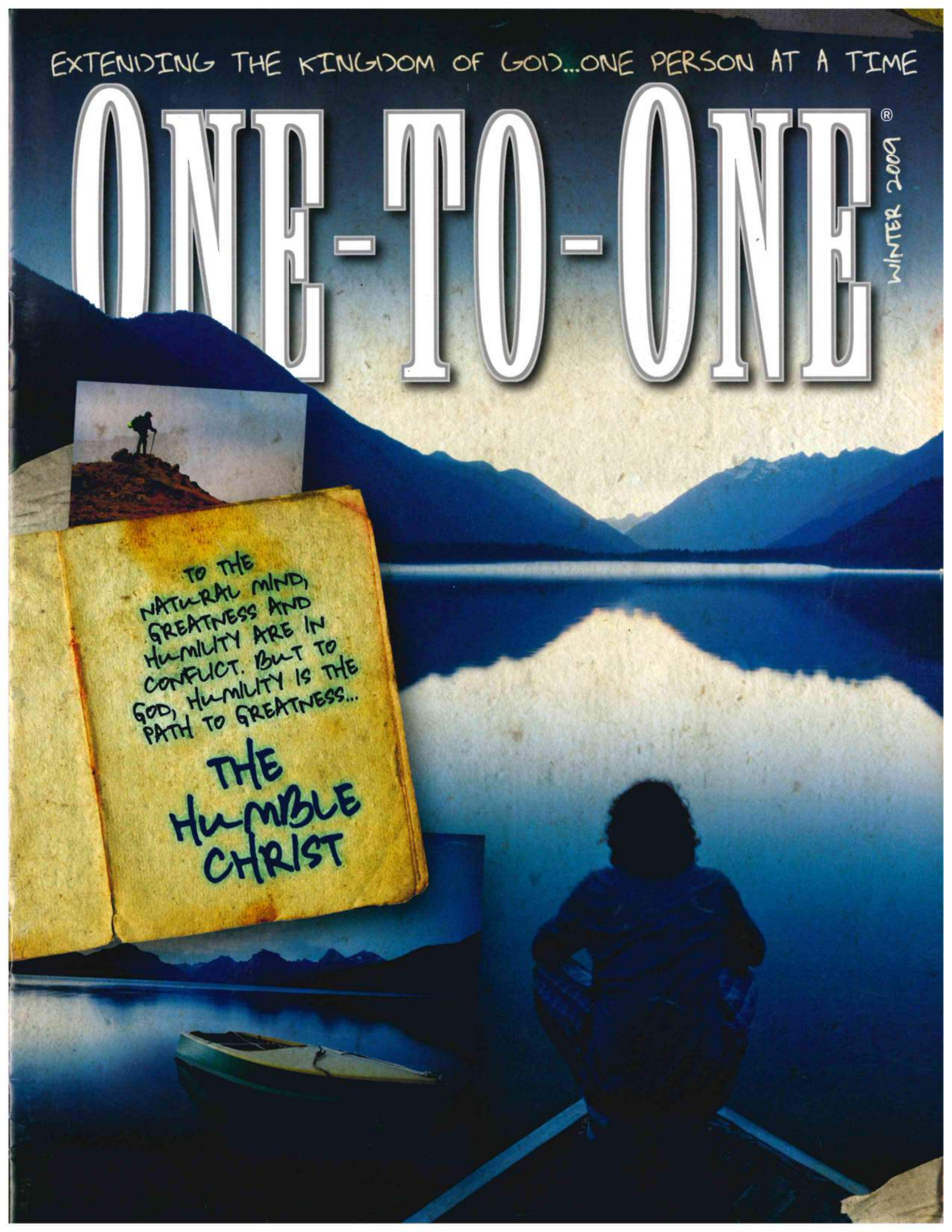


EXTENDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD...ONE PERSON AT A TIME

ONE-TO-ONE®

WINTER 2009



TO THE
NATURAL MIND,
GREATNESS AND
HUMILITY ARE IN
CONFLICT. BUT TO
GOD, HUMILITY IS THE
PATH TO GREATNESS...

