

II. THE HEAVENLY DISCIPLINE OF...SERVICE

Key Truth:

A Life of SERVICE Flows From A Life of SIMPLICITY

A) This is True for JESUS....

Philippians 2:4-8 (RSV)

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but **emptied himself, taking the form of a servant**, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

B) This is True for US....

2 Corinthians 11:3

But I fear that somehow you will be led away from **your pure and simple devotion to Christ**, just as Eve was deceived by the serpent.

CONCLUSION

Luke 2:12

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

For This Week:

Prayerfully SEEK GOD for specific ways that you can simplify your life and serve Him in new ways. WRITE down what comes to your mind. Then, during the rest of this month, PRAY over what you have written.

HEAVENLY DISCIPLINES OF THE OPEN HEART SIMPLICITY & SERVIING

Seeing the Simplicity and Service in the
Open Heavens of Christmas

December 6, 2009

SW607

INTRODUCTION

In Your Bible:

Luke 2:10-12

(Page 1014 in the Pew Bible)

Proverbs 13:7 (The Message)

A pretentious, showy life is an empty life;
a plain and **simple life** is a full life.

Proverbs 15:16 (The Message)

A **simple life** in the fear of God
is better than a rich life with a ton of headaches.

Mark 10:13-16 (The Message)

The people brought children to Jesus, hoping he might touch them. 14 The disciples shooed them off. But Jesus was irate and let them know it: "Don't push these children away. Don't ever get between them and me. These children are at the very center of life in the kingdom. 15 Mark this: Unless you accept God's kingdom in **the simplicity of a child**, you'll never get in."

Isaiah 28:13 (NLT)

So the Lord will spell out his message for them again, repeating it over and over, a line at a time, in very simple words. Yet **they will stumble over this simple, straightforward message.**

1 Timothy 6:6-8 (The Message)

A devout life does bring wealth, but it's the **rich simplicity of being yourself before God**. 7 Since we entered the world penniless and will leave it penniless, 8 if we have bread on the table and shoes on our feet, that's enough.

I. THE HEAVENLY DISCIPLINE OF...SIMPLICITY

Ecclesiastes 7:30 (JB)

God made man simple; man's complex problems are of his own devising.

Key Point:

The Christian Discipline of Simplicity is an INWARD REALITY that Results in an OUTWARD LIFESTYLE

A. The INWARD REALITY of Simplicity

In Your Bible:
Matthew 6:25-33
(Pages 960-961 in the Pew Bible)

- 1) All that we have is ultimately not the result of our own labor but the result of God's _____.
- 2) While we do have personal responsibility as stewards of what God has entrusted to us, we are not to live in worry and anxiety because it is ultimately God's responsibility to _____ of us.
- 3) Knowing this, we hold on to our possessions _____ and use them _____ to advance the Kingdom of God in our lives and the lives of others.

B. The OUTWARD LIFESTYLE of Simplicity

Ten Principles for the Outward Expression of the Inward Reality of Simplicity:

1. Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status.
2. Reject anything that is producing an addiction in your life.
3. Develop a habit of giving things away.
4. Refuse to be propagandized by the custodians of modern gadgetry.
5. Learn to enjoy things without owning them.
6. Develop a deeper appreciation for the creation.
7. Look with healthy skepticism at "by now, pay later" schemes.
8. Obey Jesus' instructions about plain, honest speech.
9. Reject anything that breeds the oppression of others.
10. Shun anything that distracts you from seeking first the Kingdom of God.

Richard Foster in
The Celebration of Disciplines