

Life is simple, isn't it? As someone said, "only if we insist on making it so." In these past several months, when coping with being locked down by the pandemic, one thing I am deeply appreciative of is a return to a simple life. Like Adam and Eve, living in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, had the greatest life, the original "simple life." They needed only food, peace, companionship, shelter, and the ongoing presence of God.

Life is so simple. And maybe it is. Life is not as complicated as we make it out to be. So is love.

"Love God with your whole being and your neighbor as yourself."

That's what life is all about, says Jesus. That's all there is to it. You and I will never have to worry about all the other stuff; we don't have to memorize the ten commandments.

Even Jesus pointed out that this law of love is the basis for everything else. Love is unconditional and never diminishes after a dear one passes. Live a life of love, and everything else falls in place.

William Edwin Sangster, Evangelical minister was once asked if he would find time to cheer up a young man who was recuperating from a nervous breakdown. Sangster promised to do his best. He sought the young man out and began to try to help him, but it was hard work.

"This is a gray world," the young man said. "I see no purpose in it. It is dull, meaningless and evil. Its pleasures soon pass. Its pains endure. I seriously ask myself the question: 'Is life worth living?'"

Sangster saw him once or twice a week for nearly two months. Every conversation was the same " nothing seemed to improve. Then something happened to that young man. He fell in love. Head over heels in love!

On the day his engagement was announced he came to see Sangster and began the conversation with words something like this: "This is a lovely world. Come out into the garden and listen to that little bird singing fit to burst its heart. Isn't it a glorious morning? How good it is to be alive!"

That young man did not will himself to that change of attitude. It was not a choice he made. Something happened to him within. He fell in love.

So it is when we experience God's love in our lives, when we live the life of love for others. The world seems to change. However, it isn't the world that has changed, but rather we have been changed by a touch.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

Love is divine and all-consuming. Love is of God. It changes the center of existence from the self to the Origin of all. And like an overflowing fountain it reaches out to others.

That's what the purpose of our life is. Our time on earth is to be used to learn how to love, to grow into loving persons. That takes many years, many mistakes, many hurts, a lot of grief. But it doesn't take a lifetime to learn. It simply takes an open heart and a sincere willingness to put God before all else.

If we truly want to know whether or not we love God we shouldn't be looking at what happens within these walls on Sunday.

No. If we really want to know if we do indeed love God, we simply need to look at our lives -- our day-to-day ordinary lives, determining if we truly love others, if we treat ourselves as if we are the least and if we treat others as if they are the greatest. That's the only measure that matters.

**“The whole law and the prophets
depend on these two commandments.”**

So, love first the God who loves us.

“This is the greatest and first commandment.”

The second is, Jesus tells us,

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

That's the purpose of our existence. That's it. Love. Four little letters. **L-O-V-E**. Simple, isn't it? Yes, but not easy. Amen.