

SIMPLICITY

The image features a solid teal background. In the bottom right corner, there is a stylized silhouette of a mountain range in a slightly darker shade of teal. The word "SIMPLICITY" is centered in the upper half of the image in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font with a black outline.

“Simplicity is practising a lifestyle free of excess, greed and covetousness so that we can draw closer to God and reach out to others in compassionate service”. (Dr Siang-Yang Tan)

The Christian Discipline of simplicity is an *inward* reality that results in an *outward* lifestyle. (Richard Foster)

**Francois Fenelon declared,
“Simplicity is an uprightness
of soul which prevents self-
consciousness....”**

THE BIBLE AND SIMPLICITY

“If riches increase, set not your heart on them,” (Ps 62 v 10)

“Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction” (1 Tim 6 v 9).

‘Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, “I will never fail you nor forsake you”’ (Heb 13 v 5)


Matt 6 v 25-33 ... But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well'.

Three Inner Attitudes of Simplicity (Richard Foster):

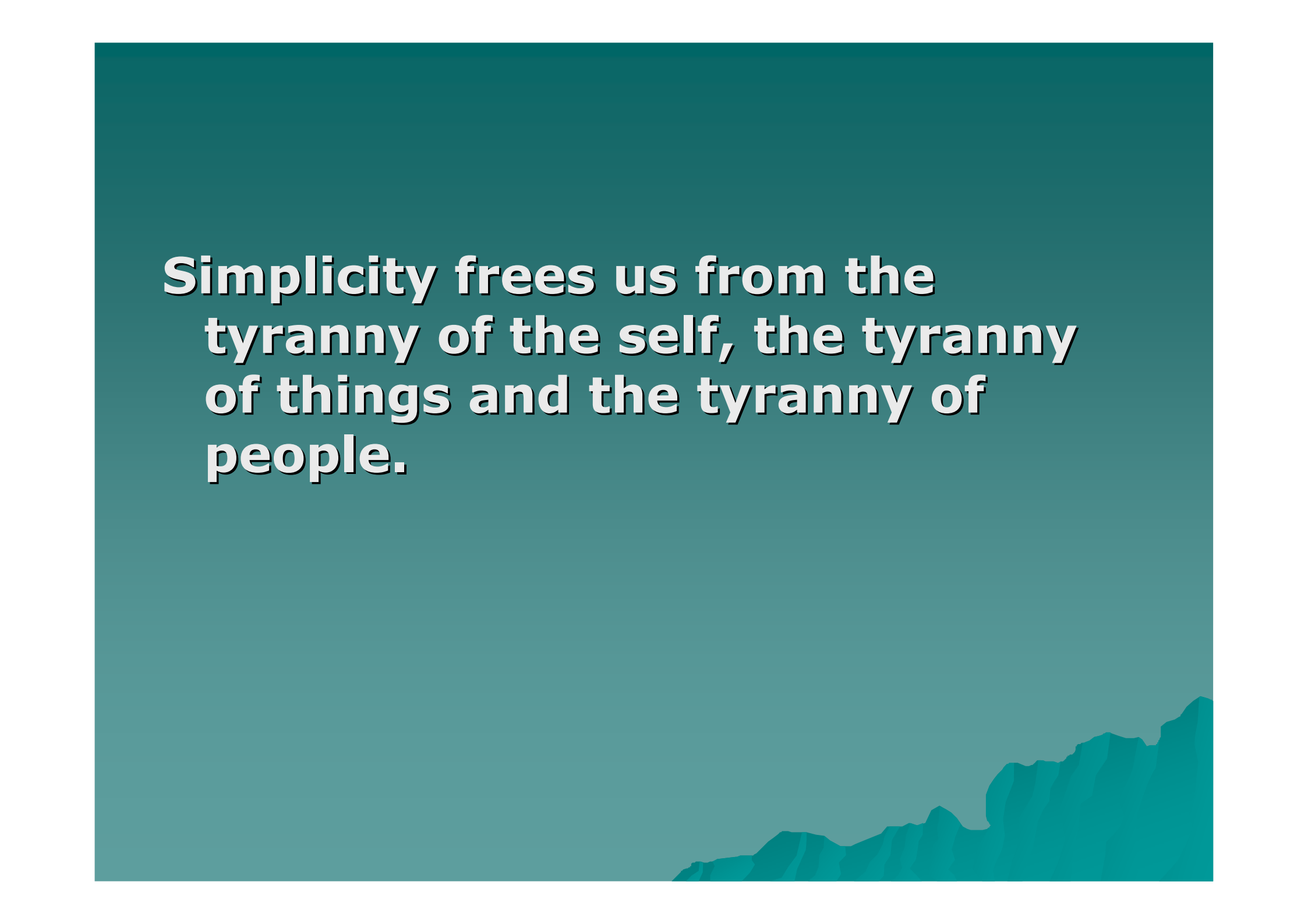
1. To receive what we have as a gift from God
2. To know it is God's business, and not ours, to care for what we have
3. To have our goods available to others

