



Week 5: Simplicity

Notes include work from John Mark Comer, and Bethany Allen from www.practicingtheway.org

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?
Mark 8:36

Table Talk:

Take a moment to think through all the possessions you have. Is there anything that you have more than one of that makes the multiple ones redundant? Is there anything you might own that you have not used in the past 6 months or more?

Discuss: Share with one another the things that you thought about through this simple process. Why do we hold onto these things?

Read: Matthew 19:16-30

What is Jesus asking of the Rich Young Ruler, or Why is it hard for the Rich Young Ruler to follow Jesus?

What is Jesus suggesting it means to be a disciple/apprentice of him in this text?

Why does Peter mention his sacrifice (and the other disciples) to Jesus?

Watch the video

Unpacking the Video

In Acts 20:35, Paul quotes Jesus saying that it is more blessed to give than to receive. John Mark told us that the Greek word for “blessed” can also be translated as “happy,” revealing that a happy life is found in giving rather than receiving. Think of a time you were open and generous. How did it make you feel when you’re able to provide someone with something they need?

Compare that experience to the last time you bought something for yourself. Do you think one experience was “better” than the other? How so?

If we want to live a happy life free from the insatiable desire for more, we must seek simplicity, also known as minimalism. What could simple living or minimalism look like in your own life? In what ways have you enjoyed, or not enjoyed, simple living?

Why do you believe it’s difficult for people in American culture to accept a simple lifestyle? What do you think the appeal of maximalism is?

Spiritual Practice: Living Simply

If we want to live a happy life free from the insatiable desire for more, we must seek simplicity, also known as minimalism. What could simple living or minimalism look like in your own life? In what ways have you enjoyed, or not enjoyed, simple living?

Why do you believe it’s difficult for people in American culture to accept a simple lifestyle? What do you think the appeal of maximalism is?

The first step toward simplicity is to reduce your consumption. John Mark described it as “limiting the number of our possessions, expenses, activities, and social obligations, to a level where we are free to live joyfully in the kingdom with Jesus.” How often do you buy things that you want as opposed to what you need?

The second step to simplicity is practicing generosity, giving your money, belongings, or your time to others on a regular basis. What could it look like for you to be more generous with the resources God has given you?

Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to lead your thoughts. What are 3-5 things that you can currently think of that you don't use, or are redundant in your life? Write them down on a piece of paper. Put those things in a box. If after a couple of weeks you haven't used them consider giving them to someone who would use them (or a Thrift Store), or sell them and put the money aside. After you have sold those things consider who you could bless with that money, and give it to them. Then start the process again, and maybe use the money in a different way, like paying off debt, giving to a local charity or supporting your church. Continue doing it until you can't think of anything that is redundant in your life