

Practice

Our exercise for this week is based on Jesus' command: "Sell your possessions and give to the poor." In context, he wasn't saying you need to sell everything. He was calling his followers to be the kinds of people who regularly simplify their lives, by selling their possessions and giving the money away to the poor.

Exercise: Identify something you own that you do not need, and give it away or sell it and give the money to someone in need.

- **Identify an item to sell and/or give away.** You don't need to sell everything, just something. It could be an item you rarely use — that bike you never ride, the surfboard collecting dust, your aging record collection, etc. Or it could be an item you love and use regularly, but you feel the gentle pull of the Spirit to give away. This calls for prayerful discernment.
- **Once you identify an item, give it away.** You can give to an organization like a local nonprofit or directly to someone you know in need. Don't make a big deal out of it. Just bless people as quietly as you can, without drawing attention to yourself or putting them in an awkward position. You may want to consider giving anonymously, if you feel led to do so.

This exercise may be really hard and feel like peeling a layer off your heart, but on the other side is joy and freedom.

Practice

We recognize that we're all at different places in our stage of discipleship and season of life. To that end, we've added a Reach Exercise to each of the four weeks for those of you who have the time, energy, and desire to go further in generosity.

Reach Exercise: Simplify

- **Pick a room or area of your life, go through it thoughtfully and peacefully, and simplify it down to the essentials.** This could be your closet, bedroom, living room, kitchen, garage, etc.
- **As you quietly observe each item in the room, consider holding it up before God.**
- **Ask yourself questions:** Do I really need this? Could I live without this? Would my life possibly be better without this unnecessary item? Rather than asking ourselves how we can get more, we're pondering how we could live with less.
- **Make four piles for the unnecessary items:** 01. Throw away. 02. Recycle. 03. Sell. 04. Give away.
- **Give your extra stuff away.** You can give to the poor via the Salvation Army or a local donation drop, or give directly to someone you know.
- **Go sit in the decluttered room or area, and pay attention to how you feel.** Spend a few minutes in gratitude to God for the goodness of ordinary life.

To simplify your whole home and life is a long process that takes most people many weeks or months, but it can have a dramatic effect on your discipleship to Jesus, emotional well-being, and spiritual freedom; so we've created a four week guide to simplifying your life, if you would like to pursue greater simplicity.

Additionally, you can listen to these three interviews John Mark did with author, former pastor, and minimalist expert Joshua Becker:

- [Simplifying your wardrobe](#)
- [Simplifying your living room and bedrooms](#)
- [Simplifying your kitchen, bathrooms, and laundry](#)

You could also consider reading one of the following books:

- *Freedom of Simplicity* by Richard Foster
- *The More of Less* by Joshua Becker
- *Abundant Simplicity* by Jan Johnson
- *Essential* by the Minimalists

Go Deeper

Read

Giving Is the Good Life by Randy Alcorn

Chapters 5-8 (pages 61-110)

Listen

Rule of Life Podcast on Generosity

Episode 02

Reflect

Before your next time together with the group for Session 03, take five to ten minutes to journal out your answers to the following three questions.

- 01 What aspect of simplifying did I find most difficult?
- 02 What emotions did I experience in simplifying and giving away?
- 03 How do I sense the Spirit inviting me deeper into simplicity going forward?

