

# *Living a Simple Life* with a Back Porch View

Dear Listener:

Thank you for stopping by for a visit at Living a Simple Life with a Back Porch View podcast! To make it easy, you will find a transcript of each episode. I hope you enjoy the visit!

## **Episode 29- Finding Room for Faith**

*Welcome to Living a Simple Life with a Back Porch View. Thanks for stopping by! Grab a glass of Lemonade, pull up a rocker and join me for conversations about living the Simple Life. Go ahead. Get comfortable and settle in for a good visit. It's time to relax and enjoy!*

There are days when having faith isn't an issue. In Hebrews, Chapter 11, and verse 1, we read "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

We have confidence in God. Our hope and assurance come through living eternally with Him. How, when, and where we worship is a personal preference. So, for the most part, we feel as if our faith is strong, even if we wobble from time to time.

But Life gets busy. Our days are filled from the moment we get out of bed to the second we lay back down, exhausted and spent. Some of us may go to church. But during the week, we just feel we have too many other things to take care of. Although faith is one of our biggest priorities, it is also the one that seems to get the least amount of attention.

I know this from firsthand experience. Some days my life just seems to spin so far out of control that I feel blessed to just have the time to breathe and to be thankful breathing is a natural occurrence – otherwise, I probably wouldn't have enough time to do that, either.

When I settled in to living a Simple Life, one of my first priorities was to find time for a daily dose of faith. I knew I was at a point where I needed to find time every day to apply Psalm 46:10 – 'Be still and know that I am God.'

At first, it was difficult at best just to have devotions in the evening before I went to bed. I tried to spend at least 30 minutes reading a devotional and my Bible before falling asleep. Admittedly, there were times the Country Boy would take my Bible from my hands because I had fallen asleep in the middle of reading.

But before long, I realized that when I didn't spend this time with God, I missed it. It had become an important part of my day.

Recently, we have started having morning devotions as well. I sit in a rocker and watch the sun come up. Some days I read a devotional and the Bible. Others I ponder on a single verse, and just sit still. The Country Boy feeds the deer in the back pasture and the ducks at the pond every morning. And once that is finished, he sits on the prayer bench. As he says, he does all the talking, and for the most part, God does the listening.

Both of us have come to depend on those few moments each day. It helps us to stay focused on Him. We are better prepared for the tasks at hand. It just seems to help center our day.

Now, I have a new question about my faith. And that is how to share it with others. I'm not one to stand on street corners and raise my voice to the Heavens. I don't want to stand behind a pulpit and preach every Sunday. And I will confess, although I do study on a regular basis, I can't always quote chapter and verse at a moment's notice.

If you're like me and want to take a quieter approach, this visit may help. But before we go any further, keep in mind it's still a work in progress for me. Every day I try to apply it, and so far, it seems to be working well.

First, before I did anything else, I needed to make it more personal. I knew what I wanted was to be more like Jesus. That led me to the question of who He was and is. If you boil it all down, He is love. Pure and simple. Everything He did, everything He said, every time He touched, it was out of love.

The most famous reference to love is 1 Corinthians 13. It's considered the 'Love' chapter in the Bible and is often used during wedding ceremonies. But it isn't just about applying it in a marriage. It tells you how to love anyone, anywhere, any time. If you combine it with Romans 12:10 -21, you not only get a good definition of what Love is, but also how to apply it.

My next question was just exactly HOW I could do that. What did I need to do or say so that my life, actions, and reactions would reflect the love of Christ?

I found the answer in Romans 12:6-8 “In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well.” The end of this verse states “And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.” A solution to my question finally began to develop.

As a gardener, I love everything from digging in the dirt to enjoying the fruits of my labor in the winter when I open a jar of vegetables that I canned from the abundant harvest. When I applied the principle of spiritual gifts to gardening, I was able to better form an answer.

We all have gifts. Some of us are better at preparing the ground. Some of us have an instinct of how deeply to plant a seed and what the best spacing is for optimal growth. Others of us are strong at feeding the plants and caring for them as they grow. And then you have Jesus, who is the expert on Harvesting.