THE
HUMBLE
CHRIST

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THE RETURN OF THE turtle

WHY ENCOURAGEMENT
IS CONTAGIOUS

By Stephen Simpson



I LOVE GETTING PRESENTS, ESPECIALLY SURPRISE PRESENTS AT surprise times. So imagine my joy on a recent January Sunday when I received a box wrapped festively with an accompanying message that my sermons had been encouraging to one of our church members. She wanted me to know that the box contained a turtle—not a live one, mind you, but a very special beautifully-crafted wooden one nonetheless. Immediately, I knew precisely why she was giving me this turtle, and what it meant.

You are probably wondering when I will share that secret knowledge with you. Your patience is about to be rewarded.

Some months ago, I was having a very difficult Saturday, facing many challenges, tasks, conflicts, and disappointments. To make matters worse, I couldn't seem to get a sermon together for the next day's service. So, I decided to console myself in the usual way, which is to go to lunch at my favorite bayside restaurant and tuck into a nice bowl of pickled beets. On my way, I passed a turtle in the road, bravely struggling to make the crossing without becoming turtle jerky. I may have mentioned already, in passing, that I was having a bad weekend, and though I wished the turtle no harm, my "help-o-meter" was already in the red zone, and so I zipped right around him and continued on my way.

And then the Lord spoke to me: "Just because you're having a rough time doesn't mean you can't help the turtle out of his trouble." Past experiences of ignoring the Lord's voice, or rebelling against His leading have taught me that those are generally poor choices, and so reluctantly, I turned the car around and drove back to the site of the little turtle's quest.

Something in me began to empathize with the turtle, and so I picked him up, careful to avoid his fierce jaws and deadly talons, and carried him across the road and into the safety of the woods. As I did, the Lord reminded me of the ways in which He carries me, and how He has called me to take what I've received from Him and share it—joyfully—with others.

That day, I saved a turtle and got a sermon, and I shared it the next day at church—and then promptly

forgot about it. Fast forward to this recent January Sunday, as I came into the sanctuary tired and battle weary, facing some fresh challenges, less than enthusiastic about having to preach, and wondering—in a fit of self-pity—if I had a friend in the world.

Suddenly, I was handed the gift and the message about the turtle, and how God had somehow used me to bless a wonderful sister in our spiritual family. Joy hit me like a bracing hug (or kick in the pants) and completely changed my outlook. Encouragement—literally, "to give heart"—had come full circle again, passed from friend to friend, to return again with "new mercies" that were fresh and enlivening.

In 1 Samuel 30, we see how David encouraged himself in the Lord after a bitter defeat, when all seemed lost. What wonderful news: we can find hope in the

Lord—He is the strength of our hearts. Having then received this gift from the Lord, we are called to share it with others. Amazingly, encouragement has a way of coming back to you...it is a most hearty and resourceful seed to sow. Once it takes root in hearts, it grows like a vine, and bears much good fruit...and fruit that remains.

Find encouragement in the Lord, and share it with somebody today, in words and in deeds. Make Isaiah 58 and Isaiah 61 your own personal mission, as Jesus did. Be a part of somebody's deliverance. You never know when they may come back to be a part of yours. **121**

Stephen Simpson is the Editor of **One-to-One** and Senior Pastor of Covenant Church of Mobile. He is also available for ministry in your city. For more information, contact Betty Duke: bettydukesm@aol.com / (251) 633-7900.

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TO THE NATURAL MIND, GREATNESS AND HUMILITY are in conflict. But to God, humility is the path to greatness. We need to grasp this lesson for many reasons that I will discuss with you. It can save our lives.

The conflict between greatness and humility can be seen all around us in every arena of life. Sports offer us many examples. ESPN is a popular channel for sports fans. Recently ESPN ran a video of a "great" running back. I could call it "hype" or a "puff piece." It was evident that the talented football player believed the hype about himself as he thumped his chest. In the following games, his "exploits" declined into mediocrity. Pride placed a target on him and set him up for a fall.

Of course, sports are not the only area where "greatness" and humility come into conflict. Years ago, a very popular evangelist bragged to me that he was bigger than Billy Graham. Billy Graham is a humble man, but this evangelist fell under the weight of his own pride. It's sort of like the guy who wrote the book *Humility and How I Achieved It*. Success is a tricky issue, only the humble can survive it. Jesus shows us how.

