

Simplicity 01

The More of Less



Weston Brooks

THE MORE OF LESS

If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.

- Jesus

Most of us ignore the challenge presented by these words of Jesus by telling ourselves that this only applied to the rich young ruler - a man whose wealth had a hold on his heart. I am not wealthy and so wealth is not an idol for me and so these words of Jesus are not for me. Jesus is not asking me to sell my possessions and give to the poor.

Yet Jesus said that "life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." He said to the large crowd, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven." In one of His teachings to all His disciples He said, "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven."

Jesus lived a very simple life with few possessions, yet His life was rich in purpose, relationships and generosity. He did not say that money, wealth and possessions are bad. But He clearly believed that we are all tempted by the lie that money, wealth and possessions will give us security and happiness. When we believe this lie, we focus on and pursue these things at the expense of true life in the kingdom. In contrast, Jesus said we should seek first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added to us.

This week we are going to try a simple exercise to help us think about how important our possession are to us and our sense of happiness. It is called the "Letting God Experiment."

LETTING GO EXPERIMENT

Start with prayer

- Take a few minutes to center yourself in God's Presence.

This Week's practice

- Make a list of the possessions with which you feel the most attachment.
- If you're not sure, think through the things you have and ask yourself, "What if I got rid of _____?" If you feel a strong reluctance at the idea, that's probably it.
- It might be clothes, home furnishings, hobby items, jewelry, toys
- Relax. No one is going to guilt you into getting rid of something you want to keep. 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.
- Start small. Take note of how the process makes you feel.

Simple Prayer

- Close your time with a simple prayer of gratitude to God for his presence, love, and goodness in your life.

Reflect

- Write down how you felt and what you learned through this exercise

RESOURCES

Abundant Simplicity

by Jan Johnson

The Freedom of Simplicity

by Richard Foster

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