to burden us, it’s to unburden us. It isn't to tax us; it's to relax us. It isn't to worry us; it's to free us from worry. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

[Testimony time follows]

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W. D. Frazee Sermons  
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757  
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755  
[www.WDFsermons.org](http://www.WDFsermons.org)  
[support@WDFsermons.org](mailto:support@WDFsermons.org)