

The Five Principles

Unity SpiritGroup

Participant Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to The Five Principles: A Guide to Practical Spirituality!

Whether you are new to these principles, or you have been studying them for years, engaging in this conversation with your small group provides an opportunity for you to deepen your understanding of these concepts, and use them to sculpt and enhance your own spiritual belief system.

This participant guide is your opportunity to spend time throughout the week reflecting on each lesson's main ideas, gaining clarity in your own faith, and listening deeply for areas of growth and insight.

While your work in this Participant Guide is optional, working through the questions each week will better prepare you for your group discussions and enrich your experience of this series.

Congratulations on making the commitment to stay open, explore new perspectives, and grow in your own faith journey...

Let's begin!

The Five Principles: An Overview

- ▶ **PRINCIPLE ONE:** God is the source and creator of all. There is no other enduring power. God is good and present everywhere.
- ▶ **PRINCIPLE TWO:** We are spiritual beings, created in God's image. The spirit of God lives within each person; therefore, all people are inherently good.
- ▶ **PRINCIPLE THREE:** We create our life experiences through our way of thinking.
- ▶ **PRINCIPLE FOUR:** There is power in affirmative prayer, which increases our awareness of God.
- ▶ **PRINCIPLE FIVE:** Knowledge of these spiritual principles is not enough. We must live them.

Lesson One: The Perennial Philosophy

This session provides an overview of The Five Principles and how they can be used to guide us in our spiritual journey.

To supplement your group discussion, you are encouraged to spend time throughout the week reflecting on ideas from this week's session:

Who/what is GOD to you?

With which religion (if any) do you most closely identify and why?

How would you describe your current belief system?

How would you describe your relationship with GOD?

What intentions have you set for your participation in this series? In what areas would you like to see growth or expansion?

What questions do you have about your faith or your understanding of
GOD that you would like to clarify for yourself through this series?

Lesson Two: God is All

This session explores the nature of God. If God is all, and God is good... why do bad things happen?

This is a week for deep introspection and reflection upon your own understanding of the nature of God, and how it translates into your relationship with the Divine.

Your challenge for the week is to spend at least 5 minutes per day in meditation, reflecting on the nature of God and your experience of God.

There are many ways to meditate. Choose one that works best for you. Here are a few tips that may help you quiet your mind and listen to the "still small voice" within you.

Meditation Tips:

- ▶ Determine in advance when you will take your time for meditation. If meditation is new to you, putting it in your schedule will help you plan for this special time.
- ▶ Meditate in the same space each day if possible. Create a space for yourself that is quiet, nurturing and comfortable.
- ▶ Make it special. You may want to light a candle or play soft instrumental music to help you relax.

Meditation Challenge:

- ▶ Before you begin your meditation, pose a question inspired by your discussion this week and listen to what (if anything) is revealed.
- ▶ Spend a few minutes in your journal following each meditation to capture your experience or insights.

Day 1:

Question:

Insights:

Day 2:

Question:

Insights:

Day 3:

Question:

Insights:

Day 4:

Question:

Insights:

Day 5:

Question:

Insights:

Day 6:

Question:

Insights:

Day 7:

Question:

Insights:

Reflections for the week:

Take a moment before your next gathering to reflect on your insights from the week. How would you describe your meditation experiences? What was the impact of this exercise for you?

Lesson Three: The Divinity of YOU!

If we assume that Principle 1 is true, Principle 2 must be true as well. If God is ALL, then God *must* express through *all of us...*

This is a week to reflect upon the divine nature of humanity. That means acknowledging the divine qualities within yourself, as well as recognizing the spiritual qualities in other people and situations.

Your challenge for the week is to see "divine potential" in every area of your life, especially those people or situations that seem the most challenging.

Spend a couple days reflecting on each example that comes to mind and notice how the shift in your perspective impacts your thoughts and feelings throughout the week.

Challenge yourself to consider three situations where you can practice seeing your "original blessings..."

Situation 1:

Write down a situation or experience
that seemed "wrong," "bad," or even "evil."

What divine qualities were being expressed in that situation?
How could that experience bring forth "good" for you and
for all involved?

(If it helps, pose each possibility as a "what if...")

Situation 2:

Write down a situation or experience that seemed "wrong," "bad," or even "evil."

What divine qualities were being expressed in that situation? How could that experience bring forth "good" for you and for all involved?

(If it helps, pose each possibility as a "what if...")

Situation 3:

Write down a situation or experience that seemed "wrong," "bad," or even "evil."

