

# The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January/February 2000

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## How to Simplify Your Life

The more complicated life becomes, the more we need to quiet our souls before God. It is my prayer that the following simple (but not by any means easy) principles may be of help to many as they have been, and continue to be, to me. "The Lord God will help me. Therefore shall I not be confounded. Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (Isaiah 50:7, KJV).

1. *Go to God first.* Kneel in silence. Lift up your heart and hands. Listen. "I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him" (2 Samuel 15:26).

2. *Receive the Givens and the Not-Givens.* "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup, and have made my lot secure" (Psalm 16:5).

3. *In acceptance lies peace.* "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

4. *It is always possible to do the will of God.* "If you love me, you will obey what I command" (John 14:15; 15:10). "Let the weakest, let the humblest remember, that in his daily course *he can if he will*, shed around him almost a heaven" (F.W. Robertson).

5. *Do it now.* "I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands" (Psalm 119:60). "You do not even know what will happen tomorrow" (James 4:14).

6. *Love means sacrifice.* "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16). Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:1-8.

7. *Choose your attitude.* "Your attitude should be that of Christ Jesus, who ... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant.... He humbled himself" (Philippians 2:5, 7, 8).

8. *Analyze your struggle.* Is it merely delayed obedience? "For some it is 'Down crosses and up umbrellas!'" but I am persuaded that we must take heaven with the wind and the rain in our faces" (Samuel Rutherford). "I run in the path of your commands, for

you have set my heart free" (Psalm 119:32).

9. *Give it all to Jesus.* "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it" (Matthew 16:25). "I am willing to receive what You send, to do without what You withhold, to relinquish what You take, to suffer anything You inflict, to do what You command, to be what You ask me to be—at any cost, now and forever" (Anonymous).

10. *Do the next thing.* "In the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded" (Ezekiel 24:18). "Five minutes of drastic obedience would make things as clear as a sunbeam" (Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*).

11. *Give thanks always and for everything* (Ephesians 5:20). "Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil on my head. My head will not refuse it" (Psalm 141:5).

## The Present Moment

Although none of us are miracle-workers and none can say we do always those things that please the Father, yet the Lord Jesus, with perfect sympathy and kindness, invites us to follow Him. Most of the things He may ask us to do will be small, but F.W. Faber says, "Love's secret is to be always doing things for God, and not to mind because they are such very little ones."

My dear friend Jan Webb, crippled by polio long ago and finding herself growing weaker, sent me her favorite quotation from Jean-Pierre de Caussade:

Run, faithful souls, happy and tireless, keep up with your Beloved who marches with giant strides from one end of heaven to the other. Nothing is hidden from His eyes. He walks alike over the smallest blade of grass, the tallest cedars, grains of sand or rocky mountains. Where you go, He has gone before. Only follow Him and you will find Him everywhere.

**De Caussade**

*The Sacrament of the Present Moment*

## *Another Transformed Marriage*

“I am ashamed to admit that your talks on *Me? Obey Him?* really convicted me. I had heard another Christian speaker say that she rarely had any conflict with her husband because he never forbade her to do things. So, in my thinking, if my husband didn’t forbid something, I was doing fine. But my marriage wasn’t growing together. We were going our own separate ways more and more. I have to admit that I didn’t really listen if he just disliked something or didn’t actually forbid it. After listening to your programs I decided to listen to my husband with more of my heart and see if I was missing anything. I wanted to honor God in my marriage also. I started *not* doing the things that bothered him and started accepting his authority when decisions had to be made. It wasn’t easy but with each small step God gave me the strength necessary to clamp my mouth shut or wait patiently for things to be done. We have a long way to go but for the first time in twenty-two years we are approaching life and marriage as a team. And now I even wait to do certain things until my husband can join me! Thank you for courageously speaking God’s Word into the darkness. Some of us are longing for light.”

Elizabeth Handford’s book, *Me? Obey Him?* can be obtained from Sword of the Lord Publishers, (800)247-9673.

## *No Need to Sin*

“In my attempts to promote the comfort of my family, the quiet of my spirit has been disturbed. Some of this is doubtless owing to physical weakness; but, with every temptation, there is a way of escape; there is *never* any *need* to sin. Another thing I have suffered loss from—entering into the business of the day without seeking to have my spirit quieted and directed. So many things press upon me, this is sometimes neglected; shame to me that it should be so.

“This is of great importance, to watch carefully—now I am so weak—not to over-fatigue myself, because then I cannot contribute to the pleasure of others; and a placid face and a gentle tone will make my family more happy than anything else I can do for them. Our

own will gets sadly into the performance of our duties sometimes.”

**Elizabeth T. King**, in *Daily Strength for Daily Needs*, by Mary Wilder Tileston

## *Prayer*

“O God, our true Life, in Whom and by Whom all things live, Thou commandest us to seek Thee, and art ready to be found; Thou biddest us knock, and openest when we do so. To know Thee is life, to serve Thee is freedom, to enjoy Thee is a kingdom, to praise Thee is the joy and happiness of the soul. I praise, and bless, and adore Thee, I worship Thee, I glorify Thee, I give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. I humbly beseech Thee to abide with me, to reign in me, to make this heart of mine a holy temple, a fit habitation for Thy Divine Majesty. O Thou Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible! Keep, I beseech Thee, the work of Thine own hands, who trust in Thy mercy alone for safety and protection. Guard me with the power of Thy grace, here and in all places, now and at all times, for evermore—Amen.

