

Simple

Abundance

By: Barbara Dickson

Bible Reading: Psalm 68:9-10; Romans 15:13; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 6:32-33

You gave abundant showers, O God; You refreshed Your weary inheritance. Your people settled in it, and from Your bounty, O God, You provided for the poor.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have; for He has said: "I will never fail you nor forsake you."

Therefore do not be anxious, saying: "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.

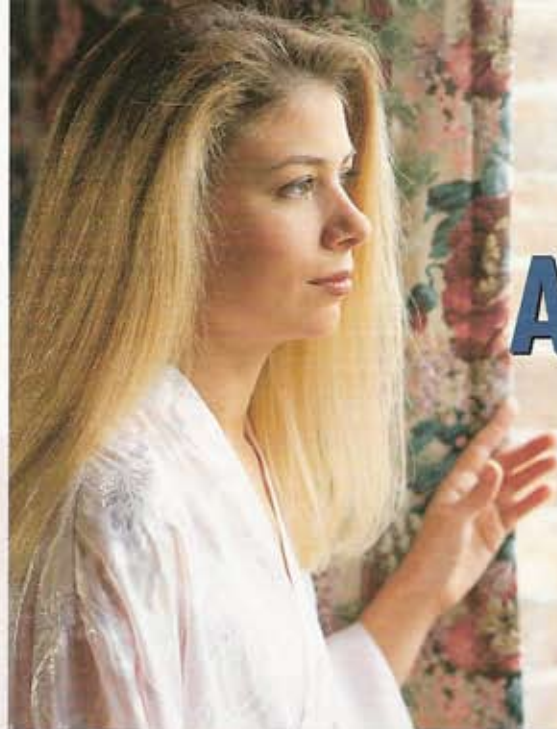
Ah, spring! A time filled with daffodil dreams and green grass wishes. Yellow flowered crowns push through wet dirt, and downpours wash away snow, salt, sand and grime. Nature's unique sweet scent of worms and damp soil permeates the clean, freshly swept earth.

Earth's rebirth brings a season of wonderment. Peel away all those winter layers of snow boots, toques and longjohns. Open the windows and inhale all that fresh fragrant air invading our dens of hibernation.

Look around and listen. God's creation is full of new life and new beginnings. Robins cheep as if they could burst through their red breasts, building new homes in anticipation of eggs that will soon nestle within nests. Buds appear on bare branches; the earth explodes with tender shoots of grass. Sweater weather fills us with a hint and a hope of glorious balmy days ahead. The sun's lengthening beams cast warmth into our homes. Dreams of new life and freshness invade our hearts.

As the sharp rays of sunlight gently point out grimy layers of winter dust, we're overcome by the desire to clean out closets, wash curtains, shampoo rugs, wipe down walls and cupboards. Scrub the dog. Scrub the kids.

April is truly a time for celebration. We wonder at earth's renewal, and we wonder at Easter when Jesus Christ, God's son, died on the cross and rose from the dead



three days later.

Jesus died so that we may have new life. Like the bursting earth in spring, joyful, peaceful, abundant life.

Sometimes, new life is difficult to imagine. We struggle to keep up with mortgages, careers, children's activities, meals and

dwindling finances. Even the simple act of cleaning can take on monumental proportions. Schedule it on the calendar and book a day off work.

We live tuckered-out lives.

Where's the answer? In the example of Jesus. The Bible tells story upon story of Jesus praying, fasting, loving, healing broken lives, spending time with the downtrodden, the shunned and the hated. He never worried about where His food and shelter would come from. He wasn't interested in keeping up with the neighbours or clawing His way to the top.

He lived simply for His Father God. And His desire for us is to seek to live like Him in simplicity, relying on God for what we need. Jesus never intended that we live complicated, worn-out lives.

Is it true that "less is more?"

This spring, maybe it's time to not only clean out the disorder in our homes, but in our lives as well. Let's spend more time enjoying some of God's gifts: family, children, sunsets, flowers and the refreshing rain. Let's make our motto "simplify." Perhaps we'll discover that when we simplify outwardly we become rich inwardly. ☺

How to Live More Simply

- Seek God's Kingdom first; everything else should follow
- Develop a deeper appreciation for God's creation: smell the flowers, watch His sunset, walk
- Make a habit of giving things away
- Clean out and up
- Stay away from debt and buy-now, pay-later schemes
- Keep your speech honest and honourable
- Buy things for usefulness, not status
- Be aware that modern technology such as the Internet and e-mail can steal time from the important things
- Enjoy things without owning them