HOW TO WALK THE PATH
THAT JESUS WALKED
THAT LEADS TO
GOD'S PURPOSE & FAVOR

THE HUMBLE CHRIST

BY CHARLES SIMPSON

So what is humility? It is freedom from arrogance, a modest estimate of oneself, a deep sense of unworthiness before God, a submission to His will. A willingness to hear criticism—whether it is just or unjust—is a way of yielding to God, making room for Him to be the judge, where we are placing ourselves in His hands.

The most obvious and best example of humility is Jesus, who—though He was God made flesh—became the servant of all and made Himself of no reputation (see Philippians 2:5-11).

HUMBLE IN BIRTH

Jesus did not come to us as Superman, descending from the galaxy. He came as a baby, completely vulnerable. He was born to a humble maiden in a manger among livestock, in the village of Bethlehem. Joseph, the step-father of our Lord, was a carpenter—a common laborer. Mary, Joseph, and Bethlehem were Divine choices—deliberate decisions to begin Jesus' journey to glory in humility.

HUMBLE IN CHILDHOOD

Jesus was taken from Bethlehem to grow up in Nazareth, another obscure village of common people. Luke 2:51-52 tells us that Jesus submitted Himself to His parents. He was the Son of God, yet subject to His earthly parents. His submission is further evidence of His humility as a child.

Luke also tells us that being subject to His parents, He increased in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. Humility enabled Jesus to cope with His evident knowledge and character, and to learn, thus avoiding the pitfalls of pride. It also

brought favor from His heavenly Father and the local community. Humility is the foundation for spiritual growth; it enables one to listen and learn.

obstacle He could not overcome, from raging seas to raising the dead. Some wanted to make Him the King of Israel (see John 6:15).

Multitudes came on foot walking for days just to

THERE WAS NO OBSTACLE HE COULD NOT OVERCOME, FROM RAGING SEAS TO RAISING THE DEAD. MULTITUDES CAME ON FOOT WALKING FOR DAYS JUST TO GET A GLIMPSE OF HIM. BUT JESUS REFUSED HUMAN GLORY AND TOOK NO CREDIT FOR HIS EXPLOITS.

HUMBLE IN BAPTISM

John the Baptist preached repentance and baptism as a demonstration of it. Multitudes came out to the Jordan River to hear John and be baptized. Though Jesus had no sin, He insisted in identifying with sinners in baptism, over John's reluctance to baptize Him.

While baptism is a joyful experience, signifying our death to self and being raised to new life, it is also a humbling experience. It is a public confession and placing ourselves in the hands of another to be buried and resurrected. Baptism was for Jesus a foretelling of His emerging ministry of identification with sinners, and placing His own life in the Father's hands, in a literal death, burial, and Resurrection.

HUMBLE IN MINISTRY

Jesus' ministry was the most powerful and supernatural that the world ever witnessed. There was no

get a glimpse of Him. But Jesus refused human glory and took no credit for His exploits (see John 5:19).

The reason that the Father could invest such power in Jesus was because He knew that His Son would not succumb to the deception that often destroys those who seek power and glory.

Another evidence of Jesus humility was His ability to be with sinners without losing His own righteousness. Good as He was, He was not too good to sit with sinners. He came for them. In His Sermon on the Mount, He said that the humble would be blessed—those who saw their own need (see Matthew 5-7).

HUMBLE IN DEATH

Humility is not always rewarded by humanity, and so it was with Jesus. He was rejected, not because He had committed some deed, but because He was a threat to those in power, and because the Father had chosen Him to take upon Himself

our sin. Isaiah 53, the Gospels, and Philippians 2:5-11 so clearly and profoundly describe His death.

Jesus said, "Not My will, but Your's be done." He humbled Himself even unto the death on the Cross—which was a cursed death. In addition, He died between thieves, who were being punished for their own sin, but He died for ours. To quietly take the punishment that others deserve is a humility that very few of us will never achieve. But in His case, it is our salvation.

Humility is not an end in itself; that is, we do not walk humbly just to be known as humble. Humility is a demonstration that we trust the Father to raise us up to the measure of His purpose. Jesus knew that the **Vindicator** was near (see Isaiah 50:7-11). He knew something that we must learn; the Vindicator is near to those who humbly trust in Him. We cannot vindicate ourselves. We have an Advocate with the Father who must vindicate us (see 1 John 2:1).

