

March 25, 2020



## ...Simplicity

“Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”  
-Matthew 6:25-27 NIV

How are you doing in the worry department these days? I know my anxiety level has been at a 9 or 10 at times during this time of exile and physical distancing. Some of us aren't working. That might mean we aren't getting paid. Or we might work in an industry that has had to shut down so no money is coming in. The future viability of these businesses is at stake. Maybe you own or run such a business. You feel a responsibility for the well-being of your employees, for your own well-being.

Does it seem odd that at a time when we are asked, if not ordered, to slow down, stay home, shelter in place, that we are finding ourselves more worried about the future than normal? And are you like me? My fears are more tied to the current state of the economy than to any fear of contracting the coronavirus.

We have a disease in America other than COVID-19. It is the disease of consumerism. We have been conditioned in our culture to desire more than what we need and to overwork to

obtain what we desire. While it would be irresponsible to not be concerned about our livelihoods and those we are responsible for, Jesus is calling us to a better, freer way of life – one of simplicity. In a world where we get our meaning from what we consume and our identity from the things we own, Jesus is offering us the easy yoke of his provision.

Jesus spent a good deal of his time teaching on money. He said we could not serve both God and money – its impossible. He lived a life that was not focused on possessions. Its not that we can't have anything, or can't have nice things, but more about having less things and being free – free from the drive or the desire to own the next new thing or just one more.

There is freedom in simplicity. We are free from the drive to work harder and faster to support our desires. We are free from the distractions that go with managing and organizing and maintaining all our stuff. We are free from the worry, the anxiety, that losing our income or not being able to support our lifestyle creates in us.

We are not just talking about decluttering, reorganizing, “Marie Kondo-ing” our things. The goal of simplicity is to live with a high degree of intentionality around what matters most – which for us should be Jesus and his Kingdom. It is a carefree unconcern for possessions. Matthew 6 also includes this verse: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (vs33)

At this time when our anxiety is high and our tendency is to hoard and “store up,” ask God to begin to change your mind – to transform your thinking from worry over possessions and money, to living more freely and intentionally a life of simplicity. Demonstrate your intentions through your generosity – share what you have and your will be storing up treasure in heaven!