

Still struggling with personal disappointment regarding recovery efforts in Haiti, my morning reflections provided food for thought. I'll share an adapted reading from "A Guide To Prayer For All God's People" It is from David Crean in *Living Simply*.

The adapted reading: Today's global realities call for comfortable Christians to review their lifestyle...A simpler lifestyle is not a panacea as it may be embarked upon for the wrong reasons. Guilt, political action or the quest for moral purity are not as meaningful as one or more of the following:

- As an act of faith—commitment to more equitable distribution for world's resources.
- Act of self-defense—against our own overconsumption.
- Act of withdrawal—from need for achievement and materialistic gain.
- Act of solidarity—with those who have no choice about their lifestyle.
- Act of sharing—what we have been given AND what we have usurped.
- Act of celebration—celebrating creativity, spirituality, community NOT awards and new TV.
- Act of provocation—leading to dialog about affluence, poverty and social injustice.
- Act of anticipation—for new patterns of resource allocation.
- Act of advocacy—for legislated change and new international economic order.
- Redirecting purchasing power—focus production toward supply of goods to meet genuine social needs.

The adoption of a simpler lifestyle is meaningful and justifiable for any or all of the above reasons *alone* ...having significant socio-political side effects; economic and structural adjustments and release of new resources and energies for social change. (try on Colossians 3:12-17)

Perhaps I am finally readjusting to life in Kansas, far removed from the daily struggles of the REAL poor. Here I can't take for granted people only partially dressed, cooking little bits of "stuff" beside their tiny, holy home, or bathing in an aluminum tub in the yard, using the water they did laundry or dishes in.

"Simple," for two years meant if there is no food, you don't have to cook, so sing or take a nap. If the wind is too strong there is no market so it isn't necessary to "drive" the burro to market to carry home a small plastic bag of peppers, salt and a few mangos. More time to nap. If there are only two sets of clothing and one is dirty, just "simply" wear the other; have to wait for water to do laundry anyway.

How can I miss that way of life? Why do I wish I were there now, as multiple tropical storms skirt the island and create more challenge? Why can I not understand why millions are left in tents over mud holes when billions of dollars were given to "repair their lives" ...simply.

Pakistan is begging for help and millions live in refugee camps all over the world. Even in Kansas new food kitchens open every day, and schools report larger numbers of homeless children while they gear up for football.

I just wish I could take a nap.

Pastor Shirley, August 31, 2010.