

sep 22

the secret to happiness

a holy man was having a conversation with the Lord one day and said. "Lord, i would like to know what heaven and hell are like."

the Lord led the holy man to two doors.

he opened one of the doors and the holy man looked in. in the middle of the room was a large round table. in the middle of the table was a large pot of stew, which smelled delicious and made the holy man's mouth water. the people sitting around the table were thin and sickly. they appeared to be famished. they were holding spoons with very long handles that were strapped to their arms and each found it possible to reach into the pot of stew and take a spoonful.

but because the handle was longer than their arms, they could not get the spoons back into their mouths. the holy man shuddered at the sight and thought of their eternal misery and suffering.

the Lord said, "you have seen hell."

they went to the next room and opened the door. it was exactly the same as the first one. there was the large round table with the large pot of stew which made the holy man's mouth water. the people were equipped with the same long-handled spoons, but here the people were well nourished and plump, laughing and talking.

the holy man said, "i don't understand."

"it is simple," said the Lord. "it requires but one skill. you see they have learned the secret to happiness ... feed one another."

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isn't that just what the Lord told us? "and just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise." luke 6:31 there is happiness in taking care of others. i can imagine hell will be full of people concerned only with self. even now we see it in so many around us. yesterday we talked of "but if not." what if "but if not?"

"though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls – yet i will rejoice in the Lord, i will joy in the God of my salvation." hab 3:17-18

Lord, teach us the spirit of sacrifice. just as You sacrificed everything for us, let us sacrifice that others may see You in us and glorify You. enable us to be that good and faithful witness. let us do unto others. let us feed Your sheep even as we receive from You. maranatha!