

WEEK 6 - SIMPLICITY & GENEROSITY

Fall Focus 2023 // Canopy Guide

On Purpose // Spiritual Disciplines

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Use the questions below to kickstart a community building, all-play conversation that connects to our weekly topic. If your group meets for dinner, these might be great questions to share around a table.

- What is the hardest thing for you to share? Time? Money? Health? Friendship? Emotional energy?
- What is the easiest thing for you to share? Time? Money? Health? Friendship? Emotional energy?
- Do you ever find yourself comparing your life to others and how hard is it for you to be content in your life?

YOUTUBE VIDEO INTRO

[Click here for the YouTube video intro!](#)

STUDY GUIDE

We've been talking about entering the abundant life Jesus offers. In this life we are transformed so that we become more like Jesus. The way we handle the resources under our control is an important spiritual discipline.

Generosity is not first about sharing from our excess. Generosity is properly born out of simplicity and reaching out when we see a need.

Simplicity does not mean rejecting the trappings of modern life and withdrawing from the world. It is refusing to accumulate more than is necessary. It means not being owned by our stuff. It means not purchasing the latest and greatest. It means holding our stuff

loosely.

Simplicity and generosity are tied together as helpful disciplines in the Christian life. We live simply so that others may simply live. When we live simply we have more disposable income and time to share.

The goal of these sister disciplines is to help soften our hearts. The early church met together and were marked by their “glad and generous hearts.” We can have glad and generous hearts, or callous and hard hearts.

Jesus softens our hearts as we practice these disciplines.

Wealth in itself is not evil. Evil creeps in as we love our resources more than we love those in need. To help ourselves develop soft hearts under the care and ministry of Jesus we live both simply and generously.

This is another excellent example where the disciplines that bring us to Jesus are also the disciplines we practice to celebrate our freedom from slavery to stuff.

Scripture to Read

- Acts 2:42-47
- 2 Corinthians 8:1-5
- James 2:14-17
- Hebrews 13:5
- Matthew 6:19-21

Deeper Discussion Questions

1. Think through your lifestyle and resources. How could you better budget your resources (money, possessions, time) for the kingdom?
2. What changes could you make to simplify your life in order to be more kingdom minded?
3. Reflecting on Matthew 6:21, where do you want your heart to be, and how can you invest your resources accordingly?

PRAYER

Make sure to claim some time as a group each week to pray specifically for each other.

EXTRA RESOURCES/ARTICLES/RESEARCH

1. “Understanding Simplicity” by Richard Foster (introductory essay found in Nathan Foster’s book): <https://renovare.org/articles/understanding-simplicity>
2. Book - Christian Minimalism
<https://www.amazon.com/Christian-Minimalism-Simple-Abundant-Living/dp/1640653880#:~:text=Book%20details&text=Christian%20Minimalism%20attempts%20to%20cut,%2C%20spiritual%2C%20and%20emotional%20clutter.>
3. Video - “21 Foundations of Christian Spirituality: The Discipline of Simplicity” undergraduate course taught by Dr. Christopher A. Hall (currently serving as president of Renovaré) at Eastern University
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwxjcftV6BI>