



10. September 2022

True simplicity (Part II)

As we had seen in yesterday's meditation, our life begins to concentrate and simplify when we orient ourselves towards love and truth.

In no way can a life that focuses solely on the material preservation of existence be understood as "simplicity" and desirable. Nor is true simplicity related to a lack of intellectual aptitude, which, not understanding the deeper contents, simply takes what is most comprehensible. Nor is it true simplicity to simplify things and be content with abbreviated explanations without depth; nor is it true simplicity that false childishness which does not confront problems, but passes over them lightly, without ever arriving at a solution.

True simplicity, on the other hand, is related to God: life will become simpler the more it is filled with God. Then we will no longer judge things according to various criteria: for example, our personal interest, the interests of others, the opinion of third parties, etc., among which the question of what is the Will of God is placed as if it were just another criterion, with the same weight as the others. With true simplicity, on the other hand, a higher criterion prevails which governs our whole life, which measures and orders everything: *"Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well"* (Mt 6:33). In this way, life becomes coherent and acquires a supernatural focus. It is no longer nature, with its demands and desires, but the Will of God that is in the foreground.

But how do we achieve true simplicity?

We have already seen that it consists in seeking love and truth; in considering the Will of God as the fundamental principle governing all life situations.

This point brings us to the constant theme of the spiritual life, because, in fact, true simplicity is a fruit of the authentic following of Christ.

For this fruit to grow, we must learn to renounce everything, if God calls us to do so. No creature and no material good should possess our heart to the point of hindering

our total surrender to the Lord. It would be as if we were to say to God: "You can ask me for everything, but not this..."

There must be nothing to limit our surrender to God, nor can we place any conditions on it. We must listen well to these words of the Lord: "*No one who prefers father or mother to me is worthy of me*" (Mt 10:37). Whoever does not try wholeheartedly to reach this unconditional surrender, will not be able to attain true simplicity either. In such a case, it may happen that we respond to the Lord's invitation like those in the parable: "*I have just got married and so am unable to come*" (Lk 14:20).

Some may object that this requirement only applies to religious vocations. However, it is applicable to any state of life, if we really want to be rooted in Christ. People who live in the world also need a higher criterion, so that they can examine in its light all the circumstances in which they move and with which they are confronted, and to give the appropriate response according to this measure.

In this way, the Spirit of the Lord will guide us to the point where we leave behind many things which, though not in themselves sinful, scatter us and thus hinder simplicity and focus on God. We will begin to perceive that these things do not fit into a deep spiritual life. Let's think of so many media offers, so many communication possibilities offered by smartphones, the destruction of silence, etc...

The Spirit will not rest until we have been taught to distinguish what is truly valuable from what is less valuable, and until we have learned to leave behind what does not serve the Kingdom of God. He will teach us not to let ourselves be carried away by the immanent dynamics of things, but to give each one its place according to the guiding principle of our life. Conversations will no longer be unnecessarily extended and become mere talk; we will become aware of distractions and limit them more and more, times of prayer will become more and more important to us, etc...

As the following of the Lord deepens, the way we pray will also become simpler. Whereas before we were mainly engaged in vocal prayer, now we will seek more simple and silent prayer before God.

True simplicity, then, consists in the fact that God - who is simple even though He possesses fullness in Himself - can dwell more and more in us. Then our life will focus on Him; we will diminish and He will grow (cf. Jn 3:30).

How simple everything becomes when we can simply say that God loves us as Father, and that He wants nothing more than to give Himself to us and to fill us with all that He can give us! How simple life is when we simply say: "Yes, Father, your will be done, for we love you"!