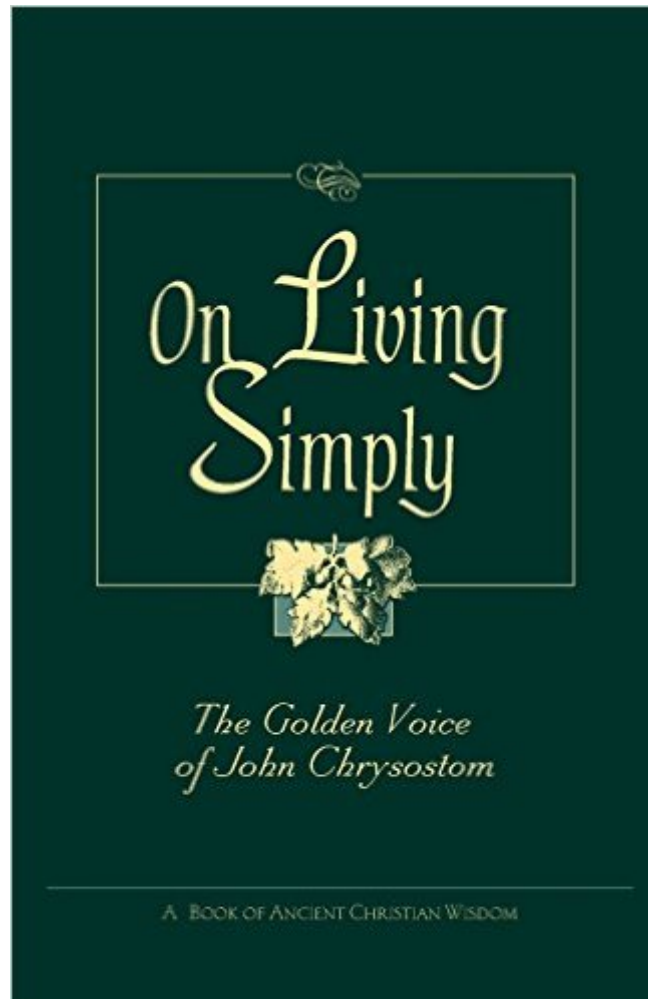


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On Living Simply: The Golden Voice Of John Chrysostom



Synopsis

These excerpts from the sermons of Saint John Chrysostom bring fourth-century wisdom to 20th century issues. Each serves as a brief introduction to a major spiritual thinker and as a meditation book for daily use.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This outstanding little book contains extracts from the sermons of John Chrysostom, especially on political and social themes. One could hardly imagine how relevant these 1600 year old teachings could be. And at the same time profoundly full of the spirit and teachings of Jesus

Christ. Chrysostom (born 347) was raised in an aristocratic family, studied under the orator Libanus and forsook it all to follow Christ. He managed to offend the bishops of Constantinople by rooting out corruption, establishing new hospitals and criticizing immorality on all fronts. He stripped the patriarch's palace of its luxuries and gave the proceeds to the poor. This of course made him very unpopular with the elite and powerful, but the people rallied around him. Forced into exile by the church's bishops, he died while being forced to march in the rainy season to a fortress on the Black Sea. John strongly denounced the luxurious lifestyle of the rich and not only preached, but modeled sharing of wealth with the poor. In fact, "If everyone lived according to the teachings of Christ, there would be no rich and poor; all would be equal." John's observations cut to the quick for citizens of a modern capitalist world, and are as relevant as if written yesterday. Consider the following passage: "Commerce in itself is not bad; indeed it is an intrinsic part of God's order. What matters is how we

conduct our commerce...each person specializes in the work for which God has ordained him; and by selling his skills or the goods he produces, he can obtain from others the goods which he needs. The problems arise because some people can obtain a far higher price for their work than others, or because some people employ others and do not pay a fair wage.

On Living Simply St. John Chrysostom Compiled by Robert Van de Weyer This is a book of short excerpts from some of Chrysostom's sermons. They were selected to show St. John's teachings about wealth and poverty. He was raised in a wealthy family and trained in the art of legal rhetoric "under the great pagan orator called Libanius." (Introduction) In 368 he renounced his wealth and position of influence, giving himself to the study of Scripture. He was ordained as a priest in Antioch and then dedicated himself to preaching. His preaching got him into trouble with the powers that be, since he boldly told the rich that their Christian duty was to care for widows, orphans, the infirm, and the poor in general. They were to use their wealth to build up others less fortunate than themselves, and not just for their own, selfish ends. He was exiled to Armenia because of his preaching. Christianity had recently become the official religion of the Roman Empire and the church had seen an influx of powerful people into its membership. This corrupted the simplicity of the Gospel, according to Chrysostom. This is a good little book, representative of what John taught about wealth, poverty, and family life. Here are a couple of quotes: #5 "In a family the husband needs the wife to prepare his food; to make, mend, and wash his clothes; to fetch water; and to keep the rooms and furniture in the house clean. The wife needs the husband to till the soil, to build and repair the house, and to earn money to buy the goods they need. God has put into a man's heart the capacity to love his wife, and into a woman's heart the capacity to love her husband. But their mutual dependence makes them love each other out of necessity also.

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