**Making Change: Less is More**

**August 4, 2019**

**Week 1 Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Ecclesiastes 4:6](https://biblehub.com/esv/ecclesiastes/4.htm), [Luke 19: 1-9](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/19.htm), [Philippians 4:7](https://biblehub.com/esv/philippians/4.htm)

REFLECT: Consider the idea of “Less is More.” The Big Idea for this week is focusing on what really matters. Do worldly possessions bring true happiness and peace? Only Christ, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, knows our every need, and can bring the “peace of God which transcends all understanding” into our lives.

PRAY: Throughout his sermon series, pray that God will instill in your heart a desire to “Make a Change” in the way we view worldly possessions.

PRACTICE: Ask yourself how you can “unclutter” your life of those things you’ve placed between yourself and God. Consider how selling, or giving away possessions can help those in need, and thereby further advance Kingdom work.

TAKE IT FURTHER! Use outside resources when appropriate (Right Now Media, The Gospel Coalition, Desiring God, The Bible Project, etc.) to research the lives of those who took a “vow of poverty”, and how their lives were blessed as the result of trusting God to provide.

Day 2-

READ: [Ecclesiastes 4:6](https://biblehub.com/esv/ecclesiastes/4.htm), [Luke 12:32-33](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/12.htm)

REFLECT: Do you consider your life tranquil? Have the acquisition of worldly possessions, and the financial burdens they bring impacted your stress levels and your stewardship to God?

PRAY: Seek God’s wisdom in breaking the “more cycle” of looking for that next thing that only satisfies temporarily.

PRACTICE: Read **Luke 12: 32-33** again. Move towards simplification, instead of accumulation. Become a percentage giver.

TAKE IT FURTHER! Listen to the hymn, “It is Well with My Soul”. Research the circumstances in which this hymn was written.

REFLECT: What thoughts did you have as you listened to the song? Did it give you a feeling of peace?

PRACTICE: Spend time in praising God for all the ways He has richly blessed you, and for giving us music so we can express our faith, and gratitude to Him.

Day 3-

READ: [Proverbs 30: 7-9](https://biblehub.com/esv/proverbs/30.htm), [Exodus 16: 11-16](https://biblehub.com/esv/exodus/16.htm)

REFLECT: Do we ask God to only provide for our daily needs? Are our prayers instead, centered around what we want, with little actual praise for what we’ve been given? Do we “disown”, or forget God when we have more than we need? Consider how God provided for the Children of Israel as they wandered in the desert. How by receiving manna and quail from heaven, they became reliant upon God to meet their daily needs. Do we rely on God, or instead rely solely upon ourselves?

PRAY: Ask God to give us the strength to trust in Him for all our needs.

PRACTICE: Let our faith be an example to those of this world that we trust in the Lord to watch over us, and provide.

Day 4-

READ: [Philippians 4: 11-13](https://biblehub.com/esv/philippians/4.htm)

REFLECT: Are we on that “treadmill”, always searching for happiness through possessions? Do we yearn for the “latest thing”, whether it be that new car, a bigger home, or the latest I-Phone? Do such things bring lasting contentment, or only short-term satisfaction?

PRAY: Pray that our heart’s desire will be to seek His strength, to be as Paul “content in any and every situation”. Pray that we might be liberated from the bondage of our tendency to be controlled by our desire for possessions.

PRACTICE: Make specific plans to Cut Back/Clear Out/Give Away, thereby becoming more dependent upon the Lord.

Day 5-

READ: [Luke 19: 1-9](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/19.htm), [Philippians 4:7](https://biblehub.com/esv/philippians/4.htm), [Philippians 4: 11-13](https://biblehub.com/esv/philippians/4.htm)

REFLECT: Zacchaeus was a wealthy man. It is apparent that he obtained his wealth through fraudulent means. We do know he had a desire to see, and meet Jesus, and in doing so had both a spiritual, and financial reconciliation with God. Christ filled that hole in his heart that money cannot satisfy. Have you experienced similar feelings of peace by coming to know the Lord?

PRAY: Ask our Heavenly Father for a change of heart concerning our love of possessions, to be set free from the financial bondage debt can bring, and become reliant upon God to provide for our daily needs. Ask for the “peace of God which transcends all understanding.”

PRACTICE: Become a percentage giver, and commit to focusing upon “uncluttering” our lives with the those “things” that the world deems important. Strive to be content whatever the circumstances.

**Making Change: Stress is Bad**

**August 11, 2019**

**Week 2 Reading Plan**

Day 1-

READ: [Proverbs 22:7](https://biblehub.com/esv/proverbs/22.htm)

REFLECT: “You can stumble into debt, but you cannot stumble out of it.” How easy is it to “stumble” into debt? Does your debt = stress?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Confess your stress to the Lord. Stop and consider- where can you choose self-control and avoid debt today?

TAKE IT FURTHER! (This is always optional- you don’t have to include this every day. Use this section when you have additional material that will help someone take a next step in their Bible study. Examples: worship song, additional scripture, article, video, quote. Use reliable, theologically sound sources like RightNowMedia, The Gospel Coalition, Relevant magazine, etc \*\*note: no more text box as they do not transfer to webpage)

WATCH: “[Root of Riches](https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/113256)” from CEO of Crown Financial Ministries on RightNow Media. [Don’t yet have a *FREE* RNM account? Sign up at [www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia](http://www.whoisgrace.com/rightnowmedia)]

Day 2-

READ: [Proverbs 10:15](https://biblehub.com/esv/proverbs/10.htm); [Psalm 52:6-7](https://biblehub.com/esv/psalms/52.htm); [John 14:27](https://biblehub.com/esv/john/14.htm)

REFLECT: Are you waiting for wealth to ease your stress and bring you security? According to the Word, where are true security and peace found?

PRAY: Confess to the Lord your feelings, true feelings, toward money and wealth. Ask Him to give you His eyes and His perspective.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: “[Non-Negotiable #1](https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/113253)” from Chuck Bentley on RightNow Media.

Day 3-

READ: [Luke 8:4-15](https://biblehub.com/esv/luke/8.htm)

REFLECT: In the parable of the sower, how do life’s worries, riches, and pleasures affect our growth as followers of Jesus?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Confess the stronghold that money and it’s stress has in your life. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom as you seek freedom. How do you take a step toward financial understanding and freedom?

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: “[Non-Negotiable #2](https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/113254)” from Chuck Bentley on RightNow Media.

Day 4-

READ: [Matthew 6:19-24](https://biblehub.com/esv/matthew/6.htm)

REFLECT: Who/what is master over your life? Consider your answer and then consider the evidence- where do you invest your resources (time, money, talent, etc)?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Confess the areas of your life where you have not given Jesus the lordship He is worthy of. What is one choice you can make today that testifies to His hand in your life?

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: “[Non-Negotiable #3](https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/113252)” from Chuck Bentley on RightNow Media.

Day 5-

READ: [Matthew 6:25-34](https://biblehub.com/esv/matthew/6.htm)

REFLECT: Jesus is your Savior and He loves you, He sees you, He cares deeply for you. What does it look like to trust His words to you in these verses?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Surrender your stuff, your stress, your worries about tomorrow. Give Jesus the praise He deserves for all He has done and will do in your life.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: “[Root of Riches Conclusion](https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/113257)” from Chuck Bentley on RightNow Media.