

# GodSense

## *Lesson 1* *(Principles 1-5)*

### TEACHER NOTES

I. Invitation to simplicity Matthew 11:28-29

*Jesus offers rest, easy burdens. It is not God's goal to add to our stress or our list of responsibilities. Instead, He invites us to relate to Him, to trust Him, to re-order our lives so that He is first and everything else falls into its proper priority.*

A. Jesus' life I John 2:5-6  
*We are told to walk as Jesus did. Ask the class to describe the kind of life that Jesus lived.*  
*Sample answers: owned little, worked at simple job, loved deeply, was never hurried, took time along with His heavenly Father.*

B. Jesus' teachings Matthew 18:2-4  
*Simple, understood by children. Ask the class to list some of the principles that Jesus taught.*  
*Sample answers: love God, love others, forgive those who sin against you, share with the needy, seek God's kingdom.*

II. Making the simple commitment

*The point comes when it dawns on us that eternity is a lot longer than time, and that relating to our heavenly Father is more important than anything else we have to do.*

A. Take time Psalm 1:1-3.

*Ask the class these questions:*

*What does this man not do?*  
*What occupies his mind?*  
*What is the result of his behavior?*

*Note that trees take a long time to grow, to put down roots. Our spiritual life is a process – will not happen all at once.*

This study is based upon the book entitled *The GodSense Devotional* by Beverly Van Kampen. If you have any questions about this material or if you would like to know more about *GodSense*, please visit the author's website at [www.beverlyvankampen.com](http://www.beverlyvankampen.com).

- i. Time with God– *meditating, study, prayer, listening, developing relationship.*
- ii. Time with ourselves – *knowing ourselves, journaling, feedback from others, developmental reading, being alone with no noise, becoming a person of quality.*
- iii. Time with others – *listening to each other, serving together, focused on one another, caring, not thinking of self.*

B. Be obedient

Joseph

*Refer to the life of Joseph as discussed in GodSense.*

- i. Knowing God’s will – *through the Bible, acting on what Jesus taught, circumstances, listening to His voice, confirmation from others*
- ii. Doing God’s will – *obedience should be immediate; God will not show us more until we have acted on what He has shown already. If you are stunted in your spiritual growth, ask, “What is God asking me to do that I am unwilling to do?” Once you obey, growth and blessing will occur.*
- iii. Giving up control – *confession of sin, believe that He knows best, don’t argue with Him or second guess Him.*

*Albert Schweitzer: “He comes to us as one unknown – without a name – as of old, by the lakeside, he came to those who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word – “Follow thou me!” – and sets us to the tasks he wants us to fulfill. He commands, and to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in his fellowship – and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who he is.”*

III. Living the simple life

A. Freedom

Psalm 119:45

- i. Breaks enslavement James 1:25  
*Free to be all that God designed us to be. Simple commitment breaks enslavement to ourselves: possessions, finances, physical appearance, approval of others, addictions.*
- ii. Delivers from Satan John 8:32-36

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*Simple commitment delivers from sin and control of Satan: Satan wants us to serve him and will try every deception in the book to get us to believe that he is looking out for our best good. Truth of God's Word and obedience to God's direction will break the hold that Satan has in our lives.*

B. Attitude

Luke 1:46-55

*Ask the class the following questions:*

*Who is the focus of Mary's song?  
How does she view herself?  
How does she view God?  
What does she say that shows her trust in God?*

i. Thoughts

Ephesians 4:22-24

*We can control what we think about and are commanded to do so.*

ii. Humility

Proverbs 11:2  
Philippians 2:5

*Teachable, thinking of others instead of self. Rick Warren's definition of humility: Not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.*

iii. Trust

John 4:43-54

*The man in the passage given "took Jesus as His word." We should do the same. We learn that He is trustworthy by studying the Bible and by testing Him in real life situations by our obedience.*

IV. Rewards of commitment to God

*Have individual students look up the verses given and then tell:*

*What does the person in the verse have to do?  
What is the promised result?*

A. Life and prosperity

Deuteronomy 5:33

B. Recognition

Matthew 5:19

C. Belonging

Matthew 12:50

D. Love

John 14:21

E. Answered prayers

I John 3:21-22

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F. Wisdom and understanding

Psalm 111:10

*Look at this list. It is a summary of the basic desires and needs of mankind. We are deceived when we think we can get these things in any way other than through a one-on-one, personal, growing, committed relationship to our Creator. Decide today that He is the most important person in your life; then begin to live accordingly.*

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# ASSIGNMENT

## *Lesson #1*

### Bible study

Read Matthew 13:1-23, The Parable of the Sower and the Seed. Thinking carefully about what you have read, answer the following questions:

- (1) What are the four kind of soil that the seed fell on?  
*Path, rocky, thorns, good*
- (2) What happened to the seed in each of the four kinds of soil?  
*Path: birds ate it; rocky: sun scorched it; thorny: choked by thorns; good: produced a crop*
- (3) What do you think Jesus was telling His disciples in verses 11-17? How does that message relate to us today?  
*While Jesus' basic message was simple, knowing Him deeply and understanding the truths He was teaching required time, relationship, and God-given spiritual insight.*
- (4) In the interpretation that Jesus gives to His disciples, what happened to the seed that was sown along the path? What did that soil lack?  
*The hearer did not have real understanding, so Satan caomes and taeks the seed away.*
- (5) What caused the seed in rocky places to fail?  
*It had no root or depth, so trouble and/or persecution cause it to fall away.*
- (6) What two things caused the choking of the seed in thorny places?  
*Worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth.*
- (7) What kind of soil produced a good crop?  
*Both hearing and understanding; probably implies applying the principles to life.*
- (8) How does this parable help us to understand that just reading the Bible and going to church are not enough to make us spiritually strong?

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*The truth that we hear has to go deep into us – to penetrate our very hearts and lives. We have to dig deeper to prepare the soil of our hearts to receive.*

- (9) What can you do to create a life in which the message of God can produce spiritual fruit?

*Spend time with Jesus as His disciples did. Ask about what we do not understand. Become students of the Bible. Pray for insight to know God and His will for us better.*

- (10) This parable is one of many agricultural illustrations used in the Bible. What does the agricultural model teach us about the time requirement for spiritual growth?

*It will not happen all at once. It occurs through staying connected to God, learning of Him, being obedient to His direction. Give it time.*

### Journaling

Think about your daily schedule. Then allow some thoughts to flow freely onto paper about what you might be able to do to simplify your life so that you can give more time to your relationship with God and less time to the temporal things of earth. What can you change immediately? What changes can you institute over a period of time? How can you slow down the pace of your life so that the ears of your heart can be listening to God as you go through your day?

### Prayer

Spend some time in prayer talking to God about the deepest desires of your heart. If those desires center around knowing Him and being obedient to His direction, tell Him that. If you have just a little desire to know and love God more, ask Him to increase your desire as you submit to Him. Ask Him if He has any message for you as you sit quietly in His presence.