**SIMPLICITY WORKSHEET**

***Entering In:***

Jesus challenges us to seek first God’s kingdom and his righteousness. He promises that as a result, all the things we need in life-food, drink, clothing, shelter-will be given to us as well (Matt. 6:33). Let us respond by yielding our lives and possessions more fully to the Spirit’s control, receiving from him the grace to live in greater simplicity day by day.

***Right now:***

Read Matthew 6:19-34 and meditate on Matthew 6:33: “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Pray: *Holy Spirit of God, help me to seek your kingdom first. Take con­trol of my desires, passions, and material possessions. Help me to be a good steward of what you’ve given me and a generous giver from the bounty you pour down upon me. May I, in your power, live in greater simplicity, so that others may be touched and transformed by the love of Christ. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

***In the Coming Days and Weeks:***

\* Take some time today to reflect on your life. In what ways are you rich? What is the extent of your wealth and possessions? Do you have enough, too much? Honestly ask, “What controls me. What do I ‘serve’ the most? What can I give up or give away?” Ask the Holy Spirit for power to be delivered from any bondage to your possessions and expect him to show you the way into new freedom. Then, be obedient to what he tells you.

\* Take a week to explore the area of giving. Where are you now in your practice of giving? What are your next steps into the joy of giving? If you do not already tithe, explore tithing for a month and see what happens to your heart and spirit. Look for ways to curb any unnecessary spend­ing. Ask God how much of your money you should keep.

\* Review the basic guidelines of everyday simplicity - buy only to meet basic needs, give away what has a hold on you, focus on enjoying what you cannot own, let thoughts and speech be simple and honest, look for God in the “interruptions,” and so on. Each week during this month, put one of these ideas into practice.

\* Spend an afternoon or weekend in a ministry center that serves wounded, sick, hungry, or homeless people. Look carefully into the faces of those you meet. Listen to their voices. Consider that these people are made in God’s image, just as you are. Ask God to give you his point of view about and his heart of compassion for these people.

\* Unclutter your life - de-accumulate. Put on a yard sale. Give away the money you gain and give away what you can’t sell. Clean out your closet and give away any clothes you haven’t worn for a year.

\* Simplify your life. Give up TV for a while. Stop working so much at the office. Give up your plans to build “bigger barns” (see Luke 12:13-21 ). Take some long walks and talk to God about the real meaning of your life. If you release things in your life to God one by one, the day will come when he will be all you will have left. And more important, he will have you!