Pride is inordinate self-esteem, conceit, a sense of superiority due to beauty, wealth, ability, power, or achievement. It is expressed in many ways: Cockiness, self-promotion, insolence, rebellion, or patronizing tones. It is repulsive to God who is truly superior yet respects humility. It is also repulsive to others.

Pride is Satan's sin (see Ezekiel 28:12-19). It got him cast out of heaven and eventually into the pit. Satan was proud of his place, beauty, and power—he lost it all. He (better than us) understands its deceptive force,



TRUST AND OBEY

Jesus obeyed and trusted the Father in His humility; *therefore*,

the Father raised Him up and gave Him a name above every name. At His name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord, because He is worthy!

Jesus attempted to teach us the great lesson of humility in Matthew 23:12. "Whoever exalts himself shall be put down, and whoever humbles himself shall be lifted up." Humility is our task; lifting up is His.

and, he uses it against us. It sets us up for a fall, creates strife, blinds us to reality, and masks our insecurity. It causes us to persecute others who are innocent and criticize those who achieve more than we do. The list of pride's problems is endless.

ANTIDOTES

Pride is a terrible disease for which there is a cure, thank God! Most of us have at sometime succumbed to the "pride virus," like the man who was given a badge for his humility. But when he wore it, they took it away. John Wesley, who believed in "entire sanctification," was asked if he was entirely sanctified.

He replied that if he said that he was, he would not be.

So what can we do to prevent this fatal disease in our own lives? The apostle Peter was afflicted with pride (see Matthew 26:33-35) but was cured at the Cross. This same Peter offers us the cure when he writes: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (see 1 Peter 5:6). Again, humility is our task—exaltation is the Lord's.

It is interesting to note that in previous verses he tells younger people to

Serve others who are in need.

Serving humbles us to see our blessings and the desperation of others.

Learn from the arrogant

how not to be, or how not to repeat their errors.

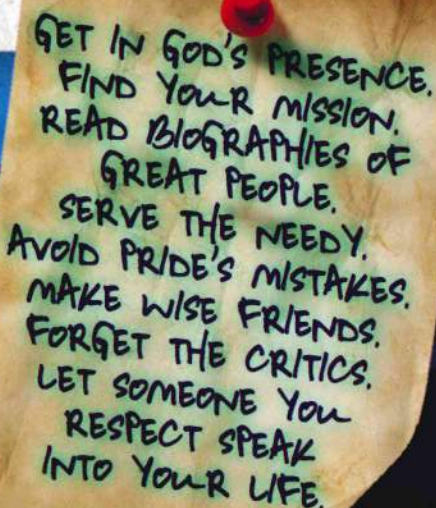
Associate with people who are more mature, or wiser than yourself as often as possible.

Don't spend much time listening to critics, their pride is contagious.

www.Biblegateway.com and look up a variety of Scriptures concerning humility and pride; there are many. Again, it could save your life.

My purpose is to preserve us through these perilous times. Our nation and we who are believers need to humble ourselves. It is the prerequisite for much-needed revival that will open our hearts and eyes to reality, and cause appropriate action.

A new look at the humble Christ will remind us that the One that we follow walked the path of humility and service. That path led Him



GET IN GOD'S PRESENCE.
FIND YOUR MISSION.
READ BIOGRAPHIES OF
GREAT PEOPLE.
SERVE THE NEEDY.
AVOID PRIDE'S MISTAKES.
MAKE WISE FRIENDS.
FORGET THE CRITICS.
LET SOMEONE YOU
RESPECT SPEAK
INTO YOUR LIFE.

submit to elders and everyone to be submissive toward each other. Other Scriptures tell us to "in honor prefer one another."

There are several antidotes to pride, or means to humility, which will help us to avoid the "pride virus":

Regularly get into God's presence—if we truly enter His presence, we will see ourselves in need (see Isaiah 6:1-7).

Find your mission. Mission will humble you as you discover your limitations and dependence upon God.

Read biographies of truly great people and realize that they survived dark humbling times to be finally promoted.

Submit your opinions and decisions to someone you respect. Submission is a mark of humility and wisdom.

Many years ago a friend and I were looking at boats. Just for fun, a broker showed us a large yacht. The name of it was "The Arrogant." On its deck was a small boat, a dingy named "Cocky." The yacht was for sale because the owner was in prison for tax evasion.

