

# Simplicity with Perseverance

by Kimberly Fletcher



I stood on the scale staring at the numbers. Two pounds! It couldn't be right. I'd been walking every day, five to six days a week. I was eating healthier and having smaller meals more often. I was even riding my bike to places near my house instead of taking the car. Two months of this and all I had to show for it was two pounds!

I looked at my husband in exasperation trying once again to convince him (and me) that liposuction was the answer and he, once again, lovingly put his arm around me and assured me that persistence in what I was already doing was a much safer way to reach my goal and would have much more lasting results. I knew he was right. I knew it was these simple steps I was already taking that would get me to where I wanted to be but I also knew that it would not be easy. It would take patience, persistence, consistency, and dedication.

While liposuction definitely seemed the easy way out, I knew the easy way wasn't really a way out at all but just a delay of the same results. I didn't put on sixty pounds overnight and I wasn't going to lose it in a day.

Reflecting on this experience it seems curiously similar to the situation we face in America today. So many of us are looking for those easy answers that will "fix" our nation and get us back on track. But the answers are not easy. They are simple, maybe we think too simple, but they are definitely not easy. It took us a hundred years to get where we are as a nation and we can't turn it around overnight. There is no magical liposuction that will suck out our over-bloated government, balance our budget, or stop the out-of-control spending. It will take patience, persistence, consistency, and dedication and it has to begin with us!

I know a lot of people who have put their hope in a presidential election, and while it is extremely important that we get involved, it deeply concerns me that so many Americans have convinced themselves that a new face in the White House will fix everything. Corruption, dishonesty, arrogance, and deception are way too entrenched at all levels of government for that to be the case.

A change of presidents may slow down the tyranny, it may even kick the stone down the road a little, but it will NOT "fix" America

and it will NOT protect or sustain liberty. No election can do that because the harsh fact is, in a land where our government is chosen by the voice of the people, what we get is a reflection of who we are ourselves.

If we as a people are wicked, we will elect wicked rulers. If we have no understanding or respect for the Constitution, we won't make an effort to vote for someone who does. If we don't reverence God or love our country, why would we care if those we vote for do? So while the easy answer we seek (a change of men) may bring minimal, short-term results; it is the simple answer (a mighty change within ourselves) that will deliver the long term, lasting results we seek. The only way we can truly secure liberty for ourselves and our posterity is to nurture liberty within our own hearts and in our own homes.

Unfortunately, when I tell people this they tend to discount the idea, some even disregarding it as a completely absurd notion. After all, how can reading stories save America? How can having dinner together as a family secure liberty? How can a focus on education fix our government? And yet, history has proven that it does just that.

When I see their eyes of the simplicity of the ideas presented in our book *Raising Patriots* I think of the story of Namaan from the Bible. Namaan was a great and powerful commander in the Syrian army who was stricken with leprosy. He sent his servant to Elisha the prophet asking him to come and heal him. Elisha didn't come to Namaan. Instead, he told Namaan's servant to go back and tell his master that if he washed in the River Jordan 7 times he would come out clean. Namaan became angry and was

offended that Elisha didn't bother to come himself. He wanted a great miracle and Elisha didn't come to offer it. Namaan was appalled that Elisha would suggest he do something so ridiculous as bathe in a river, and a dirty one at that, so he disregarded Elisha's counsel and refused to wash in the Jordan River.

It was Namaan's humble servant, troubled by his master's reaction who helped him realize the miracle he was dismissing. "... if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?"

Namaan was humbled by his servant's words. He went down into the River Jordan washed seven times and came out clean!

Please don't underestimate the power of simplicity. It is out of small and simple things that great things come about. I know it isn't easy to bring your family together for dinner each night; I know it is a challenge to gather your young ones (and even your older ones) together to read stories, and I know how hard it is to be consistent in an age of mounting pressures and chaotic schedules; but I also know it is worth it. It is worth every minute set aside, every opportunity spared.

It only takes a few minutes a day to read a story to our children, just a little juggling to eat dinner together, or gather our family and read the Bible together, but it is those simple things, those little moments, that will secure liberty. And one day, in the not so distant future, it will be our sons and our daughters that will serve as leaders, make public policy, teach future generations, and

vote in elections. And the kind of people they are, will depend on us!

Frederick Douglass once said, *“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”*

We can spend all our time trying to fix the broken men in Washington or we can exert our energies building strong children who will transform Washington.

There is no easy way out of the debacle our nation faces—but there is a simple one. It will require time, dedication, and commitment but it will bring us the miracle we are seeking and it will make it all worth it!

*“All government originates in families, and if neglected there, it will hardly exist in society . . . The foundation of all free government and of all social order must be laid in families. . . .”* —Noah Webster

### Discussion Questions

- ★ *What are some of the simple things we must do individually and as families that will lead America away from the deterioration we see around us?*
- ★ *Alternatively, are there things we need to stop doing in order to heal America? Examples: dwelling too much on the negative, too much idleness.*
- ★ *When was a time you struggled with perseverance but found that hard work paid off for you in the end?*
- ★ *In your opinion, why is it unwise to rely heavily on the President to lead the charge in healing the nation?*
- ★ *What is the President’s constitutional role?*
- ★ *What are your thoughts about elected officials being a reflection of the people and the need for self improvement?*
- ★ *How can we humble ourselves like Namaan?*
- ★ *When was a time you felt rewarded for your dedication to creating a strong family? Maybe a time a child said something kind and appreciative or when they did something you were proud of.*