

Diving Deeper into Discipleship

January 17, 2021 | Pastor Pete Fowler

Open Invitation: Heads of Wheat and Holy Bread

Sermon Reflection Questions:

- Do you see your resources and possessions – the fruit of your labor – through heavily individualistic eyes? What is one step you can take to see your "stuff" in a way that more intentionally keeps your community in mind?
- Are there any Christian practices that are trapped under so many heavy layers of interpretation that engaging in them tempts us toward a form of legalism? How can we reclaim the original intent of those practices?
- Ask God to challenge your mind and heart, even if it's uncomfortable, with the need to consider the hunger or suffering of those around you as you seek to live a life of righteousness and obedience.

Devotional Reading and Reflection

- **Exodus 20:8-11** | The command to keep the Sabbath holy, unlike other commands, includes some explanation (v. 11). How does understanding that verse help us interpret how/why we honor the Sabbath?
- **Romans 14:1-10** | In this passage, Sabbath-keeping is one practice that seemed to divide Christians and caused them to treat each other with contempt. What are some things that divide Christians similarly today? What do we learn here about addressing our divisive tendencies?
- **John 6:28-40** | Jesus makes a connection between the ancient "manna from heaven" and his self-identification as the "Bread of Life." In what ways is the provision of Jesus similar to the bread in the wilderness, and in what ways is His provision different?

Self-Care Discipline

January Discipline: Simplicity | Money (p.79-80 of *Celebration of Discipline*)

- The Christian discipline of simplicity is an inward reality that results in an outward lifestyle. Both the inward and the outward aspects of simplicity are essential. We deceive ourselves if we believe we can possess the inward reality without it having a profound effect on how we live. To attempt to arrange an outward life-style of simplicity without the inward reality leads to deadly legalism. Experiencing the inward reality liberates us outwardly. Speech becomes truthful and honest. The lust for status and position is gone because we no longer need status and position. We cease from showy extravagance not on the grounds of being unable to afford it, but on the grounds of principle. Our goods become available to others.
- In our affluent culture, we serve the god of wealth. We treat the rich as celebrities and build false promises that more money = more happiness. However, more money usually leads to more stuff and more stuff steadily squeezes God out of the equation. Jesus even challenged the rich young ruler to give away all his possessions in order to follow Him. Are there areas in your life that suggest that money has become an idol? Are you willing to be generous with the wealth you have obtained to help others?