

Transform Practices: Simplicity (Contentment)

Simplicity is an inward reality that leads to an outward expression. It is about ‘decluttering’ our hearts and lives to help us seek Jesus above all things and find contentment in Him. The practice below is designed to help you start to move towards a life of greater intimacy with Jesus through simple living. As always, these are suggestions, not rules! Have a go, adapt and change, see what works for you.

PRACTICE 1 – ‘DECLUTTERING’

1.	Declutter your heart	
	<p>Write down a list of the things that are most important to you and that you spend most of your time, thoughts and energy doing, maintaining, or pursuing. (To help you, these are the things that you would find hardest to lose or give up)</p> <p>Now, asking the Holy Spirit to show you, circle those that you recognise have a hold on you or that you have an unhealthy attachment to. Consider, why are these things so important to you? What are you seeking from them, that you can only find in Jesus?</p> <p>Surrender these things up one by one to God in prayer, asking Him to help you put them in their proper place in your heart and free you from any grip they may have on you.</p> <p>(You may find it helpful to share the above within your discipleship group or with a trusted friend)</p>	
2	Declutter your devotion	
	<p>Consider your life with God. Are there ways that you have over-complicated it? Do you try to do too much in your times of devotion that you’ve lost focus on connecting with God? Have you fallen into doing things by habit alone? Write down a list of the things that really bring you into the tangible presence of Christ.</p>	
3	Declutter your affections	
	<p>What do you really want? Consider what you see that others have that you envy or covet. Consider what God has blessed you with. Write down a list in both boxes below. Repent of the things you have coveted. Give thanks for the blessings you have received.</p>	
	Things I have coveted	Things I have been blessed with

4	Declutter your words
	A lot of the time we speak in far more complicated and convoluted ways than we need to. Jesus instructs us to speak simply (Matt. 5:37). Look at the list below and tick the things you do when speaking. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you why you do these things. Then ask Him to help you speak simple truth.
	Change the way you speak depending on who you are speaking to
	Use phrases that don't mean anything but just fill awkward silences
	Tell lies or speak in half-truths
	Use multiple caveats to everything you say for fear of offending people
	Say yes when you want to say no
	Say things you have no intention of doing, but do so because you feel you should
	Agree to something but then backtrack later
	Agree with someone even when you don't, for fear of confrontation
	Speak foolishly or coarsely
	Spin stories to present yourself in a better light
5	Declutter your life
	In what areas of your life could you walk in greater contentment by leaning to 'let go.' Try some of the suggestions below and see what impact it has on your heart.
	<p>Let go of your possessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go through your home and gather up everything you don't need or use. Include the stuff that stays there after every clear out 'just in case.' If you can afford to do so, give it away, rather than selling it. • If someone admires something of yours, give it away! Find out how attached you are to your things. • When your phone is due an upgrade, if you're current phone is working, don't get a new one. • Make a catalogue of all the gadgets you own. Consider, how many of them save you time and how many waste it? Get rid of the ones that waste it. <p>Let go of your choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go through your wardrobe and get rid of the clothes/coats/shoes that you don't wear or don't really need. If you struggle to get rid of them, ask yourself why? What is your reason for 'needing' so much? • If you have multiple streaming services, ask yourself, is this level of choice good for me? Consider going a month without streaming and observe what this does to your soul. • Remove your card details from online shopping stores to limit the ease of online purchases and create a space for you to stop and think 'do I really need this?' • In your free time, choose simple leisure pursuits. E.g. walking, cycling, going to the park – things that allow your senses to rest rather than activities that overload them. • Have a weekly menu of simple, repeated meals that you cater for, removing the pressure of having to think of something to eat each day. <p>Let go of your schedule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review your schedule and commitments. Have you over-complicated life by taking on too much? • Make time with God the first, immovable item from your daily schedule. • Consider your working patterns? Are you working at times when you should be resting? • Open up your schedule to allow more room for other people's needs than your own desires. • Sleep!