I realized that I don't have to tend the entire garden. Instead, my strength comes in simply planting the seed.

But when you take it down to a faith level, how does planting a seed relate to sharing God's love? You might be surprised at just how easy that can be. Are you ready?

First, you need to have a mindset of doing more and saying less.

In writing, one of the first things you learn is to Show – not Tell. In other words, if I was writing a novel, I wouldn't say ‘She loved him.’ I would show you that she loved him by describing her words, actions, reactions, sacrifices, facial expressions, and body language.

Knowing that, I began to make a list of all the things I could do to reflect the love I have for Christ and help others to know that He loves them as well.

One thing you need to understand, when I said showing love to ‘others’ – I mean everyone. Your family members. Friends. Neighbors. Strangers. And even those you simply cannot stand to be around. Yes. You even have to show love for those you consider unlovable. You don't have to be their best friend – but you do have to show them love.

That may be a hard pill to swallow, but if you are truly trying to be more like Jesus, you have to understand that He loves every. Single. Person. He doesn't pick and choose. He just loves.

Yes. It can be difficult to almost impossible with some people. I have a few of those in my life as well. And there are days I would rather run the other direction rather than offer grace and mercy. But if I am going to remain faithful, then I am not given a choice.

Sharing your faith doesn't have to mean quoting Bible verses. You don't always have to say a word – just let the way you live say everything that needs to be said.

Sometimes that means just allowing the light of Jesus to shine through you. This can happen by offering a genuine smile and a kind word. The key to this is 'genuine'. A false compliment or a fake smile can always be spotted a mile away. But a real smile is warm and kind. And you never know what that person is going through. Your smile may actually give them the lift, encouragement, and hope they are desperately needing.

You can lend a helping hand. This may mean taking food to a sick neighbor or weeding and watering their gardens while they are away or becoming a volunteer.

You can offer solace for someone hurting by simply listening. Ask them over for coffee and give them a shoulder to cry on. Don't feel as if you need to offer advice. Often, it's just having an opportunity to have a sounding board that can lead us to a bit of clarity.

Your faith can also be shown through laughter and joy. Keep your jokes, behavior, actions, and reactions clean. Don't participate in gossip or laughing and joking about other people. If this happens, don't respond in kind, and if necessary, simply walk away.

And if asked about your faith, be prepared to talk about your personal experiences. Again, it doesn't mean you have to quote Book, Chapter, and Verse. It just means telling someone what Jesus has done for you.

If you aren't sure how to get started finding faith in your Simple Life, try working on a few of these things:

Make it personal. When you have a personal relationship with Jesus, it shows – even if you don't always see it.

Set aside daily time and a place to worship. This can be morning, noon, or evening.

Sing praises or offer up prayer even while doing chores. I love washing dishes by hand, as it is a perfect time for prayer.

Keep a Faith Journal – be sure it has a place for a Prayer and Blessings List.

One of the basic principles of living a Simple Life is learning how to slow down and focus on the priorities in Life. It may take some time and discipline, but it can be done. And by making faith a priority, the light of Christ will start shining brighter and brighter.

If you want to learn more about the topic at hand, or get a transcript for this episode, just visit my website at [www.thefarmwife.com/podcast](http://www.thefarmwife.com/podcast). That is the Resource page for this podcast and I have it set up by episodes to make things easier to find. To help you out, this is Episode 31.

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If you have questions or need a bit of help finding room for faith in your Simple Life, stop by for an email visit at [thevirtualporch@gmail.com](mailto:thevirtualporch@gmail.com). I would love to visit with you more!

And be sure to subscribe – you don't want to miss a single conversation. I'll be sitting on the porch every Monday morning waiting for your visit!

Thanks again for stopping in. I will see you next week on Living a Simple Life with a Back Porch View. And while you are waiting on the next episode, grab that glass of refreshment, pull up a rocker, and sit back for a while. It's time to

Relax & Enjoy!

*julie*