If you are serious about this serious subject, I would suggest Proverbs 16; it will give you God's word on humility and pride. Beyond that, you might get a concordance or visit

to favor with the Father, Who exalted Him, and wants to bless us with great blessings—when He knows that such power, wealth, and beauty will not destroy us as it did our adversary. The choice is between humility now or humiliation later.

Remember, Jesus was not only the righteous Son of God, He was intelligent—intelligent enough to walk humbly and vigilant before the Father; and give the glory to Him. 121

Charles Simpson is Editor-in-Chief of One-to-One Magazine. He ministers extensively throughout the United States and among the nations.





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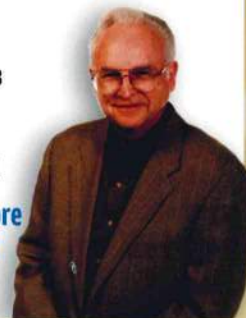
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BY STEPHEN SIMPSON

Love Is...

Real Life Lessons From Mom & Dad

FEBRUARY IS, FOR MANY, THE "MONTH OF LOVE," HIGHLIGHTED BY THE celebration of Valentine's Day on the fourteenth day. I like Valentine's Day...it's an opportunity to express my love and gratitude to my wife, Susanne, in a special and intentional way, and to be reminded that such expressions can never be offered too much. And, there is the moral and loving obligation for me to consume at least a couple of chocolate candies...in my wife's honor, of course.

This Valentine's Day—and every Valentine's Day for the rest of my life—will also carry special personal significance for me, and for our whole family. In 2008, one day before Valentine's Day, my Mom went home to be with the Lord after a lengthy battle with cancer. Mom's life was filled with so much love, which she lavished upon all of us in our family, especially Dad, who loved her deeply and fully in return.

Demonstration

Dad and Mom's love story is a beautiful one, and it has touched untold numbers of lives. Their first "official" date was on Valentine's Day, 1958. They both grew up in godly families, and both were sensing God's call on their lives before they met. My parents had gotten to know each other during a church revival—Dad was preaching, and he needed a piano player for the meetings. Love bloomed over sodas following the evening services, and they married in 1960.

My parents not only told one another—often—of their love, but they demonstrated it constantly through unselfish acts, each constantly seeking to bless the other. Their love spilled over onto us as their children and to so many others who have related as natural and spiritual family with them.

The apostle Paul wrote these words to the Christians in Corinth:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

Thanks to my parents, I learned from the earliest age what love is, and saw them live Paul's words. In fact, it was their example that God used to teach me about His own love. He showed His love to me by giving me my parents and by expressing His love through them towards me. I observed them treat one another lovingly, and also saw how they loved my sister and brother. This opened me up to receive God's love and "prepared the way" for His voice to call me into His Kingdom.

Not a Chore or a Bore

The phrase "love is a verb" applied at our house. Mom was not only a thoughtfully eloquent speaker and writer, but she was a servant of the highest order. She not only laid down her life to serve my Dad, my sister, my brother, and me—and our extended family and church members—but she loved doing so. She lived to serve and found great joy in it; it was not a chore or a bore, but a delight to her. Her meals were made with love, the home was clean and bright, she constantly taught us how to be good servants and good stewards, how to pray and play, and how to honor our Dad and most of all, God.

She was an avid reader, and instilled in us a love of reading. As a child, I remember her reading to me from "Treasure Island," "Robinson

Crusoe," "Paddy the Beaver," "Swiss Family Robinson," and of course, the Bible. When I wanted to ask Jesus into my heart, it was Mom who first knelt with me and prayed beside me. She laughed with me, cried with me, played with me, and gave me a good switching if I got out of line. That's love!

Likewise, Dad served Mom and our family in so many ways. The world knows my father as a pastor, author, and teacher who pioneered in the Charismatic Movement. But in our family, we've always known him as a tireless champion for us, who has always—in every case—sought God's will and God's best for each of us. He was always affectionate with Mom, though never in a way that we as children would find "yucky"... but it was genuine. It was plain to us that they were each other's best friend, and woe be to the individual—including one of us kids—if we ever tried to come in-between or divide them. It wasn't going to happen. They were always on the same page; the world might come against them, but they stood together and saw the world's schemes come to naught.

