

“Simple Values”

Simple Life Sermon Series | Week One | Newbreak Church

November 13th, 2022

Newbreak’s Sermon Study Guide is an in-house resource that serves sermon-based Life Groups and/or individuals who want to reflect further on how the message contributes to our spiritual formation.

In this week’s study, we talk about simplifying our life by living according to the right values. We live in a culture of hurry and an unsustainable fast pace. Before we know it, we are burnt out and frustrated. Why? Whether we have the language to pinpoint it or not, we are languishing because we are not living according to the right values. Let’s discover how to live a lighter life by living according to Christ-centered values!

Icebreakers for Life Groups

- What Thanksgiving food could you not go without?
- When someone asks how you are doing, what is your most common answer? Busy? Tired? A combination of the two? Or something else?

Going Deeper Into the Message

*The simple life is not about getting **more** things done, but about getting the **right** things done.*

Read Ephesians 5:8–10

Point 1 – Discover what God values.

Ephesians 5:8–10 (NLT) ⁸ For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! ⁹ For this light within you produces only what is **good** and **right** and **true**. ¹⁰ Carefully determine what pleases the Lord.

It’s amazing how quickly our lives can get off track when we are hurried. It’s like we wear “busyness” as a badge of honor. This is not a call to stop everything, but rather to simplify. The solution isn’t to stop, the solution is to simplify. So, what does it mean to simplify? It means putting our focus on the **right** things instead of just on **more** things. Part of the work of the gospel in our lives, according to Paul, is that the light of Christ

“produces only what is **good and right and true**.” God’s values will always follow suit with what is good, right, and true. When Paul is speaking of what pleases the Lord (verse 10), he is not simply saying what makes God happy. He is saying what God is truly looking for and what He values. Spoiler alert: Living hurried and disordered lives isn’t it!

- **God’s values are all about the things that draw us into a healthy and whole relationship with him and also with one another.** That’s the key! We see those all over Scripture and there are too many that can be identified that we often have to be selective in what ones we want to focus on.

Just as the goal is not to stop but to simplify, so also the aim is to be busy with the right things, without being hurried. Dallas Willard, the late, great, well known Christian practitioner was once asked what the greatest enemy of the spiritual life is. His response? “**Hurry** is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day. You must **ruthlessly eliminate hurry** from your life.” That answer means something. And so step one for us involves discovering (or re-discovering) God’s values. After all, **God’s values breed life—the kind of life our soul so desperately longs for; the life our world so desperately longs for but cannot grasp in its hurry and pursuit of all the wrong ends.**

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- “God’s values are all about the things that draw us into a healthy and whole relationship with him and also with one another.” What are some things you identify that God values? Be specific!
- How have you seen hurry cause disorder within your life and your soul?
- What is one thing you can implement today to begin to “ruthlessly eliminate hurry” from your life?

The simple life is not about getting more things done, but about getting the right things done.

Read Ephesians 5:10–17

Point 2 – Allow God’s values to shape my values.

Ephesians 5:10 (NLT) Carefully determine what **pleases** the Lord.

Or in other words... what the Lord **values**. This is all about directing our energy toward what matters most. In the long run, being Kingdom-minded is what matters most. So I

have to be honest with myself about what is helping me become Kingdom-minded. The best way to do that is by looking at my values and my time.

Simplifying our energy comes down to two key things: having a simplified vision of my values and a simplified vision of my time.

As we say, our calendar and bank account will show us real quickly what is actually valuable to us. Simplifying my values will simplify how I use my energy. Why? Because if we value everything we value nothing.

John Mark Comer, the author of *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, says this: “We achieve inner peace when our schedules are aligned with our values.” And he is right! Much of our frustration, we would venture to say, stems from an incongruence between what we value and how our lives are actually spent. We are *exhausting* ourselves for the wrong things instead of *establishing* a legacy in what matters *most*.

And the tricky part about all of this is that the enemy of the great is often the good. In other words, we can find justifiable reasons to keep doing everything we are doing even if it is not the pace of life we are supposed to be living, and yet the question remains: What is most important? Notice how the question is not “What is important?” There are a legion of things that are important, but only a few make the list of what is most important. And the answer comes down to determining what Christ-centered values we are going to live by.

We have written before about how to create personalized, Christ-centered values for your family. You can [read about it HERE](#). Here is a sample of what it may look like:

Simplicity – The ability to be satisfied with the abundance of less.

We are simple in that we do not clutter our lives with too many possessions or time commitments that take us away from the simple joys and priorities that deserve our devotion. Simplicity allows us to be deep and abiding human beings. It also helps fight anxiety. After all, we tend to make life more complicated than it needs to be.

But godliness with **contentment** is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out. (1 Timothy 6:7–8, CSB)

If we don’t live according to Christ-centered values, our lives will be **reactive** and not **proactive**. Values are not just words or mantras, they are the fire that ignites everything we do. We structure our calendars around our values. We make big and small decisions according to our values. Living in alignment with our values ensures that we are living a life of simplicity and purpose, not hurry and haphazard coincidences.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- How do you incorporate God's values into your everyday life? What values are specifically in focus for you?
- What does your calendar say about what you value? Your bank account? How can you make a proactive choice this week about how you're spending your energy?
- In light of this conversation, what things might you need to say "yes" to? What things do you need to say "no" to? What things do you need to say "not now" to?
- If you don't have a list of personalized, Christ-centered values, consider [reading this blog](#) we wrote and writing your own. What are some of the values you have selected?

Memory Verse: Ephesians 5:15 (NLT) So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise.

—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

How are you going to think or live differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?

How does this week's message shape or nurture your relationship with God?

BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids in a way that they would relate to or understand?