

JOURNALS POSTED ON JULY 11, 2016

Love Simply. Simply Love. Everyone.



KRISTY ENGEL



GLOBAL

Dear friends,

Thank you for your ongoing support, prayers and communications with me over the last several months of my travels and work. I know many are busy with their own summer travel and I appreciate everyone who is keeping up with me through social media as well as letters. Today's newsletter is a bit more personal and I hope will inspire you to make a difference right where you are!

EVERYONE

I have been reminded, recently, through both social media as well as messages given at my home church that what we say and do have an influence on the world around us. This was not an idea that I had necessarily forgotten but rather, needed to be prodded to remind others that it is not only a select few that are given the call or challenge to seek change in our world, i.e., be a missionary. Granted, that world may seem small if you begin to compare yourself to those you read about or see on the news, but the reality is that you (yes, YOU!) have the ability to influence change in the immediate sphere around your person. The transformation may not be great or noticed by many, but for those that feel a difference, it will be important. Do not be afraid to be an agent of change and show this world something different than the images of hate and suffering and anger and disunity that seem to overrun television and every form of news media that we read, watch and listen to every day.

When one of my friends posted a picture of me helping with the relief work following the Haiti earthquake six years ago and said some very nice things about me and the work that I do, it was incredibly humbling to read. At the same time, I wanted to encourage every single person to go out and do similar things in their own communities. There are hurting people all around us. Some people simply need a friend to listen, others need a helping hand and still others need education and medical care of which some of us are uniquely qualified to assist. Maybe you bake the best cookies on the block or play a mean game of chess that you would love to teach someone else. I'm not sure what your gift is but I know this...you have a gift and it is needed somewhere to help someone right now.

God may have blessed your life to give you time off from your job to go and serve in other places in the world or even within the United States. Do you need to know how to get connected? There are wonderful opportunities within International Ministries through Volunteers in Global Missions and the folks working with this department can help find the opportunities to fit your gifts. Maybe God has blessed your life with funds to specifically meet ministry needs around the world even when you cannot go yourself but you want to connect with the missionaries and ministries serving in a particular area. Do you have questions about how to get your church involved or how to connect with ministries in your own community? There are resources through American Baptist Churches (as well as other denominations) that would LOVE to hear from people that want to get involved. Here's the key...you have to make the first step! Let your voice be heard! Ask the questions and talk to someone about your interests.

Please do not wait for someone else to make the first step in changing the hurt around you. You have a voice and you have the ability to do something today. I truly believe that light and love can overcome but not if we hide them from the world. If we could simply learn to love others and be less concerned about what we got in return or whether they looked, spoke or believed the same that we did, our world would be a much different place. Love simply. Simply love.

I will end with the quote that began these thoughts for me and which I think is appropriate for all of us to consider in our own lives. It is by Ralph Waldo Emerson: "To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition, to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived, this is to have succeeded." I am not trying to diminish the gravity of the political and social problems that exist in our world today. I know that it will take time for healing and for change. I also know that there is something that you and I can begin doing today, this very minute. Love simply. Simply love. Everyone.

THANK YOU

I want to thank so many people for their kind words when you heard that my dog and ministry partner for many years, Kobe, died a few weeks ago. He was a blessing to so many people and even after he retired to a church and the home of dear friends in Mattoon, Illinois, his ministry continued until his last days. He was proof that missions and ministry should always think outside the box!

Thanks again for making a difference!

Sincerely,
Kristy