

## Advent Sunday Week 3 - Luke 3:10-18

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“What should we do?” – a question we have all asked ourselves when we see the many injustices of our society, in this ongoing pandemic; as Christians wanting to live out our faith. John the Baptist answered this question three times in the Gospel, his responses each tailored to the person asking the question. The general crowd should give to others from their surplus. The tax collectors should avoid corruption and only take the taxes that are required. The soldiers should act ethically. And when the crowd was inspired by John’s words, he redirected their praise to Jesus.

When I read this Gospel, I see John asking the crowd to simplify their lives – get rid of the excess, give away from their surplus, and focus back on God. We are not called to go without or to live in scarcity, but rather to have enough and to give from our abundance. This simplicity also applies to our words, actions, and decisions. Are we letting the excess of the world distract us from God? Are our words cluttered with sugarcoating or gossip or lies, or are we straight-forward in our interactions? Are we consumed with how to serve others the “right way” and letting that inhibit our actions? Oftentimes, we overcomplicate and overcrowd our life. Once our basic needs are met, let’s use this Advent season to remove the excess and return our focus to God, who sustains our spiritual needs and guides our next steps.

### Prayer

God of Abundance,  
In a season often filled with “more,” remind me that I have all that I need through You. Lead me to can give what I can to Your people, including the gifts of my time and talents. So that I may not be distracted by the things of our world, and instead engaged in the ways of Your Love.

Amen

### Suggestion for Service

There is an inherent sense of gratitude that comes from living simply. I am not readily discarding or overly consuming, but I’m being intentional with what I own. I am recognizing the value of each item that I bring into my life.

Take time with your belongings. What do you use? Is there anything you keep “just in case” but have never needed? Where are the biggest areas of clutter in your home?

Donate items with intentionality: if they are still in usable working condition and they are from your abundance, then pass them along to an ethical thrift store or non-profit.

Repurpose items rather than buying something new, such as using a glass pasta jar as a food storage container or to hold your Q-tips.