



**Sermon Series: Strengthen Me, Part 3**

**Sermon Title: The Power of Simplicity**

**Date: 5/28/2023**

Simplicity is an essential element for living a godly life marked by joy, peace, and love. Simplicity allows us to untangle the web of distractions that preoccupy us and frees us to grow in the Lord.

**Big Idea: Keep it simple!**

Keep your relationships, wants, desires, and your life simple if you desire a closer relationship with God. In the gospel of Matthew, there is an account where the man's love for his money and possessions kept him from obeying what God told him to do. **Matthew 19:21-22**. That man had inner turmoil. He wanted to have eternal life, and he valued and kept the commandments, yet he was attached to his wealth.

We will see four realities of simplicity

### **SIMPLICITY IS A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE.**

When done in love, discipline is a good thing – Paul talked about this in **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**. Even though we may not like it at the time, discipline builds character and integrity. When we talk about spiritual disciplines, we are talking about habits, practices, and experiences that are designed to develop, grow, and strengthen us spiritually and enable us to grow spiritually mature.

Simplicity is a spiritual discipline because we are actively called to do something. Simplicity involves both an inward mindset and outward actions.

### **SIMPLICITY IS A HEART ISSUE**

**Matthew 6:19-21**

Simplicity is not necessarily about having less, but rather it's about focusing on the things that matter most. Minimalism has become a popular lifestyle trend. This trend is characterized by beginning an intentional process of living with less and simplifying one's possessions- but to simplify your life without

having an eternal purpose is to create a superficial solution for an ongoing problem. The goal has to be a deeper relationship with Jesus.

Scripture does not tell us that it is necessary to abandon all possessions and live on the bare minimum. Christians are not called to a life of asceticism, which involves severe self-discipline and abstinence from all forms of pleasure in order to pursue spiritual goals. As a matter of fact, Scripture actually speaks against both materialism AND asceticism. **Luke 12:15, Ecclesiastes 5:18b-19.**

Simplicity is a heart issue not a possessions issue.

## **SIMPLICITY LEADS TO CONTENTMENT**

**1 Timothy 6:6-7 NIV**

Contentment is being satisfied with what we have. But wow! We live at a time where it is becoming increasingly more difficult to be content because there is always something coming around the corner that is newer, faster, better, and brighter.

Simplicity is a way of living that doesn't require *things* in order to find contentment. **Philippians 4:12-13.** Simplicity leads to contentment as we grow in our awareness that everything we have is a gift from God. **Romans 11:36.** Simplicity also leads to contentment as we learn how to trust that God is able to protect what we do possess. **Luke 12:22, 30b – 31**

## **SIMPLICITY ENABLES GENEROSITY**

**1 Timothy 6:17-18 NIV**

When we share what we have with others, it loosens our grip on our possessions and leads us to freedom. When we choose to be content with what we have, it frees us from being stuck to a lifestyle of chasing after the next best thing.

Here are three steps that will help you practice simplicity.

- 1) Identify – identify what in your life needs to go.
- 2) Be intentional. Simplicity goes against everything you interact with on a daily basis, so pursuing it needs intentionality.
- 3) Live it out – The wrong heart attitude toward stuff can choke out your spiritual life, but the right heart attitude can lead to freedom which will allow you to live a life that draws you close to God.

### Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **What are some practical ways we can live with simplicity in a culture that encourages the opposite of simplicity?**
- **How would you advise someone who is always focused on getting the next, newest thing?**
- **How would you respond to a Christian who says that Christians should live a minimalistic lifestyle?**
- **Do you have anything in your life that unnecessarily takes up much of your time? Explain**
- **How could simplicity change your relationship with God?**