

What does it mean to “seek first God’s kingdom?” What is promised to those who do so?

Jesus said, “Sell your possessions and give to the poor.” Is this a command? What is Jesus’ logic for doing this?

How have you experienced God’s care for you as you have followed Him?

REFLECT

What does a lifestyle of Christian simplicity look like in America today? What features of such a lifestyle are important or appealing to you?

RESPOND

Pair up with another person. Share one thing you have been concerned about recently. What does that tell you about where your heart, and your treasure, is focused?

Pray for each other to put God’s kingdom priorities first. If God brings to mind any step to take, write that down so you remember to do it.



Matthew 6:19-34 (page 663)

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Simply treasure what truly counts. (Don’t let what you have determine who you are.)

Richard Foster in *Freedom of Simplicity* Simplicity is an inward reality that can be seen in an outward lifestyle. We must have both; to neglect either...is disastrous.

²⁴ You cannot serve both God and Money. Simply serve your true Master. (Don’t make money more than it is.)

Ron Blue Stewardship is nothing more than the recognition of God’s ownership of all of our resources and our own willingness to act upon the Truth of His ownership. When we have less “stuff,” we also have fewer illusions of control.



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²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?
Simply trust God as your provider. (Don't let worry rob you.)

³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

Simply unplug from consumerism.
(Don't chase what this world pursues.)

Stuff is not Salvation by Anna Quindlin
Newsweek, December 22, 2008
Because things are dire, many people have become hesitant to spend money on trifles. And in the process they began to realize it's all trifles...Meaning, real meaning is what we are always trying to possess..

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Simply order your life wisely. (Don't waste what God richly provides.)

Adam Hamilton in *Enough: Discovering Joy through Simplicity and Generosity*

Six Financial Planning Principles

1. Pay your tithe and offering *first*.
2. Create a budget and track your expenses.
3. Simplify your lifestyle (live below your means).
4. Establish an emergency fund.
5. Pay off consumer debt and use credit wisely.
6. Practice long-term saving and investing habits.

Eugene Peterson regarding Matthew 6:33
Our priorities should be clear by now...What God says and what He does, and how we respond and how we obey, are the center realities of our lives.

LIVING OUT A THEOLOGY OF SIMPLICITY

LIFE GROUP STUDY

RELATE

What values and expectations about money did you learn from your family growing up?

What principle, insight, or idea was meaningful to you from this week's sermon?

READ

Luke 12:27-34

What two activities should God's children never do, according to Jesus? (v. 22, 32). What reasons does He give believers to not do these things?

In what ways did Jesus say we should be like wildflowers or birds? Why do you think He used these as examples for us to imitate? How realistic is that?

What does this passage teach you about God? How does a right understanding of God's character and our relationship to Him affect how we deal with our daily concerns?

What helps you resist temptations to worry about personal or family needs, or to be overly concerned about other peoples' opinions about how you look or what you do?