**St. Augustine** (A.D. 354-430)

## *Joy*

Among the most joyful people I have known have been some who seem to have had no human reasons for joy. The sweet fragrance of Christ has shone through their lives. I have often spoken about dear old Mrs. Kershaw, a destitute widow who, somehow or other, began to work for my mother. She lived in a bleak old house, sparsely furnished, cold in winter and hot in summer. She had only one son. He rarely visited her. She was in her seventies, poor, humpbacked, and stone deaf. One of us would pick her up in the car each

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morning. On the door we would find a notice: "I AM HOME. COME IN." She was always sitting in her little rocking chair, black coat and hat on, black bag in her lap. She looked up with a seraphic smile: "Oh, it's the daughter!" she would say if it happened to be my turn to transport her. When she entered our home she had one thing on her mind: *How can I make the Howards happy?* She would set to work—washing dishes, doing laundry, making applesauce or brown sugar cookies, going upstairs to sit with our old, sad, deaf step-grandmother (can you imagine the exchanges in conversation?), and praying for our family. I've never seen a sweeter face, never met anyone who could have excelled her in lovingkindness and total self-forgetfulness.

"In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book.... The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 29:18,19).

"Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy" (1 Peter 1:8).

C.S. Lewis wrote, "Joy is the serious business of heaven." I think Mrs. Kershaw lived in heaven on earth!

### *Three Days in a Castle*

Last August we had the privilege of speaking in Aberystwith, Wales, and in Scotland, where my stepdaughter Katherine Scamman lives with her husband Tom and their four children. With friends from Mississippi, we took a train from Edinburgh to Inverness (no, the Loch Ness Monster made no appearance) where we had three idyllic days in Kilravock (pronounced *Kill-Rock*) Castle, the fascinating home of the Roses of Kilravock since 1460. Miss Elizabeth Rose, 25th Baroness, is the warm Christian hostess to tourists like the Grens. Everyone is welcome and there is a short Bible reading and comment at breakfast and dinner. The food was highest quality gourmet. Coffee was served in the drawing room following evening dinner.

Miss Rose gave us a full tour of the castle with its

dungeons, turrets, towers, and banquet rooms, regaling us with intriguing tales connected with the portraits of her countless ancestors.

Guests may choose a historic room in the castle or a country style bedroom in the wing. Lars and I had what surely must have been the baronial bedroom—beautifully furnished, private bath, the makings of tea, and below our windows a green sward where we watched tiny deer grazing. We wandered through the most magnificent ancient trees I have ever seen—one gigantic beech spread its huge branches to the very ground where they lay and then rose again. There are sports facilities, golf courses, fishing. Interested? Apply to the Secretary, Kilravock Castle, Croy, Inverness, IV2 7PJ, Scotland. Phone/FAX: (01667) 493258. Open from April 28 to October 2. You'll love it!

### *Books*

*Mountain Breezes: The Collected Poems of Amy Carmichael.* Hardback: \$29.95; Paperback: \$15.95. Phone: 215/542-1240. I am delighted to recommend this book, since it contains hundreds more poems than were included in her very small book, *Toward Jerusalem.*

And now—a *much* smaller book—a booklet, really—something completely different from anything Amy Carmichael ever wrote. It's about sexual purity, and I wrote it for men and women 15 and up: *NOT Everybody's Doing It.* Price: \$.99. Call Back to the Bible at (800)759-2425.

### *Something From Lars*

A line in a song by Tennessee Ernie Ford about loading #9 coal was, "Another day older and deeper in debt." We thank God that it is not the theme song of the Newsletter. Once again you have been generous in giving and in your response to our yearly premium offers. We all know that what you receive could be bought for a bit less at retail. So as we say in Norway "tusen takk," or *thousand thanks*. You may remember that *A Path Through Suffering* came out in large print, (for those whose arms are not quite long enough and who

are not willing to suffer glasses). *Keep a Quiet Heart* is now available also in large print. The publisher must be working out of debt 'cause it's priced at \$17, with no gold leaf edges. I get uncomfortable with numbers past \$15 so I'll mail it out for \$14 and that will include the postage and handling. The handling portion is free since I do it myself. Order from *me—not* from the Newsletter: Lars Gren, 10 Stawberry Cove, Magnolia Ma. 01930.

As to Y2K. Had about a month's worth of tuna fish and spaghetti along with cash for the month. You're reading this on who knows when, since the post office may have been or is still (?) inoperative. Or you lived in Detroit and on 12/31 decided that it will be a disaster—what to do?—drive to warmer climate but no gas to be had and now you're still stuck in a rest stop in Tennessee. Or it is January 3 and you are in a N.Y.C. elevator on the 36th floor, stuck, been there since 12:15 A.M. on the 1st.

God knew about Y2K since the beginning. We worried some, prepared some—perhaps too much or not enough. I may be saying, "Well, dahlin', we've got 16 strands of spaghetti and a can and a half of tuna left—all is not lost." "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps" (Proverbs 16:9). Wherever we are at this time, God has brought us through, and may He bless this beginning of the new millennium.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## Travel Schedule January – March 2000

**January 21, 22** Madagascar, Eveche Anglicava.

**January 28** S. Hamilton, Mass., Christ Church Women's Ministry, Jo Ann Buccigrosso, (978)356-6948.

**February 12** S. Hamilton, Mass., Gordon-Conwell Seminary, Ockenga Institute, David Horn, (978)468-7111.

**February 18, 19** Visalia, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Kathie J. Smee, (209)687-0220.

**February 22-28**, Conference in Izmir, Turkey, Incirlik Air Force Base (U.S. Army), Protestant Women of Chapel.

**March 5**, Hopkinton, Mass., First Congregational Church, Richard A. Germaine, (508)435-9681.

**March 11**, El Paso, Tex., Cielo Vista Church, Mary Muller, (915)772-0288.

*Correction:* In the November-December Newsletter, the poem sent to me by my brother Phil ("When on my day of life the night is falling...") should have been attributed to John Greenleaf Whittier (1882).

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