



Simplicity

'There are two ways to get enough. One is to continue to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less.'

- GK Chesterton

Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys.

- Luke 12:23

Less is More in the Kingdom of God

When you examine the life of Jesus, one thing becomes abundantly clear - the man who had nothing, not even a place to sleep (Matt 8:18-20) had everything he needed to live a flourishing abundant life. He came, after all, not just to show us the right way to live, but the *best* way to live.

And one of the ways modeled to us in Jesus is a life of simplicity.

Put simply, simplicity is the invitation to prioritize a life filled with God rather than a life filled with stuff. How do we spend less, buy less, pursue less, crave less, and do less for the sake of giving more of our lives away in pursuit of the Kingdom of God.

This week's practice helps us step by step simplify our lives to give more of our time, energy, and resources to God and His Kingdom.

SIMPLICITY PRACTICE

People don't usually experience significant growth or development without big and affecting change. When we allow the impact of change to reverberate in our thinking and feeling, we catch a glimpse of what could be a better way, and we are empowered to move in a new direction.

Anyone can just get rid of excess junk. It's not that hard, and it doesn't really change much. The invitation Jesus extends to his disciples isn't for more space in their garage or a more hip, minimal apartment. Jesus calls his apprentices to freedom from the tyranny of consumption.

So we ask ourselves, what do we 'have' or 'do' that's getting in the way of our discipleship to Jesus?

A couple questions to consider:

- How would my prayer life improve if I stopped doing this?
- Would I be able to be generous if I didn't buy this?
- Is there anything holding me back from spending more time in God's word?
- Would I spend more time living on mission with my coworkers or neighbors if I stopped doing this?

This week, take some intentional time to list the things that you have or do with which you feel most anxious attachment.

If you're not sure, think through the things you have and ask yourself: "What if I got rid of _____?" Or 'What if I stopped _____?' If you feel a strong reluctance at the idea, that's probably it.

Consider the following list of things that could be barriers to life with God in the Kingdom. (Note, this is nonexhaustive):

Simplifying Possessions:

- Clothes
- Shoes
- Accessories
- Home furnishings
- Books
- Records
- DVDs / Blu-rays
- Video games
- Jewelry
- Kitchenware
- Kids toys

Simplifying Time:

- Overwork
- Streaming Platforms and TV
- Video Games
- Too many apps on phone
- Social media
- Travel
- Clickbait articles on the internet

Simplifying Spending:

- Eating out
- Lack of budget
- Vacations
- Clothes
- Toys

No one is going to guilt you into getting rid of something you want to keep. But as we begin this practice, the invitation is to reach into your particular area of attachment and consider parting with something. You might sell it, donate it, or give it away.

If a wardrobe is your thing, how would you feel if you parted with a few outfits you like? What if you gave up some records in your collection? Some books on your shelf? A few pairs of shoes?

Now, take some time to make a list of ways/things you want to simplify to focus on the kingdom of God:

Simplifying Possessions:

Simplifying Time:

Simplifying Spending:

Next, consider some ways to replace those old things with new kingdom work or life with God:

RESOURCES

The following are recommended resources if you would like to journey further into this practice:

- **Simplicity Practice** by Practicing the Way
- **When The Game is Over, It All Goes Back in the Box** by John Ortberg