

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

SIMPLICITY

Oh, how complicated and stressful our lives can be! Yet God tells us He wants us to live simpler, more peaceful lives. He **MAKES** us lie down in green pastures, which shows we're not very good at it on our own. Spend this week seeking simplicity in your life and be free of the things that are weighing you down. He's offering all of us a simple life. Let's accept it with joy!

DAY 1

GOD'S SIMPLICITY AND GRACE

“JESUS INVITES US TO A LIFE OF JOYOUS TRUST – A WAY OF LIVING IN WHICH EVERYTHING WE HAVE WE RECEIVE AS A GIFT, AND EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS CARED FOR BY GOD, AND EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS AVAILABLE TO OTHERS WHEN IT IS RIGHT AND GOOD. THIS REALITY FRAMES THE HEART OF CHRISTIAN SIMPLICITY. IT IS THE MEANS OF LIBERATION AND POWER TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT AND TO OVERCOME THE FORCES OF FEAR AND AVARICE.”

-RICHARD FOSTER

English Standard Version

2 Corinthians 1:12

For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you.

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear Father, I want to live a simple yet profound life, and I ask for You to teach me how. May You give me simplicity and godly sincerity. I don't want to follow earthly wisdom, but to be wise through Your grace. I know that if I can just rely on Your grace, then I will trust You and not complicate my life with trying to do all that the world tells me I need to do to be smart, successful, beautiful, and wealthy. I want my testimony to be simply that I completely trust in You. Amen and Amen

REFLECT: How do we live a life of simplicity? Could it be to separate which of our Christian beliefs are cultural and which are truly biblical? The Lord doesn't want us to live by earthly wisdom, but to rely on His grace! Begin by seeking Him, learning more about His ways, and stripping away anything in your life that is not simple and sincere. Spend this week doing just that as you embrace God's grace and wisdom.

ACT: Start this week in prayer – ask the Lord to reveal to you the difference between earthly wisdom and Godly wisdom. Ask Him to fill you with His grace and to strip away anything that is complicating your life unnecessarily. Write down what you think God is telling you and be willing to let go of any beliefs, actions, activities, habits, or words that are not full of grace. This could be the start of developing a simple, child-like faith that frees you up to become less stressed and more like Christ! Commit yourself simply to prayer.

DAY 2

DO JUSTICE, LOVE KINDNESS, AND WALK HUMBLY

"THE POINT OF SIMPLICITY IS NOT EFFICIENCY, INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY OR EVEN LIVING A HEALTHIER, MORE RELAXED LIFE. THE POINT IS MAKING SPACE FOR TREASURING GOD'S OWN SELF."

-JAN JOHNSON

English Standard Version

Micah 6:8

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

DAY 2

PRAY: Lord, Thank You for showing me the basics of what You require of me and what is good in Your eyes. You say that I should do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with You. That seems too simple, and yet I ask that You show me how. I need You so that I don't over-complicate my life with a long list of rules, laws, obligations, and responsibilities. Help me to simply do what's right, find joy in loving others, and walk with You every moment of every day in joyful humility. It sounds beautiful and it's all You ask. I just need You to help me do it. Thank you, Lord! Amen.

REFLECT: Reflect on these four concepts from today's verse: 1) God has told you what is good 2) The Lord requires you to do justice 3) He requires you to love kindness and 4) The Lord requires you to walk humbly with Him. How would your life change if you implemented these four truths into your daily activities and goals? What would you have to give up? Focus on? Re-think? This one verse is life-changing if we could live it out fully. How would it change you?

DAY 2

ACT: Today, choose to practice each of these concepts from Micah 6:8. You may need to write these down: First of all, find out what God means when He says to “do good.” Then do one thing today that is “just”; Do or say something “kind” to someone; and then decide what needs to change for you to walk “humbly with Him”. At the end of the day it might be fun to write down how your day was more simple because of practicing these commandments. Notice whether you feel more peaceful and satisfied, even if this is the only thing you accomplish today. By following the few things that God “requires” of you, your life will not only be simpler, but you will be living by godly wisdom, not earthly wisdom.

DAY 3

BE SATISFIED WITH YOUR DAILY BREAD

PEOPLE WHO PRIDE THEMSELVES ON THEIR
“COMPLEXITY” AND DERIDE OTHERS FOR
BEING “SIMPLISTIC” SHOULD REALIZE THAT
THE TRUTH IS OFTEN NOT VERY
COMPLICATED. WHAT GETS COMPLEX IS
EVADING THE TRUTH.
-THOMAS SOWELL

English Standard Version

Proverbs 30:8

Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give
me neither poverty nor riches, but give me
only my daily bread.