Dad is always encouraging, teaching, exhorting, serving, challenging, coaching, and stretching those he loves. If love believes all things, as Paul says, then we can say we've seen Dad believe—and help us believe—that all things are possible in God. And, those who know him know there's never been a more generous man, though so much of his giving and serving has been "behind the scenes."

Another facet of his life has been his loyal and faithful commitment to those he pastors, no matter what they may face. Thank God, he's not only been that way with church folks, but it always started at home. I've seen a lot of religious phonies in my life; so many, in fact, that I was once tempted to walk away from faith. But, the genuine integrity I've always

continued on page 15

TIME 2 INVEST

IF YOU'RE LIKE MOST AMERICANS, YOU CLOSED OUT 2008 WITH A 30-40% HIT ON YOUR INVESTMENTS. How to invest your remaining funds is likely—and should be—on your mind. As we re-incubate the nest egg with another “failsafe” strategy, we should also be remembering the most precious resource we have to invest: *time*. I want to say upfront that this is not really an article on time management tips; there are plenty of good

A look at our
moment-by-moment
investment portfolio

by JONATHAN SIMPSON

writings already available on that subject including a few topic threads on CSM's online discussion board. This is also not an evaluation of the subject of time which gives the same sensation as lying on your back at night and staring into the cosmos. Time is a mystery not to be solved here, but to be revered for its investment power and understood as God's creation, which He holds as a tool in our transformation. It will never get a bailout, but it will be redeemed.

● "I AM" OUTSIDE TIME

"The Architects of Time" is the seductive tag line of a renowned Swiss watchmaker. If this article were an interview with the self-proclaimed "architects" maybe we could get to the bottom of questions such as "What did 'In the beginning' look like?", "Is time travel possible?", "When did the dinosaurs come into play?", and as a bonus question, "Where does your company see itself in the next 2,000 years or so?" You get the point. I'm sure they make fine watches.

To invest our time wisely it is important that we should consider our time context. In our limited understanding of time, we give it attributes such as "Time is on our side", "Time flies", "Time stood still", "Time will tell", "Time marches on", and "Time will heal." Perhaps these ascribed traits are in fact intrinsic to its design. We

should realize however that the hands of **the clock** serve the Designer of time itself, and not any other end. "Father Time", the charming old guy who married "Mother Nature," is an example of mankind's inadequacy at times, to see beyond creation to the Creator.

The real Architect of time is no more bound by time than a bird-house builder is confined to his bird house. Like the sparrow, our capacity to grasp this is limited. From our Time Crafter's vantage, all of time is open to



Him. He can enter time at anytime. His Word to us is timeless because He is able to speak from where time is not. He offers, in a moment, salvation beyond a lifetime. He is the Appointer of time and time is really on His side.

● TIME AND MONEY

We hear it often: "Time is money." But how much is it worth? Considering that time is constantly being spent (whether we invest wisely or not), cannot be saved, is limited, and we don't know when it runs out; what on earth is more valuable? Time and money are both

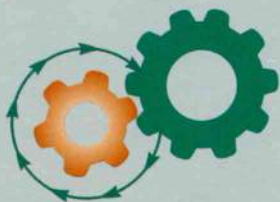
measurable and investable, but time is the better measurement and the best investment.

All too often we spend money to compensate for our poor time investments. "My prescription medicine will fix my (fill in the blank) because I didn't invest time in my diet and exercise.", "This iPod will fix my relationship with my child since we haven't spent time together." And my favorite... "These new golf clubs will bring out my 'A' game since I didn't take the time to practice." The same holds true at work. "I would have made the sale if I'd invested the time to know my product or my client's needs", "We're in the red because we never took the time to budget or project cash flow", "It sounded like a great investment at the time, but I never considered the business plan."

● TIME FOR FRUIT

Investors on Wall Street know that when the bell rings, their investment opportunity window for the day has closed. From Big Ben to our daily planners, we are conscious to measure time. But no matter what the "beam me up crowd", the "Doomsday predictors", or the cuckoo clock may say, only the Architect knows what time remains in store. Those stuck on this issue will be left behind in productivity.

