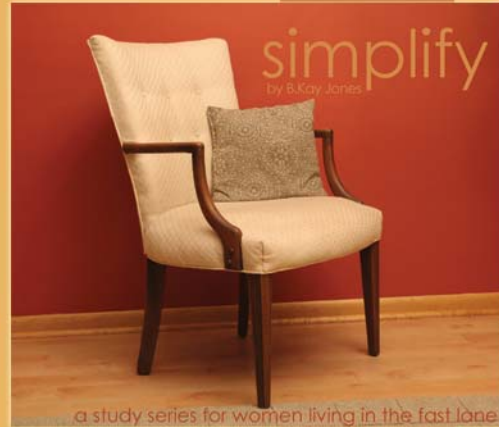


# simplify

*an introduction*



Every time I go into a home decor store the same piece of artwork jumps out at me. It's a red plaque, my favorite color, that says SIMPLIFY. It seems like I see it everywhere I go. Perhaps my eyes always fly to that plaque because that is what the Holy Spirit is saying to me these days... "Simplify."

Anyone who knows me well can tell you I'm a pack rat by nature. I don't like to let anything go. A few years ago the Holy Spirit showed me that my "pack rat syndrome" was rooted in the fear that I would not always have enough. So...I've been sizing down, giving away, throwing away, etc. I tried the yard sale thing but, girls, that was not for me. I found there was much greater blessing in giving it all away than in selling it. Through this process I've come to a realization about the way we present Jesus to people. Too often we give them all the clutter - the do's and don'ts - instead of what they need...simplicity.

Recently a relative of mine moved near us to start a spiritual journey with God. All the do's and don'ts he heard as a child were stifling the passion in his heart to simply know God. I think that happens to all of us. We want to be perfect...for Him, and live an exemplary life...for Him, but we can't do it on our own. That's why God sent Jesus.

Jesus simplified the law and the commandments by placing them in a nutshell. In Matthew 22:37-39, when a Pharisee tried to trip him up by asking him which commandment was the greatest, Jesus had no problem simplifying because the pathway to God was never intended to be complicated or cluttered. He replied, *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"*

Join me on a journey into the scriptures to find out just how we can love God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind; and love our neighbor as ourselves... just simple truth to inspire us and intensify our walk with God.