







joyfully in the kingdom with Jesus.” **How often do you buy things that you want as opposed to what you need?**

**In what ways could limiting your intake give you freedom?**

**What could it look like for you to limit what you typically buy in a regular month?**

Being a consumer isn’t just about buying stuff—it also applies to our activities and obligations. As hard as it is to believe, these activities can distract you from God. **In what ways could extra activities or responsibilities be a distraction? How does your use of your resources—your time, energy, and money—reflect your priorities?**

The second step to simplicity is practicing generosity, giving your money, belongings, or your time to others on a regular basis. **What could it look like for you to be more generous with the resources God has given you?**

John Mark was honest about his feelings toward practicing generosity: it doesn’t sound fun, but it is the way of Jesus. But even though simplicity may not sound exciting, it will bring you happiness and contentment. **What in your life could you downsize or give away? What would it look like to try living with less for the next month?**

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**BIBLE EXPLORATION**

When ask our possessions to make us happy and satisfied, we are putting our hope and security in things that can be stolen, broken, or destroyed. The only secure place for our faith and hope is in Jesus. Read Matthew 6:19–21.

These verses remind us that our possessions don't last forever. At any given time, they could be stolen, destroyed, or lost. **How does knowing material goods fall apart change your view of your possessions? In what ways does it impact your view of accumulating new things?**

Over-consumption reveals our disordered desires: instead of being satisfied with God, we try to find value and meaning in the things we own. **What sorts of things do you buy when you are feeling down? In what ways might you be trying to satisfy your heart with something only God can provide?**

When our treasure holds a higher position in our heart than God, it becomes an idol. **Are there any possessions or consumeristic behaviors that compete with Jesus for your attention or even affection? Is there anything you are afraid Jesus will ask you to give up?**

Our consumerism is a form of worship—but worship focused on things rather than God. We give our resources in return for peace, comfort, and status. **When you are feeling unnoticed, anxious, or unloved, what could it look like for you to turn to Jesus?**

**LAST WORD**

In a society shaped by consumerism, simplicity is a radical commitment to following the way of Jesus. But when we limit our possessions and commit ourselves to generosity, we will find the joy and fullness of life that Jesus promises.

As you examine your habits, consider what it would look like to limit your intake and increase your giving. Ask God to help you set some goals for this next week and discover the joy of simplicity.

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## **DEEPER WALK**

**Read:** Read the chapter “Simplicity” in Part Three of John Mark’s book *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*.

**Pray:** Pray and ask God to help you become a more generous person. Ask him to help you see the value in giving rather than grieving the loss of a possession.

**Give:** Take inventory of your belongings while thinking about the needs of your community. What surplus do you have that could meet a need? Take your opportunity to love God and serve others by being generous.

**Memorize:** Memorize Luke 12:15, “And he said to them, ‘Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the possessions.’”