

# Sermon Study Guide

Pastor: Dr. Henry Schorr

Date: Oct 24/25'15

THE MAIN THING: Pursue Simplicity: Fall 2015 Series

Living simply will allow us to help others to simply live.

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: *Opportunities to connect and pray as a group*

Imagine that you hear the eulogy at your funeral. What would you like to hear?

PURSUE GOD: *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

1. Read Mt 6:19-24. What is the value of earthly treasure? What is the danger?
2. Did you ever consider before that "treasures in heaven" are people whom we have influenced spiritually? If not, what did you think Jesus meant by "treasures in heaven"?
3. What are the benefits of living simply?
4. When we choose "for me to live is Christ," and choose to learn from Him, how do we evaluate our use of time, relationships, and stuff (see the "5 steps" in the summary)?

PURSUE MISSION: *Seek to be the community of God's people in your community as you live out your calling*

1. How do we store up treasures in heaven? What resources do we have and how do we use/squander them?
2. Pastor Henry gave 7 guidelines for living simply (refer to summary). Take a moment to read them out loud. Which one is a priority for you? Which is the most challenging? Which of these will you take?
3. Consider Pastor Henry's suggestion to deliberately take some extended time away to write a "Life Credo."

=====

*Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.  
Psalm 62:1*

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 6:19-24

<sup>19</sup> "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>22</sup> "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup> "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Matthew 11:28-30

<sup>28</sup> "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

# Sermon Study Summary

Today's pursuit of "the Good Life" has led many to personal discontent, excessive debt and the excessive accumulation of material possessions, and - most importantly - spiritual fatigue and stagnation. In reality, the Good Life is not quite so simple.

The previous messages explored untangling the clutter of everyday life. The first principle (Mt 6:24) was simplifying your finances — put your trust in God and God alone, not in material possessions and status. The second principle for simplifying your life was to focus on the eternal things of God. In Mt 6:22, Christ uses a body full of light as a metaphor for our spiritual vision and focus and challenges us to understand if we see things from God's perspective or from our own limited, earthly perspective; there will our treasures be also!

The third principle, and focus of this message is — **to live simply**. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:19-22 to not store up treasures on earth, but to store up treasures in heaven. He is not saying that earthly treasures are bad in of themselves. He calls them "treasures," and they do have value. But he is saying that we ought not to value wealth, possessions, or affluence too highly as all these things depreciate, and eventually, all fade away with time. We are encouraged, therefore, to invest in heavenly treasures — people and relationships.

It is for this reason that the first two principles are imperative. If you invest your focus and finances on earthly things you will lack the resources and time to help meet the need of those God loves and cares for. By living simply you will be enabled to clear debt away and prevent yourself from slipping back into debt. Living within your means simplifies life, and it also frees you from unnecessary worry and anxiety. And when you live simply, you can focus your resources, time, and talents to reach out to others to help fulfill their needs. God calls us to trust in Him and have faith that by choosing simplicity He will bless us and also bless others through us. For this task we should turn to five scriptural steps to help us live simply.

- 1) **Decide what is most important to you.** For you to live is . . . what? Your great, encompassing, passion will determine how you utilize the gifts and blessings you have been given; the temporary things of this life, or to know Christ. At the end of your life, what will have mattered to you the most, and what will have mattered to God?
- 2) **Learn from Jesus daily.** In Matthew 11:29, Christ invites us to come to Him and to trust Him with our troubles and to learn from Him. In Christ you will find rest for your soul and discover a life of contentment and simplicity. This peace will come through the Spirit as you place your trust in God and commit yourself to the study of Scriptures.
- 3) **Evaluate your relationships** in light of what is most important to you. Although Jesus yearned to interact with all those he met, he still invested in a small circle of relationships — relationships with individuals whose focus was aligned with that of His Father's.
- 4) **Evaluate how you are investing your time.** Take time to consciously focus on what matters most to you — if that be God, take deliberate time to spend time with God. Assess and acknowledge signs that you may be overburdened with too many activities or hobbies that lead to neglect of our real priorities. Shift the focus on excessive distractions and preoccupations and instead invest yourself into genuine time with family and loved ones.
- 5) **Evaluate your possessions and your financial decisions.** Discover where you spend your money; this will allow you to ascertain where your priorities lie. If you live more simply, you will have more money and resource to invest in God's Kingdom; if your finances are convoluted or strained, perhaps you are spending money in areas that aren't conducive to meet the needs of God's people. The question boils down to this: What am I living for? For me to live is . . . what?

To successfully simplify your life, utilize these 7 guidelines:

- 1) Evaluate your own lifestyle and not that of someone else. It's just simply not our business to judge the lifestyle decisions of others. Our duty is to ask the Lord for genuine humility and take care to avoid legalism and a spirit of self-righteousness.
- 2) Choose to buy things for their usefulness rather than their status. Don't spend money to impress others; let the beauty of your life and character speak for you.
- 3) Realise that nothing is a good deal if you can't afford it. It does not matter how good of a deal you think you may be receiving, nothing is worth piling up financial debt.
- 4) Learn to enjoy things without owning them. Share and enjoy things without feeling the need to own them. Enjoy simple things.
- 5) Learn to say "yes" to real needs and "no" to created needs. Beware of the temptation to think that you are buying out of necessity when in reality a want is masquerading as a legitimate need.
- 6) Wait and pray before you make a purchase. Allow God to reveal whether the purchase meets a real need or a created need. Exercising prayer and patience also allows God to provide for the need in ways you may not have expected.
- 7) Consider purging your belongings of unnecessary possessions. The reality is our lives would be a great deal simpler and less stressful when we declutter. The less you have, the less that consumes your attention and the less that you need to maintain.

*Treasures in Heaven are people! People are the all we can take with us from this planet, by Christ's saving grace. Jesus teaches us that investment in people is all that will matter in eternity. That's it.*