



# FORMATION



March Teaching Series

A blue-toned landscape featuring a mountain peak in the upper right and a river valley in the lower left. The scene is captured in a monochromatic blue palette, with the river reflecting light and creating a bright path through the valley. The overall mood is serene and minimalist.

# Simplicity

Week 5

# Reflect

Take some time to process together as a group on last week's practice:

- How did you start practicing what we talked about last week?
- How was your experience in your practice?
- Where did you feel God most present and distant this week?

## Overview

Drawing from Jesus' teaching in Luke 12, we see that worry is often rooted in what we've made ultimate. When anything besides God becomes the center of our lives, it pulls our attention, emotions, and energy into a cycle of striving and anxiety. Simplicity, then, is not about reducing complexity or owning less—it is about moving from a fragmented inner life to a single-hearted focus on God. As Richard Foster describes, it is an inward reality that leads to an outward life of freedom, and as Søren Kierkegaard puts it, purity of heart is to “will one thing.”

Jesus invites us into this integrated life by calling us to trust the Father's care and to seek His kingdom above all else. Through images like ravens and wildflowers, He reframes our mindset from scarcity to abundance, reminding us that God already knows and provides for our needs. Simplicity is ultimately about reordering our loves—releasing our grip on what we think we need and learning to rest in God's presence and pleasure. As we turn our attention back to Him in everyday moments, the divide between sacred and secular fades, and our whole life becomes an expression of devotion.

# Reading

ABBALOE

## Luke 12:22–31 NIV

*22 Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. 23 For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. 24 Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no store-room or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! 25 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? 26 Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? 27 “Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 28 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! 29 And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. 30 For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. 31 But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.*

## Discussion

What’s one thing that has been taking up a lot of your attention or energy lately?

What do you notice about how Jesus talks about worry and trust?

What do you think it actually looks like to “seek first the kingdom” in everyday life?

What do you tend to worry about most? What might that reveal about your heart?



# Practice

*Our Practice for this week is to identify our values. Pray or journal through the reflection questions at the end:*

## **Ask someone close to you**

Ask a close friend or your spouse what they would say your core values are, based on how you live. This can be a vulnerable thing to ask, so choose someone you trust to be honest and kind!

## **Examine your budget**

Take a look at your spending in your banking app or any budgeting tool you might use. What does your spending tell you that you value

## **Examine your schedule**

How we spend our time is a major indicator of what we value. Look back in your calendar or memory (or, keep track for a few days!) and consider where you are investing your time. That will point to what you are placing value on most?

1. Make a list of the values your life currently demonstrates. Any that surprise you? Are there any not on the list you wish were there?
2. As you work through this Practice, you may discover a gap between what you say or think you really value most, and what your money or time demonstrates you value most. Where do you see the biggest discrepancy? (Example: "I want to value family time with dinners at home, but my schedule tells me I value work most.")

Based on what you've discovered, make up a list of 5 or so core values you want to be living into. Some may be currently supported by your lifestyle, and some may be "in progress." That's okay! Our goal is to get some clarity around what our "center" is, so we can keep coming back to it.





# How We Want to Change

[www.abbalovechurch.com](http://www.abbalovechurch.com)