

## Celebration of Discipline 6: SIMPLICITY

1. **REMEMBERING** Examine the following list of ten principles for practicing simplicity from Foster in *Celebration of Discipline*. Which ones seem speak to you most about your own practices?
  - a. Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status
  - b. Reject anything that is producing an addiction in you
  - c. Develop a habit of giving things away
  - d. Refuse to be propagandized by the custodians of modern gadgetry
  - e. Learn to enjoy things without owning them
  - f. Develop a deeper appreciation for the creation
  - g. Look with a healthy skepticism at all “buy now, pay later” schemes
  - h. Obey Jesus’ instructions about plain, honest speech
  - i. Reject anything that breeds the oppression of others
  - j. Shun anything that distracts you from seeking first the kingdom of God
2. **REFLECTING** If you were to ignore these principles completely, what do you imagine some of the consequences might be?
3. **DISCOVERING** Read Matthew 6:25-34. It is a section from the Sermon on the Mount that addresses worry and describes Jesus’ solution to it.

*Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup>Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?*

*<sup>28</sup>And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. <sup>29</sup>Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” <sup>32</sup>For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup>But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. <sup>34</sup>Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

- What practices and behaviors does Jesus encourage as a solution to worry and anxiety?
  - What thoughts and beliefs does Jesus endorse to help us practice these behaviors and be free from worry?
4. **CONNECTING** How might life look differently for you if you began to enact some of the principles proposed by Foster and Jesus?
  5. **RESPONDING** What will you do in the coming week to experience a simpler life? Pray supportively for one another.

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**Jesus does not respond to our worry-filled way of living by saying that we should not be so busy with worldly affairs.... What counts is where our hearts are. When we worry, we have our hearts in the wrong place. Jesus asks us to move our hearts to the center, where all other things fall into place.**