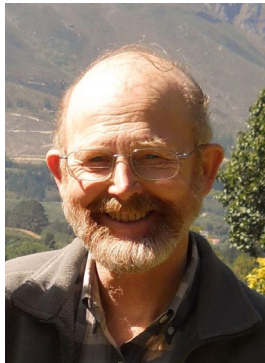


As Simple as a Smile

Pulse of Spirit
December 12, 2018



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This service this morning is part of a pattern of Creation. To quote from Patrick Campbell's poem shared earlier:

*...as powerful and yet as effortless
as gravity;
as mysterious and as simple as a
smile.*

I have a few words on pieces of paper here, but that isn't the real crux of the service. The real question is: *What are we doing?* The recipe for the magic of *this* service calls for genuine expression of manhood and womanhood, an investment—yours and mine. It's an investment in this time because, in thinking about this service, I realized this is the perfect time. We often think, *Oh, it'll be the perfect time in two or three weeks, or after we get past Christmas, or into New Year's; once we're in New Year's, that'll be the supreme time, or at the spring equinox.* But *this* is the perfect time, and

believe it or not, we are the perfect people. You are the perfect person, I am the perfect person, and we are the ones bringing the magic.

I thought further on this and kind of relaxed into it. This is simply the greatest moment in the greatest era that I have known in seventy-eight journeys around the sun. It is. It's magnificent. Partly because it's the one we've got, and the only one I've got influence in. But also, when you think on it, there's been a lot building toward this time we live in. It's no accident that we have all these echnological... I was going to say "conveniences"; it might be more accurate to say "facilities." And it's no accident that you and I are here—that I'm the perfect speaker right now and you are the perfect people. Those in South Africa, those at Sunrise Ranch and other places, are the perfect people for something to be born among us in this time.

The magic required isn't something that I'm going to reach into my pocket and pull out and mix a couple things together, nor are you. It's the magic that's between us, and it's utilizing and taking advantage of it and allowing. It's like flower bulbs planted in the ground. You don't see much except this brownish—well, it might be reddish, any color of ground—but it's pretty blank in the first while, until the bulb grows. That's what our lives can be like. We may think they've been wonderful and we'd like to go back to the golden age, but you know if there ever was a golden age such as we hear about in the legends and myths of our culture, it's *this* age.

Where is the gold then, and where is the magic, and where are the special ingredients to make this age real? We've lived in the promise of a golden age or the promise that technology is going to revolutionize our lives. That technology is in you and it's in me. It can be in our neighbors but it is the technology that we bring in our living that is essential to revolutionizing our lives in this era. It's the answer to all those things on the news that look like we're going to hell in a handbasket. When you really think on it, there's been no better era to live in.

I came across some words from Nelson Mandela that he had written in his book; originally he'd written this in a letter to his wife, Winnie. This was written in Kroonstad Prison, dated February 1, 1975, and that's long before he was president. He was just locked up. The government of the day wanted him out of circulation so they locked him up in

prison. That had happened to a number of other activists at that time. While Nelson Mandela was there, it was like he was in a cocoon. It's like the caterpillar that he was became a butterfly, but a butterfly with muscles! So I'd like to share these words that he wrote to his wife at that time. The cell he is referring to is his jail cell.

. . . the cell is an ideal place to learn to know yourself, to search realistically and regularly the process of your own mind and feelings. In judging our progress as individuals we tend to concentrate on external factors such as one's social position, influence and popularity, wealth and standard of education. These are, of course, important in measuring one's success in material matters and it is perfectly understandable if many people exert themselves mainly to achieve all these. But internal factors may be even more crucial in assessing one's development as a human being. Honesty, sincerity, simplicity, humility, pure generosity, absence of vanity, readiness to serve others—qualities which are within easy reach of every soul—are the foundation of one's spiritual life. Development in matters of this nature is inconceivable without serious introspection, without knowing yourself, your weaknesses and mistakes. At least, if for nothing

else, the cell gives you the opportunity to look daily into your entire conduct, to overcome the bad and develop whatever is good in you. Regular meditation, say about 15 minutes a day before you turn in, can be very fruitful in this regard. You may find it difficult at first to pinpoint the negative features in your life, but the 10th attempt may yield rich rewards. Never forget that a saint is a sinner who keeps on trying.

And that, to me, is the greatest line: “Never forget that a saint is a sinner who keeps on trying.” See? There is hope for all of you, and me too!

It’s just a simple question, you know. If Nelson Mandela can see this while being locked up in a cell, how about us? Sometimes we think, *Oh, he’s special*. But I have heard, in talking to people who have been on the inside of the iron bars, that they’d almost like to go back there—I say *almost*—because there is that opportunity to think, to feel. You have other things you need to deal with, but there is that opportunity for introspection, for meditation. In this age we live in, we figure that someone who is a paraplegic or has a speech problem, has a stroke and has lost their ability to speak, is the one that is at a disadvantage. And yet, you know, they may be the ones that have the advantage in our culture as it is, because they don’t have the choice of all the things that distract us.

