

Something to Pray About

By Cindy Sears – April 2009

"SIMPLICITY"

Jesus asks for *radical* discipleship from His followers. He condemns the love of riches (Luke 16:13) and hoarding (Luke 12:16-21); and He calls us to joyful and carefree unconcern for possessions (Luke 6:30). Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 6:17-19 not to trust in riches and to share generously. Consider these **Three Attitudes** and how liberating they would be if you allowed God to ingrain them upon your heart:

1. We work but we know it's not our work that gives us what we have. We are dependent on God for essential elements of life, such as air, water, sun. God is gracious in His care of us. Genesis 1:1; Psalm 33; Matthew 6:25-34
2. God is able to protect what we have been given. The lock on the door is not what protects the house. It is common sense to be cautious, but if you believe that is what is protecting your home, you will be riddled with anxiety. We can trust God to protect not just our possessions, but also our families, our reputations, our jobs, and more. Psalm 33; II Samuel 22: 2-4
3. Martin Luther: "If our goods are not available to the community, they are stolen goods." Fear of tomorrow causes us to cling to our possessions. But if we truly believe God is who Jesus says He is, we do not need to be afraid. When we come to see God as the almighty Creator and our loving Father, we can share because we know that He will care for us. If someone is in need, we are free to help them. (Ordinary common sense will define the parameters of our sharing and save us from foolishness.) Proverbs 3:27-28; 11:24-25; Luke 6:30; Acts 20:35.

To experience the liberating spirit of simplicity will affect how we live. Here is a list of ten principles of the outward expression of simplicity. These are **not** laws or rules, but guidelines and evidences of the inward simplicity **God has created in your heart.**

1. Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status. Cars, houses, fashionable clothes, furniture, etc. Use them up before replacing them.
2. Reject anything that is producing an addiction in you. Learn to distinguish between a real psychological need, like cheerful surroundings, and an addiction. Eliminate or cut down on addictive drinks and food.
3. Develop a habit of giving things away. De-accumulate.
4. Refuse to be propagandized by custodians of modern gadgetry. Timesaving devices rarely save time.
5. Learn to enjoy things without owning them. If we own it, we feel we can control it—this idea is an illusion.
6. Develop a deeper appreciation for creation. See Psalm 24:1.
7. Look with healthy skepticism at all *buy now, pay later* schemes. These are traps that deepen bondage.
8. Obey Jesus' instructions about plain, honest speech. Say *yes* or *no* only. See Matthew 5:37. Do what you say you will do. Avoid flattery and half-truths.
9. Reject anything that will breed the oppression of others.
10. Shun whatever would distract you from your main goal—to focus on God and His kingdom.

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness! Matthew 6:33.