Not to put a damper on joys of the **Jake and the Fat Man** TV marathon you may have watched last night, but we have to face it: money we **can** save, but to gently



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disagree with Jim Croce, we **can't** really save time; bottle or no bottle. Our man on the street says, "Sure, I can save time...I know I saved at least 3 minutes yesterday taking the shortcut." Hurrying does not equal saving time. It's not as if you're going to live to be 103 because you knew all the shortcuts. In fact, it may have the opposite effect. The hurried approach (a.k.a. poor time investment) usually reflects poor preparation on the front end. Yes, we must learn to utilize time, but under-allocating time investments because we had "other things to do" and expecting to hurriedly make them up later is not sustainable. Preparation is a consistent, on-going time investment that yields transformation. This is fruitfulness. As followers of Christ along the Kingdom road, we are in preparation; being transformed with God's grace from glory to glory.

● TIME RETURN

We hire investment planners for our asset allocations because we want to maximize our investment potential. We weigh our risk tolerance, age, desired retirement lifestyle, look at charts and graphs but what about our time portfolios? Along with our money, everything is vying for our time. Family, friends, work, the synchronized swimming team, Area 51 memorabilia, 1960s horror films, and trivia. Judging from its fruit, there could be a strong case made for Americans to reevaluate their time expenditures over the last 60 years. Education rankings, credit card debt, and divorce statistics

are not witnesses we want called to the stand. We have our work cut out for us.

Recently, my friend Dr. Lawrence Bedsole did something that only 38% of Americans do at least once a year. Along with his wife, he invited some friends over for dinner at his home. The friends happened to be me and my wife. In conversation, Lawrence commented "that we're losing the sense of accomplishment taken from being a master in whatever it is that we do as individuals and as a calling. Bragging rights seem to be based now on how much you CAN do as opposed to how much you excel at what you SHOULD do or were called to do."

There is no way to cheat time. Wal-Mart is not selling "flux capacitors" last time I asked for a price check. There is, however, a way to make the most of time if we are willing to be obedient to its Creator. Who else could lay out a better time portfolio for us? Time is at His side. He has allotted the time for your transformation; for you to become a master in your calling, and He is able to redeem that which is lost.

As you consider where you will spend time in 2009, remember there is no better time investment than in people. Remember this at work and with those God brings into your life. If there ever was a way to compound time—this is it. ¹²¹

Jonathan Simpson is Director of the Construction Services Team for Apex III, a construction firm based in Mobile, AL. He also coordinates *Marketplace Exchange* for CSM and provides management assistance for the Hidden Treasures Costa Rica ministry.

witnessed in Dad's life—and His gracious encouragement towards me—were used by God to bring me back into His purpose.

Tenderness & War

And just when we thought we had learned everything we could know about love, we witnessed Dad and Mom in the final years of her life; it may sound strange to say, but the overwhelming sense I have concerning that season is gratitude for all that God allowed us to see and know, by His amazing grace. Dad set aside any agenda he could have had for work, travel, and ministry in order to completely and tenderly give himself to Mom's care. Oftentimes, he had sleepless nights and grueling days, but he was constantly there with Mom, offering hope, and assisting her with every aspect of daily life. And, in the same measure that he demonstrated tenderness to Mom, he also demonstrated a fierce determination to serve her as she fought cancer. His willingness to war on her behalf not only added time to her life, but added life to her time. That's love.

In a world where the vision of love is often distorted or perverted, and where it can sometimes seem that love is not real, it's heartening to see a picture of love that, like a light, can cut through the fog of confusion and offer an example for how we can live.

Regardless of our past or our present, we can all discover opportunities now to demonstrate love through service, selflessness, loyalty, commitment, tender affection and kindness, work, and even fighting together against common enemies. It is incumbent upon those who are parents to demonstrate love—not only for the sake of those who receive this love—but for the sake of a younger generation who is watching us, reading us, learning from us, and who will one day do as we have done. 121

Stephen Simpson is the Editor of *One-to-One* and Senior Pastor of Covenant Church of Mobile.

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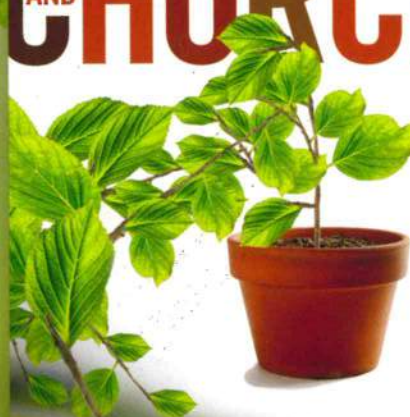
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