What divine qualities were being expressed in that situation? How could that experience bring forth "good" for you and for all involved?

(If it helps, pose each possibility as a "what if...")

Reflections:

What did you notice this week as you practiced seeing through a "divine lens"? What is the impact to you personally when you remove the labels of "wrong," "bad," or "evil"?

Lesson Four: The Creative Power of Thought

This week, your challenge is to create (or update!) a Vision Board!

A Vision Board can take many forms, and there is no wrong way to create one! The idea is to have a tangible, visible reminder of the life you are choosing to step into.

This could be something you hang on your wall and look at daily. It could be something small that you keep in your wallet or purse as a daily reminder. Or it could be something you create, then put away until you are ready to review and update it!

Here are a few tips to help you get started. Remember, the idea here is to *have fun* with the process, and let yourself step into the unlimited possibilities that can be expressed through your life!

Materials: First, choose something to use as a base for your vision board. This could be something you can put in a frame, a bulletin board, a poster board, a card for your wallet... Use your imagination and have fun!

Other supplies to have on hand:

- Favorite Magazines/Catalogs
- Glue/Tape
- Scissors
- Markers
- A photo of yourself to put in the center (highly recommended to tie your vision back to YOU!)

Before you begin, pull all of your supplies together. Take a moment to meditate or say a prayer to intentionally begin the process. You may want to light a candle or play inspiring music to set the tone.

Remember, you do not need to complete your board in one sitting. Take your time, have fun, and let yourself imagine INFINITE possibilities for your life!

Pssst... Don't forget to bring your Vision Board (finished or not!) to your next small group gathering so you can share your progress with your group!

Lesson Five: Communion with God

This week, your challenge is to connect with a Prayer Partner throughout the week. You can connect via text, email, phone call, or meet in person depending on what you decide together.

Share your prayer requests with each other, and if you are comfortable, use affirmative prayer to support each others' intentions.

My Prayer Partner is:

Name:

Cell Phone:

Email Address:

Other Phone:

Day One:

- ☐ Yes, I connected with my Prayer Partner today.

My prayer request:

My Prayer Partner's request:

Day Two:

- ☐ Yes, I connected with my Prayer Partner today.

My prayer request:

My Prayer Partner's request:

Day Three:

- ☐ Yes, I connected with my Prayer Partner today.

My prayer request:

My Prayer Partner's request:

Day Four:

- ☐ Yes, I connected with my Prayer Partner today.

My prayer request:

My Prayer Partner's request:

Day Five:

- ☐ Yes, I connected with my Prayer Partner today.

My prayer request:

My Prayer Partner's request:

Day Six:

- ☐ Yes, I connected with my Prayer Partner today.

My prayer request:

My Prayer Partner's request:

Day Seven:

- ☐ Yes, I connected with my Prayer Partner today.

My prayer request:

My Prayer Partner's request:

Lesson Six: Living Your Truth

This week is about integrating the first four principles and expressing them through your life. This is also the final lesson in the series... a great time to celebrate your progress!

For this final session reflect upon the following:

What is the biggest "aha" I received from this series?

How will the wisdom from this series impact my words and deeds as I move through my week?

What's the next spiritual challenge for me on my path? (A new series? Service project? Host your own group? Other ideas?)

How (and when!) can I celebrate my growth and participation in this series? How can I express my gratitude to the other members of my group for the affect they have made in my life during this series?

Congratulations on completing The Five Principles!

Remember, this is not the end... It is a new beginning. Continue to grow in your understanding of each of the principles and let them guide you to your highest and fullest spiritual expression!

About Us

Spirituality Today is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing small group ministry training and resources for New Thought churches.

To explore additional video series for use in your SpiritGroups or to find a SpiritGroup near you, visit us online at *www.SpiritGroups.org*.



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The author of "What If It All Goes RIGHT?" Mendhi has spent the past 15 years speaking to audiences around the world about mindset, spiritual development, and the power of possibility.

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Rev. Ellen Debenport

Ellen Debenport is a celebrated author and speaker. Her book, *The Five Principles*, is a sophisticated but clear explanation of the universal spiritual laws that are the foundation of human living.

She is a graduate of Baylor University and, prior to ministry, was a reporter for United Press International and The Tampa Bay Times in Florida and Washington, D.C. She was ordained as a Unity minister in 1999, served as associate and senior minister at Unity Church of Dallas and also served six years on the board of Unity World Headquarters at Unity Village.

She is currently minister at Unity of Wimberley, a town of artists and musicians in the Texas Hill Country near Austin.

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