

LIVING SIMPLY

In today's fast-paced world, it's all too easy to get entangled in a web of endless responsibilities and the sheer volume of stuff. Ever felt the weight of both physical clutter and the mental and spiritual burden it can signify? You're not alone. And while Netflix specials on decluttering or the minimalist trend may offer temporary fixes, they do not get to the heart of the matter.

That's where the Transformation Trek comes in. This season, we're delving deep into the concept of Simple Living. But we're not simply joining the minimalist bandwagon. Instead, we're seeking to uncover the profound simplicity embraced by Jesus Himself. His life was a testament to living with intention, free from the burdens of excess, both physical and spiritual.

Remember when Jesus referenced the birds and the flowers, highlighting their lack of toil or anxiety? It wasn't merely a poetic observation; it was a profound call to a life unburdened by needless worries or materialistic pursuits.

Join us on this journey through the guide, not just to declutter spaces, but to declutter the heart and spirit, aligning more with the life and teachings of Jesus. Together, let's move beyond fleeting trends and step into a more profound, intentional simplicity.

Ready to take the leap? Let's begin this Practice.

Seek simplicity: Unearth God's deep presence and purpose amidst the clutter.

KEY VERSES

Matthew 6:31-34

Luke 10:41-42

Luke 12:13-21

Matthew 6:19-21

Isaiah 26:3

James 1:8

Colossians 3:1-4

Hebrews 12:1-3

Philippians 4:7

Matthew 5:37

TEACHING



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Trek Discussion Videos



Week 1. Putting the King in Kingdom

Key Verses: **Matthew 6:31-34, Colossians 3:1-4, Hebrews 12:1-3**

Discussion Questions:

As we take stock of the things we do, the things we have, the things we want, who would someone assume, based on this, **is the King of our life?**

Q. How does prioritizing His kingdom impact our daily choices?

Q. What challenges arise when we don't recognize the King's authority in our lives?

Weekly challenge: This week, fast from a chosen "worldly concern," be it social media, entertainment, or a food. When its absence is felt, turn to prayer or scripture. Ponder the profound fulfillment Jesus provides.

Week 2. God vs. Good

Key Verses: **Matthew 5:37, James 1:8**

Discussion Questions:

Q. How do we discern between what's good and what's God-approved?

Q. What temptations exist to choose merely the good instead of God's best?

Q. How can we ensure our decisions align with God's purpose and not just what seems good?

Weekly Challenge: Spend 5-10 minutes every evening this week to reflect on decisions made throughout the day. Were they driven by worldly "good" or God's guidance?

Week 3. Who Owns Who?

Key Verses:

Matthew 6:19-21 , Luke 12:13-21

Discussion Questions:

Q. How can our possessions subtly take ownership of us?

Q. What steps can we take to ensure our hearts and priorities aren't governed by material wealth?

Q. How does viewing life through the lens of eternity change our perspective on ownership?

Choose a space in your home—a drawer, closet, or room. As you evaluate each item, ponder: Does this spiritually uplift me or weigh me down? Donate those items that don't serve a meaningful spiritual purpose.

Week 4. Peace in a Storm

Key Verses:

Luke 10:41-42, Philippians 4:7

Discussion Questions:

Q. In the storms of life, how can we anchor our souls in God's peace?

Q. How did Jesus model tranquility in the face of challenges and opposition?

Q. What practices or scriptures help you find calm amidst life's turbulence?

Q. What will you take from this Practice into the future?

Each day, dedicate 5 minutes to sit in silence, meditating on a scripture or a challenging situation. In this stillness, invite God's peace and presence.

PRACTICE STACKING

In our journey toward simple living, we introduce a concept called "Practice Stacking". While at first glance, this might seem at odds with the philosophy of simplicity, let's unpack its essence.

"Practice Stacking" isn't about heaping on more activities or turning spirituality into a checklist. It's about choosing disciplines that actively help unburden, focus, and deeply fulfill our souls. In a world constantly pushing for more — more tasks, more possessions, more accolades — simple living invites us to a different, counter-cultural rhythm. This rhythm isn't about adding for the sake of addition but about removing distractions and amplifying what truly matters.

Though "Stacking" may sound counterintuitive, it's grounded in a principle Jesus so beautifully embodied: doing things that lighten our load, not increase it. It's about choosing paths that lead us closer to His presence, not further away.

REFLECT

We'll be revisiting some spiritual practices in this guide, practices that have stood the test of time, aiding believers in their walk with the Divine. These aren't tasks to be conquered but avenues to connect deeper with God. They don't make God give us more peace; they help us turn toward it, dwell in it, and walk hand-in-hand with Him.

Some of the practices that enhance our journey into simple living include Wielding the Word (Bible Reading), Transformative Prayer, Silence & Solitude, Fasting, and more. If you haven't explored them yet, or even if you have, consider diving into them. They serve as invaluable companions on this journey. For a comprehensive list, you can check out [TransformationTrek.online](https://www.transformationtrek.com).