DAY 3

PRAY: God, in my quest for simplicity this week, I want to keep falsehood and lies far from me. I know that keeping up with lies is not only complicated, but stressful and exhausting. Also, please give me neither poverty nor riches for I don't want too little, which is scary and stressful, but I don't want too much, for that is also stressful and will make my life much more complicated. God, please just give me only my daily bread and keep me honest, for I know this is all I need to live a simple life. Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever thought about how much more complicated life is for people who lie, especially to get rich? They have to keep up with the lies to stay consistent, and remember past lies so as not to get caught, and who they said what to, so as not to be exposed. It's exhausting, it's scary, and it can lead to not only embarrassing but also legal consequences. Our lives are always so much simpler when we follow God's ways and keep falsehoods, lies, and greed far from us!

ACT: What is the last lie that you told? Did it have to do with getting more money? Who did you tell it to? How can you stop that lie right now so that you don't have to keep perpetuating it in the future and so that you don't have to remember what you said and to whom you said it? Would it need an apology to end it? What can you do right now to simplify your life, end that lie and greed and never say another lie again?

DAY 4

I LACK NOTHING

“JESUS INVITES US TO A LIFE OF JOYOUS TRUST – A WAY OF LIVING IN WHICH EVERYTHING WE HAVE WE RECEIVE AS A GIFT, AND EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS CARED FOR BY GOD, AND EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS AVAILABLE TO OTHERS WHEN IT IS RIGHT AND GOOD.”

-RICHARD FOSTER

New International Version

Psalms 23:1-3

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.

DAY 4

PRAY: Dear Lord, my shepherd, I thank You that because of You, and loving You, I lack NOTHING. Thank You that You make me lie down in green pastures because You want me to rest; You lead me beside quiet waters because you want me to slow down, enjoy the beauty around me, and simplify my life. Thank You that You refresh my soul, therefore I don't need to strive for peace, calm, and joy. Lord, I want to live a simpler life and I know I can only do that by depending on You, trusting You, and turning to You in times of need. I love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

REFLECT: When you get overwhelmed, stressed, and feel that you'll never catch up, have you ever thought to read through Psalm 23 and just meditate on God's promises? He wants us to be peaceful and not complicate our lives with deadlines, huge projects, events, meetings, etc. He wants us to love Him, love others, and enjoy the world around us that He has given to us as a gift. He wants us to live an abundant life, not a busy life. Have you ever heard the quote: "If the devil can't make you bad, he'll make you busy!" That's something to think about....

DAY 4

ACT: How can you make your life simpler? What are you doing that might be good, but it's not BEST for you in this season of life? What are you doing just because it's an obligation or you feel guilty if you don't do it? Are you spending time with anyone who might not be healthy for you? Lie down in a "green pasture" or "beside quiet waters" right now and evaluate how you spend your time. What can you eliminate in order to live a simpler life with more space for God. Cut out busyness and let the Lord refresh your soul.



DAY 5

CALM AND QUIET MY SOUL

“WHILE THE IMPOSTOR DRAWS HIS IDENTITY FROM PAST ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE ADULATION OF OTHERS, THE TRUE SELF CLAIMS IDENTITY IN ITS BELOVEDNESS. WE ENCOUNTER GOD IN THE ORDINARINESS OF LIFE: NOT IN THE SEARCH FOR SPIRITUAL HIGHS AND EXTRAORDINARY, MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES BUT IN OUR SIMPLE PRESENCE IN LIFE.”

-BRENNAN MANNING

New International Version

Psalms 131: 1-2

My heart is not proud, Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content.

DAY 5

PRAY: O Lord, I come to You to get more balance in my crazy life. I need to calm and quiet my soul, like a weaned child with its mother. I need to know I'm OK as I am and that I don't have to concern myself with greatness. I don't want to occupy myself with things that are unreasonable, unattainable, and not a priority to You. So, please quiet me now and refocus me on only what You know is important and best for me. Thank You and Amen.

REFLECT: We know the famous verse, "With God, all things are possible." But Psalm 131 tells us not to confuse that with taking on too much, expecting unrealistic goals, and striving for accomplishments that are beyond what the Lord has in store for us. Where is your heart? Is it lifted up to the Lord or full of stress, busyness and striving? Are your eyes lifted up too high or are they focused right on Jesus? Ask yourself where you are with the Lord vs. your ambition, goals, and accomplishments. Do you need to simplify your life and quiet your soul?

