

# Immerse

**THINK SIMPLE**

**On the Go Devotional Guide**

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## **Fundamental Notes:**

**Purpose:** Explore, discover. Grow. The purpose of this devotional is to provide another way for us to engage God and God's Word, reassuring us that God is with us wherever we are, no matter what we might be doing. This devotional is not a substitute for church. This devotional is not meant to replace the focus or importance of being in community with others in our faith exploration, discovery, and growth.

**Goal:** The last time I checked, none of us have all the answers. The goal of this devotional is to wrestle with God's word and open the door (window) for God to speak to us. When we wrestle, we provide a platform of opportunity to be shaped and formed (like a potter at the wheel) to God's intended purpose. Asking questions on our own, rather than simply take another person's word for it, helps us develop our independent character and grow stronger in self.

**Structure:** At the front end of this devotional guide are things meant to center your focus. You may read them one at a time and one each day, or you can dive in head first and double team them. The one activity I would like to encourage everyone to take time on, is "Yes And." This activity gets at the core of validating the importance of all we learn through our faith and involvement in church and all we learn by participating in extracurricular activities.

**One a Day. Two a Days. Two sides of the coin:** As you reach the core lessons, you will find that they are labeled as A and B. Sometimes, there is even a "Consider This" addendum. There are many consistent themes throughout scripture and as we might already know, there are often two sides to consider within each theme. The layout of this devotional is meant to give the flexibility to explore the devotions one each day, if you are away for a weekend, or if you have a group gathered, you are welcome to take each topic in its entirety. The "Consider This" addendum provides further thought to consider and dig deeper. In essence, the hope is for you to use how it works best for you.

**Initial Thought:** This thought comes at the beginning of each devotional as insight to what and where the devotional topic might be leading. This thought is meant to give you a taste of what is to come and make you hungry to dig deeper.

**What Now?** This thought comes at the close of each devotional as an ending challenge or question. What we explore and discover through the devotions should not end with the turning of each page. Our growth through this journey will be dependent on our ability to listen and learn and leverage our knowledge throughout our lives. This thought will work to help us build a bridge back to the church or worship community that grounds us. It will remind us of how we can stay connected when we are away, and if the opportunity presents itself, challenge us to come back and share our experiences and discoveries with others. We are all called to be the light and a candle is only as good as the light it shares.

**Consider This:** This section is for digging deeper. None of these devotions cover everything there is to know about the topic. This section provides additional scripture references, reflections, or stories to consider.

**Practice:** The scripture readings for each devotional are cited, but you are strongly encouraged to open the good book, open an app, look in the top drawer of the hotel dresser, or pack a bible-to-go.

## “Think Simple”

Initial Thought: The little things make the biggest impact. We don't need to tackle the world in order to make a difference or make the world a better place. As a matter of fact, what is needed most is for us to give our focus to making the most of what we can with what we have. A successful career, major revolution, or great life, can very easily be defined in the simplest of moments.

**Read: Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32, Luke 13:18-19**

*\*Take notes or underline key words or phrases in your bible as you read\**

The parable of the mustard seed told by Jesus uses one of the smallest elements on earth to make a big point. A mustard seed is tiny; almost too small to believe how it could possibly become a tree. Jesus says that if we have the faith the size of a mustard seed, we could move mountains. What this parable is meant to highlight is the magnitude and power of God's ability to strengthen us in our smallness. If we give God a little, God will do great things.

***Active Listening Exercise:  
Download and Listen to: “Dream Small” by Josh Wilson***

**Reflection:** Never underestimate the power of simple things. In doing the little things, we create building blocks that pile high and wide that soon enough become the foundation for really big and important things. When we think simple, we make ourselves available to be made great.

Loving others (Matthew 12).

A few small stones (1 Samuel 17).

A couple fish and few loaves of bread (John 6).

A smile.

Calling someone just to say you are thinking about them.

Taking time to listen.

Add your own...

How is it that these make such a big difference?

**What Now? Take time to reflect and examine yourself.** What are some things you are really good at doing? This is one time you can brag about yourself so go on, be honest and acknowledge what you are good at; small things as well as big things. Now, think about the impact those things have on your surroundings. In what ways do the simple things play a significant role? In what areas of your life could you focus on doing simple things to be a part of a bigger movement?