Remember, in our quest for simple living, we aren't trying to do more; we're striving to be more in tune, more centered, and more profoundly connected to our Saviour.

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

One of the most iconic teachings of Jesus, the Sermon on the Mount isn't just a list of rules, but a profound manifesto on life lived in harmony with God and His Spirit. It's an invitation to a life that, while simple in its focus, is deep in its fulfillment. This teaching paints a picture of a life that remains blessed in the face of adversity, one that embraces the good, navigates the bad, and confronts the ugly with grace and strength, all because of our identity and relationship with God. It's not about religious complexity but about spiritual simplicity that's rooted in love, justice, and humility.

A Promise to God's People Jeremiah 29, Especially Verse 7:

Though originally written for the Israelites during one of the darkest chapters in their history, the principles here resonate deeply with our modern souls.

Living under the shadow of Babylon, one of history's most formidable empires, the Israelites receive a surprising directive from God: to seek the peace of the city they're in, to plant gardens, to marry, to eat and thrive. In essence, God's calling them to a rhythm of life that's simple yet deeply transformative, even in the midst of adversity. It underscores God's heart for His people: that even when we find ourselves in less than ideal circumstances, there's a beautiful simplicity in living out our faith, in continuing to trust in God's overarching plan, and in seeking the welfare of our communities.

These passages, though penned in different times and contexts, illuminate a timeless truth: The heart of God beckons us towards a life of simple trust, profound purpose, and deep-rooted peace. It's a call to live fully, but not frantically; to engage deeply, but not to be overwhelmed; and to find our ultimate identity and purpose in Him.

A Grateful Soul

Cultivating a grateful soul involves nurturing a profound sense of thankfulness that permeates our entire being. It's about allowing gratitude to shape our relationship with God and influence our view of all aspects of life. This practice sees every circumstance and interaction as an opportunity for gratitude.

Practices for a Grateful Soul:

Reflect and meditate on scriptures that encourage gratitude, letting them guide your worldview.

During prayer, express your thanks to God for blessings and guidance during challenges and for the people in your life, even the difficult ones.

Create art, music, or other expressions that symbolize your gratitude toward God.

Engage in collective praise and worship activities, like communion.

Don't approach these with a performance mindset, but with a heartfelt focus on God, His life-giving provisions, and His work in your life. Respond by permitting yourself to worship, to praise, and to offer your genuine self in the process.

FASTING

There's something spiritual about food. What we eat and drink has a profound effect on us and likely more on our spirit and soul than we could ever know. The Ancient Hebrews actually consider their soul, the centre of being, in their stomach. This is where such sayings around a "Gut Feeling" comes from.

A Traditional Fast (Going without Food)

So, it would therefore make sense that going without food for a day, a couple of days or even 40 days (Lent) is something that would have a profound effect on us. How you do this though, is completely up to you and God.

Here are a couple of options:

Choosing to skip a meal - Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner - each day for a season. Replacing the time to pray/read scripture.

Choosing to not eat for an extended period of time, only drinking water. (We strongly recommended consulting a doctor before doing this, it's not a competition or challenge, it's a practice.)

Choosing hours to eat e.g. not eating during daylight or between certain hours

P Disclaimer: This is not a health or weight loss program. If this is why you are led toward this practice, then our suggestion is to stay away from it. This is about abiding in Christ, not about looking better in jeans.



FAMILY PRACTICE

Setting the Scene:

Imagine a typical evening; buzzing phones, TV chatter, and dinner tales. Now, let's transform one evening a week.

Suggestion 1: Unplugged Evening

Designate an evening for no electronics. Dive into board games, crafts, or music.

Reflection: Notice the change in family dynamics. Is there deeper conversation and connection?

Suggestion 2: Gratitude Journal

Introduce a 'Family Gratitude Journal' on the unplugged evening. Everyone shares one thankful moment from the week.

Reflection: How does gratitude reshape our family's perspective in a world always wanting more?

Suggestion 3: Simplifying Spaces

Choose a space to declutter together. Discuss valuable items and consider donations.

Reflection: How does decluttering mirror our spiritual lives?

Suggestion 4: Nature Retreat

Monthly or quarterly, spend time outdoors. A park picnic or a forest hike can recenter the family.

Reflection: How does nature draw us closer to God's simple, profound presence?

Suggestion 5: Simple Meal

Occasionally, step back from the ordinary meals we make and instead prepare a very simple meal like rice or oats for dinner. Many around the world have meals like this as their staples. Doing this and talking about it as a family can remind us that every meal doesn't need to be spectacular, time consuming or expensive. It can also help us be grateful again for the food we are blessed to eat.

This isn't about more 'to-dos'. It's an invitation to seek more; deeper connection, reflection, and God in our daily rhythms. As we venture into simple living as a family, it's about direction, not perfection – aligning our hearts towards a Christ-centered life.