Earlier in my life, when I was ranching, it got so I couldn’t go outside in the sunlight because I had a problem with my eyes. I had to stay in the house for probably a week—it might have seemed like a year to my wife! I couldn’t watch television, I couldn’t read, and I couldn’t go outside. I was used to living outside 365 days a year, and there was work to be done and people to see, things to do, and I had a crew to lead. But in being forced to sit there and to be within the confines of that house, I learned what older people do when we think they’re just sitting there in the seniors’ accommodation, doing nothing, just going to seed. They’re not just sitting there. There’s something going on in a Being all the time, and they’re working. Because I know, when I was chased back into myself, just my body, I was working. There was something to do all the time. And I wasn’t getting all the outside stimulation—I had some. When the outside is quiet, there’s this amazing fountain that comes up from within, and that overflows. That may not be the perfect existence, but it’s not the worst one. You’re still there.

This thing about meditation: we put it off. We don’t have time to meditate. We don’t have time from our busy lives to think, to be with our friends. I talk about this because in this part of the world we’re going into the Christmas season. Christmas is a pleasant time with lots of celebrations and stuff, but it’s also a hectic time. It’s like New Year’s in the East, in China. The rush they have at New Year’s is almost a killer, trying to get back home for that time. It’s the same compulsion as there is

in the Western world toward being home for Christmas or being home for some other family holiday. It can be so overwhelming that we don't take the time to meditate, to realize where we are and how rich the time is.

Recently we bought a little yellow car. I don't think I ever figured I'd buy a yellow car, at least not until I got a taxicab license! Parenthetically, most of the taxicabs in this area are yellow. I bought a little yellow Honda. I guess the price was right. But also, that little car has proven to be the size that I need. I've done that with other areas in my life. There are minimalists who carry this to an extreme and live like a bunch of Spartans, yet there is a right size. It's like when you're in business, when you're starting out, if you're a certain size you're struggling along, and then you hit this time when you're middle-sized, and you start to make money.

In the ranching business, we found out that if we had a herd of four hundred brood cows, that was the optimum size for the ranch we had. If we got bigger, we stopped making money. In our experience you had the choice to either have about four hundred brood cows or have up around a thousand. So you see which size you need to be for the full expression of your life into the earth. What fits my substance, my lifestyle?

It's like with this poem of Patrick's:

*the Pattern of Creation:
it is as powerful and yet as*

*effortless as gravity;
as mysterious and as simple
as a smile.*

Think of what's the most powerful thing in our concept of the Universe. It isn't the atomic bomb, it isn't the neutron bomb, it isn't the hydrogen bomb; it isn't even nerve gas. It's gravity. Gravity is what we call the force that holds this Universe together. It's what we describe as the foundation to keeping the right distance between the planets, between us and the sun. If somebody shut off gravity today, we'd all be toast, because we'd be in the sun. Or else we'd be popsicles because we'd be out beyond the reach of our sun.

So gravity is powerful and it's mysterious. No one has pinned down why we have gravity. There are theories, and I've learned three or four in the course of my education and just plain thinking on such things. You know, I haven't met anybody who has figured out what gravity is. It's just there. It's mysterious. We don't think about it.

Mysterious, but "as simple as a smile." I think there may be more gravity in the smile than there is in anything else. When we're on the street or when we're out and around, doing business, it's a smile that holds things together more than anything else. We may be clever and sharp at business, but if we have a smile and have what backs it up, that's what lights up rooms. What melts people's hearts is a smile. Not just the fakey smile you do for pictures when old Aunt Maude or Uncle

George want to take one of the family. It's the smile that bubbles up from within your heart, from within the pure joy of life. And that is within reach of all of us.

I think that's what Nelson Mandela was touching on—that's what's within reach. And what he said was, "Never forget that a saint is a sinner who keeps on trying." We may think we're not all that good, but a smile keeps coming to the surface and keeps on trying. It's like when I was a little kid, I remember my parents would say—you know, your mouth's down at the corners because you're not happy about something—"We'll go out and get a big rooster to put on that pouting lip of yours." If we can look at ourselves and smile, then we're ninety-five percent of the way to bringing joy to this earth. We can bring a smile to the people we're with—not a mocking smile, but a smile where they're invited to join us in the joy of life.

What I invite you to this morning is the joy of life. What's sometimes said about Christmas presents or other presents is that they're for the giving. The abundance we have in this culture, in this society, in this part of the world, is for giving. My little yellow car is for giving. Living in a dry, warm place with lots to eat—that's for giving. And I have the responsibility of giving because I live where I live and do what I do. And if I lived in a jail cell, whether it's a handicapped physical body or an actual cell, I still have the responsibility for giving.

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Teleconference Service of the Creative Field

December 2, 2018



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