



**SERIES: MY LIFE WITH GOD**

## How to Simplify Your Life

**Life Reference: Matthew 6:24-34**

**Focus Verse:**

**“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).**

Stuff! Wonderful stuff everywhere! Stores are filled to capacity, but how much is really needed to care for our families? It is a fact that we do need money to exist; however, material goods cannot replace love and a relationship with God and family.

We are blessed by God, but blessing comes with responsibility. Prosperity and comfortable surroundings have not been given to us for our selfish luxury. Our blessings are to be given away and shared with those in need. According to a report by Ronald J. Sider in *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, 1.2 billion people live in grinding poverty, trying to survive on one dollar a day. Another 1.6 billion are very poor, living on two dollars or less a day. To sum it up, just a little less that half of the world's population (2.8 billion) try to survive on two dollars a day or less.



The words that Jesus spoke to Peter in Luke 12:48 apply to us today:



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**"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."**

Materialism will invade our value system, causing us to think that we have been blessed by our own efforts and that we do not need God. Our spiritual and prayer life suffers when our lack of need keeps us from dependence upon Him. Without His favor, we have nothing. Every blessing we have comes from God. Our influence can be far-reaching when we share those blessings with others.

What does "materialism" really mean? Materialism involves a preoccupation with comfort and wealth, trying to satisfy fleshly desires rather than spiritual values.

The early Church was missionary-minded, having a desire to spread the gospel. We are living in such an hour when our time to reach a spiritually dying world is short. Burdened down with a preoccupation of "things" leads us to feel that all time is "our time," leaving no room in our schedules to do the work of the Lord.

### **Life Reflection:**

What are you doing with your time?

What activities are you involved in that take you away from your time to serve the Lord?

It is important that we realize the materialistic society in which we live. It is easy to become preoccupied with our jobs so that we can give our children "things" rather than our time, love, and attention. A desire for material goods may even take first place above children, marriage, love, and harmony in the home.

Every woman needs to know what her values and priorities are and how to organize her time and money. Give some thought to the following questions:

- What do I want to establish in my home?
- What do I want to accomplish in my lifetime?
- What do I as a mother want my children to learn?
- How much education do I need?



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- How can I find quality time with my family?
- What are my spiritual goals?
- When my children are grown, what will they remember about our home life?
- Does my home provide the nurturing that is needed to accomplish my long-term goals?
- Am I accomplishing the goals that I have set out for myself?

## Life Reflection:

Which of the two following statements most clearly reflects your priorities?

1. I spend all my time working to gain possessions that give me pleasure and occupy all my time?
2. I seek to balance everything and give to God the hours that are needed to accomplish the task that He has called me to in this hour?

It is possible to gain balance in our life! Ask God to help you set your boundaries.

## Life Response:

In Matthew 6:33, Jesus taught us to "Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . . and all these things shall be added unto you." This verse of Scripture gives us confidence that if we put God first in our lives, He will supply our material needs. We should purposely try to balance our lives with certain values and activities.

- Church attendance and activities
- Work – God's work and personal work
- Education
- Family and fun
- Sharing in community involvement

Those who spend all their time achieving material things in life are doing so to satisfy selfish wants. When everything we do revolves around self, we become a very unhappy person. It is when we give of ourselves that we get the satisfaction that we cannot buy.



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**“He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it” (Matthew 10:39).**

The pressures of today’s society challenge home and family values. We are constantly bombarded with ads for things bigger, better, and newer. Buying with credit cards has made it too easy to fall into the trap of keeping up with everyone else. Children feel peer-group pressure to “belong” by participating in particular activities or by wearing the latest fashions. Desiring their happiness, parents then feel pressured to buy them particular brands or involve them in various activities. Media advertising tries to tell us what is good for us. We must be strong to take a stand for what is right, not only for ourselves but also for those we influence.

In past centuries, families enjoyed the simplicity of life. Adults and children alike have a greater appreciation for what they have when they do not have so many choices. When we make up our mind that materialism will not rule our household, we can win. Discipline is the greatest tool we can give our family. It will produce happy children and bring order and peace to our home.

### **Life Reflection:**

Do you know how much money you really spend? To learn where your money really goes, write down every penny you spend for a couple of weeks. The results may surprise you.

Do you plan how you will spend your money? Do you spend your money with a purpose?

As a good steward of God’s abundance, do you pay tithes and offerings first?

Learn to save while you shop, and teach your children to do the same. By teaching your children to work, they will learn the value of money. One of the greatest joys they can accomplish in life is to learn to finish a task and feel happy about it. Many parents are more concerned about their children having fun than teaching them to be responsible for themselves.



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We can simplify our lives by taking inventory and looking through our homes to see what we really need. The following little verse tells us how to adapt a simpler lifestyle:

***Use it up, wear it out.  
Make it do or do without.***

Since we cannot take anything in this world with us when we leave, things are dispensable. If something takes too much money or causes too much constant effort to maintain, get rid of it! We must keep our priorities in the right place. The following list of *Six Things That God Won't Ask on That Day* helps us keep a clear perspective.

1. God won't ask what kind of car you drive. He'll ask how many people you drove that didn't have transportation.
2. God won't ask the square footage of your house. He'll ask how many you welcomed into your home.
3. God won't ask about the clothes you had in your closet. He'll ask how many you helped to clothe.
4. God won't ask what your highest salary was. He'll ask if you compromised your character to obtain it.
5. God won't ask what your job title was. He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.
6. God won't ask in what neighborhood you lived. He'll ask how you treated your neighbors.

God has a great future for you and can use you in many ways. What can you do? There are many opportunities and a bigger picture for your life. Do not let the cares of this life burden you down. Invest yourself in others. It will give eternal rewards and will always return in a blessed way.

## **My Prayer:**

Lord, I thank You for the many blessings You have given me. May I always realize that You are the owner of all I have and that You have entrusted it to me to be a blessing to Your work. Help me never to become distracted by the accumulating possessions in this world and lose sight of my relationship with You. Let my heart be fixed on things eternal, for nothing else really matters.



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## More Life with God References:

Deuteronomy 8:13-14

Mark 4:19

Luke 12:16-34

James 4:13-17

*Bible Study Submitted by Pamela Kern*



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