

Not First #6:
SIMPLICITY

Word

Scripture Reference

1Timothy 6:6-19

Discussion Questions

1. Which of your belongings do you think you can't live without? Why? Share with the group.
2. The Bible reminds us that this present life is not our final destination. We are just pilgrims in this land, and so we should not be accumulating things that might weigh us down when God calls us to move, like the baggages of prosperity, possessions, position, promise, pride, and property. This is why Christians should practice the spiritual discipline of simplicity. To leave simply is a reminder for a believer to live for eternity. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-19. Living in simplicity is not necessarily about physical things, but about one's attitude. In his letter to Timothy, Paul gives wise counsel from which we can draw out four principles on simplicity:
 - a. **Simplicity is about contentment (v. 6).** Simplicity is being satisfied with what God has given you. It is developing the attitude of contentment by doing your best for the glory of God. Do you find it difficult to be content? Why? Discuss what happens when people are discontent with their lives or with what they have. If someone with a problem of being content approaches you for advice, what would you tell that person?
 - b. **A truth to remember: We come with nothing, we leave with nothing (v. 7).** How do you react to this truth? What is the purpose of wanting to gain so much if you can't take it

with you when you pass on from this world? How can you invest for eternity?

- c. **The essentials of life: Food and clothing (v. 8).** Food and clothing (used in the context of covering, shelter, or protection from the elements) are necessities that you should be content with. Sometimes you should be reminded that you can survive without some of the things that you think are essential for you to live. What are the things that you give so much importance aside from food, clothing, and shelter? Discuss why you can survive even without those things.
 - d. **A warning to live simply (v. 9-10).** When you are not content, the Bible gives a stern warning that you could fall into a trap that plunge men into ruin and destruction. To counteract, you need to live simply. Discuss why the get-rich-quick schemes that people have fallen for look attractive to many. Why is the love of money a root of all kinds of evil (v. 10)? Since everyone needs money to pay for necessary things, in what way can you keep a proper perspective on money and possessions?
3. To help you live out these principles, here are four questions you can ask daily to practice the spiritual discipline of simplicity:
 - a. **Do I really need it (v. 11)?** The pursuit of what is spiritual is what you really need to do. What is the difference between need and want, or necessity and luxury? Read verse 8 again if you find it difficult to distinguish what is really necessary from luxury.
 - b. **Does it have eternal value (v. 12)?** Paul urged Timothy to fight the good fight, which is to persevere to hold on to what is eternal. Does what you are pursuing have eternal value? What does God expect of you? Discuss the things that you can invest here on earth that has eternal value.
 - c. **Does it bring glory to God (v. 13-16)?** The emphasis here is to live for the Lord. We pursue God for His glory! What attributes did Paul refer to God on verses 15-16? Does the way you live your life brings glory to God?

- d. ***Does it bring you closer to God or draw you away from Him (v. 17-19)?*** It is a command that those who are rich should not put their trust in their wealth, but in the Lord. Just because you are rich in the present time does not mean that you will be rich in the life to come. In what way does a person's possessions keep him/her away from God? How does living simply bring a person closer to God?

Walk

The many pieces of life's baggage can weigh you down, that's why you are to cultivate the discipline of simplicity to help you focus on the work of the Lord. Does what you have make your life so busy that it keeps you from pursuing what you are called to do, which is to further the kingdom of God? Is there an area in your life wherein you need to learn to be content, or is there anything that keeps you away from God that you need to give up? Ask the Lord to help you to live simply in order to be closer to Him.

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that there are many things in life that hinder me from pursuing your Kingdom. Those things make me so busy and preoccupied that I hardly have time for You. Please help me to surrender those things to You. Help me learn to cultivate a life of simplicity for Your sake, and to choose to invest for eternity instead of working hard for the things that I cannot take with me when I die. Help me to be wise and follow Your instructions in Your Word so that I can live a life that gives glory to Your Name. In Jesus' name. Amen.