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Story about snake in the Philippines.

Satan is the master of disguise. He has three primary methods of operation in 3-D: distraction, deceit and division.

2 Corinthians 11:3

Paul is defending his apostleship and warning the church of Satan's subtle, but steady work among them. Like the python on the bus, Satan is looking for ways to hitch a ride.

One of those ways is to add clutter.

2 Corinthians 11:20

Satan loves to get people to look busy while in reality, they are empty.

Someone once said, "God put me on earth to accomplish a certain number of things. Right now, I'm so far behind, I will never die."

Review of previous "Simplicity" messages:
Our minds—the remedy is God's Word
Our fellowship—rediscover and build biblical community

Tonight, we are going to address our activity.

Note the phrase, "the simplicity in Christ." One of the amazing things about the life and teaching ministry of Jesus is SIMPLICITY.

People were amazed that Jesus could have such impact in a simple way. This was in contrast to the Pharisees whose teaching only brought burden and complication.

Let's talk about the simple teaching of Jesus.

Sermon on the Mount = Matthew 5-7

Simplify Your Attitudes/Ambitions (Beatitudes)

Jesus begins by establishing new standards of success in life.

What does God want in your life?

Faithfulness rather than fame
Humility rather than honors
Sincerity rather than success
Gratitude rather than glory
Servanthood rather than self-service
Vision rather than visibility
Passion rather than popularity

A simple life begins with God's goals, not mine.

Simplify Your Words

Matthew 5:37

We live in a "wordy world"—talking heads, volumes of reports, and more. We speak a lot, broadcast a lot, print a lot, but do we really "say" much?

When you say something, let it mean something. Winston Churchill was known as a man who could say much in a few words. In response to a report he received, he said, "This report by its very length defends itself against the risk of being read."

"All the great ideas are simple and can be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honor, duty, mercy, hope." —Winston Churchill

Watch your words. Don't get caught up in the verbal clutter and fray of life. Let what you say matter.

Do you realize how we complicate life when we fail to speak with clarity and truth? (Lies greatly complicate the realities of life).

This is not only true toward others, but also toward God!

“But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words” (Matthew 6:6-7).

God isn't interested in volume or eloquence.

Simplify Your Desires

Do you want too much of the wrong things for the wrong reasons? It could be like a dessert buffet—regretted your choice, ate things that really didn't matter, grossed yourself out.

Matthew 6:19-24

We need to make some “lifestyle choices” and they need to reflect the reality of our faith.

Simplify Your Fears

We live in a “phobic” world and there are some reasons to fear. But too often our lives are cluttered by energy-burning, life-distracting anxieties that destroy the joy of daily living.

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?” (Matthew 6:25 NLT).

We are anxious about many things, but God says to let one big fear, one overarching anxiety govern our lives. If you let your energies move toward the following, the rest will take care of itself:

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

Simplify Your Rules

What governs your life from day to day? We all live by rules, but they may not be thought out or written down.

Jesus said over and over again, “You have heard it said, but I say to you...”

The Master's master principle for life (The Golden Rule): “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

Most live by a rule that says, “I will treat others as others treat me.” What is wrong with this disposition? It puts you and me at the center of the universe.

“The best players do the basic, simple things perfectly, every time, and under the most pressure.” —Michelle Akers, U.S. Soccer Olympic Medalist

Simple Life:

“At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, ‘Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven’” (Matthew 18:1-4).

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