

Slow and Steady

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1 

Lesson 13**Focus:**

Building a close relationship with God takes time.

Lesson 13**Bible Basis:**

James 4:6-10;
5:7-11; Psalm
24:3-5

Lesson 13**Memory Verse:**

Come near to God and he will come near to you. —James 4:8a

Students will consider the importance of putting in the time to attain something valuable as they explore building a close relationship with God.

Materials:

- Internet access

Play the following video [2:27]:

Title: 10,000 Hours to Become Massively Successful

Source: youtube.com

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDmKJPXoUUM>

Short Description: 10,000 Hour Rule Explained!

Mastering a skill or hobby requires time, discipline, and dedication. It doesn't happen overnight! Instead, it takes years of determination.

➤ **Do you think it actually takes 10,000 hours to master a skill? Why or why not?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Students may mention that it depends on the skill. For example, cleaning is easier to master than playing a difficult song on an instrument.)

➤ **Do you have hobbies, activities, or interests that require a lot of time? What is that process like?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Be prepared to share your own experience.)

➤ **Who has an example of persevering slowly and steadily to achieve a goal?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Outside of training for something, students may have examples of persevering through a tough read or a challenging class, working steadily on a fractured relationship or painful experience.)

➤ **In a fast-paced world where we expect things quickly, where do you find examples of dedication and discipline?** (Answers will vary; accept all reasonable answers. Examples may be found in mentors of all kinds. Parents who work hard, love their kids no matter what, and find time for worship and service. Someone who worked hard for years to become great in their field, especially those who achieved success late.)

The Christian life is wonderful, but it doesn't mean everything is suddenly easy and perfect. It doesn't mean we suddenly have all the answers or make all the right choices. The Christian life is about growing closer in relationship to God day after day. That takes time and intentionality. As Christians, we don't stop growing after we commit our lives to Jesus—we grow even more! Every day is a new opportunity to grow closer to God.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Slow and Steady

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STEP 4 

Lesson 13**Focus:**

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5:7-11; Psalm
24:3-5

Lesson 13**Memory Verse:**

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Materials:

- Index cards
- Pens/pencils

If your class is meeting online, invite your students to bring an index card or piece of paper, along with a pen or pencil, with them to class.

As we've learned, building a close relationship with God takes time—and intentionality. Like an athlete who makes time for their training every day, we can make time for God. This means adding in a practice or habit that draws us closer to God, but also cutting out bad habits that keep us from making the time or spending it well. For example, an athlete needs to work on strength, stretching, and drills that reinforce the fundamentals of their sport. But they also need to cut out bad habits related to what they consume, when and how long they sleep, etc.

- **What is a practice you can include in your routine to build a close relationship with God?** (Accept all reasonable answers such as reading or memorizing Scripture, praying, finding solitude, volunteering with local missions, attending a worship service, etc.)
- **To begin your practice, will you need to break a bad habit or make a change in your routine? Talk about that.** (Accept all reasonable answers. Examples might include: not hitting the snooze button, or “unplugging” on a certain hour or day, or getting homework done earlier, so there's time for church or youth group, etc.)

Hand out one index card to each student and a pen/pencil. If your class is meeting online, invite students to have their papers and pens or pencils ready. **Just like any relationship, growing closer to God takes time. It isn't a race, but being consistent is helpful. Commit to making one small change this week to build your relationship with God, and write it on one side of your index card.**

On the other side, make a chart to log your new practice. Log it in a way that makes sense for you and your practice, or use simple checkboxes—for example, seven checkboxes if you wish to pray for your friends each day this week, or 52 boxes if you want to unplug every Sunday for a year, or 10 boxes for 10 verses you want to memorize by New Year's. Whatever your practice—track it.

Think of this not as a scorecard, but as a thermometer. Our relationship with God will experience highs and lows. Sometimes the changes God is working in us aren't noticeable all of a sudden, but take place over time. Logging our time with God gives us a chance to reflect and take note of small but significant signs of a strengthened faith. Especially if you're not a journal-er, this can be a helpful way to do a regular spiritual check-in to consider how you've grown and how you'd like to continue growing with God.

Close in prayer as you challenge your students to come prepared next time you meet to share about their relationship building experience over the last week.

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