The Outward Expression of Simplicity (Richard Foster):

1. Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status
2. Reject anything that is producing an addiction in you
3. Develop a habit of giving things away
4. Refuse to be propagandized by the custodians of modern gadgetry
5. Learn to enjoy things without owning them

- 6. Develop a deeper appreciation for the creation**
 - 7. Look with a healthy scepticism at all “buy now, pay later” schemes**
 - 8. Obey Jesus’ instructions about plain, honest speech**
 - 9. Reject anything that will breed the oppression of others**
 - 10. Shun whatever would distract you for your main goal - to seek first the Kingdom**
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**Simplicity frees us from the
tyranny of the self, the tyranny
of things and the tyranny of
people.**

The background is a solid teal color. At the bottom of the image, there is a dark teal silhouette of a mountain range with several peaks of varying heights.

SOLITUDE



Dr. Siang-Yang Tan says: "Solitude is being alone in purposeful withdrawal from human interaction. It is a deliberate choice to be alone in order to draw closer to God by the power of the Holy Spirit, thereby freeing ourselves from bondage to people and things. Silence, the absence of speech, is a crucial component of solitude. While not all silence is solitude, silence is always a part of solitude."

Henri Nouwen wrote: “Without solitude it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life”.

Richard Foster: Solitude is more a state of mind and heart than it is a place.

Jesus and Solitude

- ◆ He inaugurated his ministry by spending forty days alone in the desert (Matt 4 v 1-11).
- ◆ Before he chose the twelve he spent the entire night alone in the desert hills (Luke 6 v 12).
- ◆ When he received the news of John the Baptist's death, he 'withdrew from there in a boat to a lonely place apart' (Matt 14 v 13).
- ◆ ... the seeking out of solitary places was a regular practice for Jesus (Matt 14 v 23).

Steps into Solitude

- ◆ Take advantage of the “little solitudes”
- ◆ Develop a quiet place
- ◆ Observe your speech
- ◆ An entire day with no words at all
- ◆ Withdraw for a few hours
- ◆ Retreat once a year

Thomas Merton observes, 'It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brothers. The more solitary I am the more affection I have for them... Solitude and silence teach me to love my brothers for what they are, not for what they say.'

SOLITUDE SNIPPET

- Where am I with God at present?
- What are the things/ circumstances/ people that are outgrowing my thoughts about God?
- What lessons could God be trying to teach me through difficulties/ struggles?

SIMPLICITY CHECK

- ◆ Do I give the impression of being more godly than I truly am?
- ◆ Do I try to impress people with my degrees, titles, or honours?
- ◆ Am I living contentedly within my income?
- ◆ Am I a compulsive buyer?
- ◆ Do I try to impress people with gadgets?
- ◆ In recounting events do I shift the story ever so slightly to make myself appear in a more favourable light?
- ◆ Must I always make excuses for my behaviour?
- ◆ Can I accept compliments freely without any need to shrug them off in self-conscious modesty?