Consider This:

YOU CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE BY DOING SOME OF THE SIMPLEST THINGS.

One summer day a player sweated all alone in a gymnasium, long snapping footballs from the half court circle on the basketball court to a target hanging on the wall underneath the basket. **No one in that community had ever seen a player do that before.**

A couple weeks later the same player walked up to local business owners at their place of business and handed them a card which stated the local football team was going to win a state championship that upcoming year. This was a feat the school never had accomplished. **No one in that community had ever seen a player do that before.**

During the season fans noticed the same young man playing offensive center. Every play he would sprint from the huddle to the line clapping wildly as if to say, "Here we come!" How long had that young man been breaking the huddle that way? All year - every game. **No one in that community had ever seen a player do that before.**

Later, during a playoff game, the same young man played every single play of the game, never coming off the field during offense, defense and special teams. He was the only player who did. When the game was over he was so exhausted he collapsed on the way to the team bus. **No one in that community had ever seen a player play to exhaustion before.**

Finally, during the state championship game, this young man snapped punt snaps on a field covered with eight inches of snow hitting the punter right in the hands. What made the feat more remarkable was he was wearing a pair of gloves that he could not remove because they had become frozen to his hands. The team went on to win the first state championship in school history thus fulfilling the prediction of the card. **No one in that community had ever seen something like that ever done before.**

Years later a call was made to the former player. "Your teammate has cancer. We need you."

On a Sunday afternoon the player stood in front of a crowded banquet hall. He spoke about courage. He spoke about teammates. He spoke about loyalty. He spoke about love. Over \$80,000 were raised that day for medical expenses. **No one in that community had ever seen that done before.**

In your life, do what no one has ever seen done before.

YOU CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE BY DOING SOME OF THE SIMPLEST THINGS.

## “Think Simple”

Initial Thought: K.I.S.S. (Keep It Simple Stupid)- Keeping things simple is a lost art in our overachieving and multi-tasking society. Sometimes it feels as though the only choice we have in our everyday lives is to think of at least 3 things at once and be 2 places at once. That way of living is not simple. We need to simplify and focus.

### Read: Matthew 12:28-34

\*Take notes or underline key words or phrases in your bible as you read\*

Why do we have two million laws to uphold ten? This has been a question I have asked for quite some time. Actually, in this section of Matthew, we could ask why we need ten laws to uphold two? Having been questioned by the Pharisees and the Scribes on much of what he stands for, Jesus answers perhaps their most difficult question. They asked, of all the commandments, of all the things we are supposed to do in life, “what is the most important?” Jesus’ answer was simple: LOVE God and LOVE others. The only commandment we really need to be God’s faithful children is this one. If we follow it in true obedience, the rest of life will fall into place.

**Reflection:** Looking back through the years thinking about all the pitchers I caught, the most successful pitchers were the ones with only two pitches. It was clear their control and command of the game was better and on top of that, they were usually the ones who pitched deeper into games. Most of them had a third pitch as well but it was really for show if they needed to waste one.

There is something magical about calling the game for a pitcher who is focused only on throwing two types of pitches. From these two pitches, location and speed are the only other factors to give the pitch depth and variety. Two different pitches thrown in the right location at the right speed is all the variety a pitcher really needs to be successful.

For pitchers who have an arsenal of five or six different pitches, it not only takes a long time to go through all the pitch choices to find the right one, they tend to rely on the guessing game of the hitter verses their ability to throw certain pitches well. It is hard enough to master one pitch in baseball, much less have the time and ability to master five or six.

**What now?** Is it better to have twenty items on your college application or resume in which you only had time to give a little to, or have only a few in which you were able to really commit and understand at a deeper level? Is it better to give \$50 each to four different organizations or \$200 to one organization?

**What now too?** In what areas of life can you simplify? Are you trying to do too much? Are you trying to tackle too many things at once and be too many places at once? Consider whether it is better to dig deeper into something or spread your wings out wide? Another way to consider this is to ask whether quality or quantity is preferred?

How can you better focus, grow in depth, and not jeopardize quality, throughout your life?

**Notes:**