DAY 5

ACT: Choose a trusted friend or mentor and set up a meeting to ask them to help you to evaluate your life. We're all too busy and often with things that appear urgent but ultimately aren't important. Sit down with this respected person and talk through your life. How can you improve the balance between your goals, time, relationships, and accomplishments, with your walk with the Lord and your spiritual growth, your time in scripture, Make sure your heart is lifted up to Him and your soul is peaceful and quiet. This will be an important meeting for you!



DAY 6

LEAD A QUIET LIFE

"IT IS NOT A DAILY INCREASE, BUT A
DAILY DECREASE. HACK AWAY AT THE
INESSENTIALS."

-BRUCE LEE

New International Version

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life,
to mind your own business and to work
with your hands, just as we told you, so
that your daily life may win the respect of
outsiders and so that you will not be
dependent on anybody.

DAY 6

PRAY: Father in Heaven, I ask that You not only make it my ambition to lead a quiet life, but that You help me to mind my own business when it comes to the people around me. I pray that You will keep my eyes focused on You and not on my neighbors or the celebrities I watch and talk about from TV, Films, and music. I ask that I live a life that will win the respect of outsiders and that I won't get my identity from others' comments or from comparing myself to the beautiful people in Hollywood. Help me to be content with who You've made me to be and not idolize anyone else whom I think has more. Thank You for creating me to find peace and simplicity in You alone. Amen.

REFLECT: We often complicate our lives by watching people in the news or media who are bigger than life and appear to have more money, more fame, more beauty and more fun than we do. But it's all an image. People are never what they appear to be, and the glitz and glamour of Hollywood seems wonderful, but it's often an empty shell covering up very lonely, sad, confused people. So, catch yourself when watching others and figure out how to make it your ambition to lead a quiet, simple life and to fulfill all that the Lord has planned for you, without comparing yourself with someone else. That will win you the respect from outsiders as you walk each day with Jesus.

DAY 6

ACT: Pray right now for the celebrities you follow in the news or on the screen and ask the Lord to help them fall more love with Jesus. Pray that they make it their ambition to lead a quiet peaceful life, amidst the horrible pressures and invasion of their privacy that they deal with as rich or famous people. They need our prayers to handle this unnatural situation that makes their lives horribly complicated and public. Our prayers for them, as we work toward the same goal, can be life-changing for someone you admire but don't even know.



DAY 7

LIVE SIMPLY AND BE CONTENT

“SEE HOW NATURE – TREES, FLOWERS,
GRASS – GROWS IN SILENCE; SEE THE
STARS, THE MOON AND THE SUN, HOW
THEY MOVE IN SILENCE...”
MOTHER TERESA

New International Version

1 Timothy 6:6-8

But godliness with contentment is great gain.
For we brought nothing into the world, and
we can take nothing out of it. But if we have
food and clothing, we will be content with
that.

English Standard Version

Philippians 4:19

My God will supply every need of yours
according to his riches in glory in Christ
Jesus.

DAY 7

PRAY: Dear God, for the last day of this week, I pray for simplicity in my life. I ask for godliness and contentment, for You say that is great gain! It's true that I brought nothing into this world, and I will take nothing out of it. So, I want to be deeply grateful for the food and clothing You supply and be content with that. You promise me that You will supply every need of mine, according to Your riches in glory in Jesus Christ, so I stand on that promise and will not complicate my life with worry, busyness, or a lack of contentment. I have so much, and I thank You for supplying it for me. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen

REFLECT: Reflect on godliness and contentment versus busyness and striving. God doesn't want us to be unproductive. He wants us to accomplish things, to work hard, and to do what He has put on our hearts to do. But He also doesn't want us to be discontent with the life that He's given us or striving for more, for better, bigger, and greater things. How do we find that balance? A simple life doesn't mean an unproductive life. It means trusting God to accomplish through us what He wants us to do, and waiting on Him for His perfect timing.

DAY 7

ACT: Define three clear goals that you believe the Lord has put on your heart to accomplish. Then give each one to the Lord, relinquish control over those and ask Him to lead you every day to do what He wants you to do to accomplish them. Continue to trust Him for direction, answers, and open doors. Turn over your fears to Him, knowing that your only job is to fulfill His will for you. "Rejoice always, pray constantly, and give thanks in all things!" The rest is up to Him. Congrats! You have now just begun to live a life of simplicity.

