



Habits of a Disciple – Simplicity and Fasting

John Bodily – 11 Jan 2026 (watch talk [here](#))

What is simplicity?

John talked about developing habits and practices of **inner simplicity** such as prayer and fasting to order our hearts before God, and **outer simplicity** to develop a simpler lifestyle.

Some biblical examples:

- Jesus' friend Mary choosing to sit at the feet of Jesus in contrast to her sister Martha, who is busy and distracted and concerned about many, many things. (Luke 10:41-42)
- The merchant in Jesus' parable that sold everything for the pearl of great price i.e. the Kingdom of God (Matthew 13:45-46)
- Jesus' encouragement not to worry about what you will eat, drink or wear, but instead seek first the Kingdom (Matt 6:31-33)

A simple lifestyle is one that arises and emerges as a consequence of a simple heart. An undivided heart is captivated by God and his kingdom and lives for him, above all else. Yet our hearts are often divided and disordered. The bible reveals that there are many things that compete with God for the affections of our heart and create disordered attachments to things other than God:

- **Stuff** – money, possessions
- **Self** - our will, desires and ambitions
- **Other people** - expectations, affections, our need for approval

"only the simple are free" - Richard Foster

Fasting

"The essence of fasting is separation of ourselves from something in order to offer ourselves in greater measure to God.... One of the main purposes of fasting is to wean us from our dependence on God's gifts and enable us to become dependent on God alone." M. Robert Mulholland Jr.

Reflect and discuss:

- What is currently competing most for your heart's attention?
- Simplicity is often described as "freedom." Does your current lifestyle feel free, or cluttered?
- What could you do to grow in the discipline of simplicity?
- Do you have a pattern of fasting in your life – what might that look like?