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The following question was asked by a reader, “*can one live a life of simplicity in today’s world, and if so how?*” The answer is, YES, a person or a family can live a life of simplicity.

Living a life of simplicity is learning to live a life making wise choices, while partnered with God enjoying all He has for you without the pressures of worldly distractions. It’s choosing to live with Godly wisdom instead of conventional wisdom (the world’s way) and this includes making wise choices about finances, i.e., living within ones financial means, planning for needs and wants and trusting God for overflows (favor). Conventional wisdom encourages individuals to buy into the trap of a temporal lifestyle philosophy of “buy now, pay later; a very costly price to pay for this type of wisdom. Or do you choose Godly wisdom, which says “*a wise man counts the cost before building a house.*” Living a life of simplicity is not living poorly, it is being content and grateful to God for all that He has blessed you with. Ask yourself, what is important in life - living debt free or living paycheck to paycheck trying to pay off credit card debt or personal loans that you can’t afford?

Decide to make “wise choices.” God exhorts us to “count the cost” before making financial decisions, choosing Godly wisdom will keep you from being a slave to the lender. For a month or two keep a detailed record of your spending habits. The goal here is to track impulse spending and to learn to spend only on essentials and put the extra money in savings. For example, how often

do you eat out? Make it a goal to eat in more, fast food and restaurants are convenient, but very expensive. (Use eating out as a reward system for meeting miles stones in your life.) Shop weekly! Plan major shopping trips and only shop once you have saved for these expenses. Create “family night” spending more time with the family playing games, and getting to know more about each other.

Godly wisdom says we need to change the thinking that we “own” our possessions. According to God, He owns everything (*Psalm 24:1*). We are “stewards” and as stewards we are required to manage what has been entrusted to each of us, because one day we will give an account of our stewardship (*Luke 16:1-2*). Worldly possessions are temporal we are told to put our hope on things that are eternal. God’s word also tells us to be prudent in our living, because it’s hard to serve and worship Him when burdened with debt and the fear of foreclosure or bankruptcy. Conventional wisdom is not the way to go! Let Godly wisdom be your success, He will prosper you in all you do (*Deut. 8:18* says “*remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth*”).

Godly wisdom says to be content in all that you have and who you are in Christ Jesus. *Philippians 4:11-13* says “*.....for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound*

If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more and running over. Whatever measure you use in giving—it will be used to measure what is given back to you.

Luke 6:38



and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Contentment is the "key" to living a simplistic and happy lifestyle. Are you content with what you already have? Are you thanking God, right now, for what He has given you? If not, then you need to start!

Living contently is not identifying money, things, or possession with who you are! They can't make you happy, can't buy your health and can't guarantee that you will always have these things. Things fade away, they get old, and you will tire of them easily, because the more you have the more you want; you will never be satisfied. Apostle Paul, through the Holy Spirit, revealed the secret to contentment is trusting Christ to get you through the lows and highs in your life. He knew how to be hungry and to be full! How to suffer need and how to abound! Don't put your trust in things, trust in Jesus Christ who can strengthen you in the good times and pull you through the bad times. God is not against wealth, it's the missed placed value we put on having money and things. He wants to be included in the decision-making process for our finances, career, raising our children, etc.

Godly wisdom says to have a generous heart and to be a cheerful giver, which includes tithing into God's kingdom (local church). Remember to give back to God 10% of your earnings, after all, He blessed you with the ability to have the job. Conventional wisdom says, "I don't have enough money to tithe. I have to pay my bills." Tithing is a "blessing!" So, please seek Godly wisdom and tithe, don't miss your blessing!

Friends, living a simplistic lifestyle is not hard, it's a matter of renewing your mind and heart by making Godly choices concerning your lifestyle and not letting the world dictate to you how you should live. God created us to have a relationship with Him and He wants to prosper us in all that we do; but only through obedience to His commandments will this happen (Deut. 28).

God knows the harm that conventional wisdom causes and would like for us to avoid striving after the world's wealth traps. The Book of Ecclesiastes helps Believers to understand why God is opposed to conventional wisdom. We are reminded in Ecclesiastes that it is not only vanity because it does not satisfy, but even if we could attain it, without Christ we would lose our soul and what profit is there in that.

So, if you are suffering lack in your finances or other areas of your life, "**seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you**" (Matthew 6:33). God wants you to be free to live a life of abundance, not in bondage to debt.