

I. ONE THING—The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

II. MEDITATION

B. Review your class notes from Tuesday.

- Take some time to think about the main ideas of the lesson. If you want to add details to your notes, you'll find the audio message on our website under the Resources tab. ([www.DivineDesignDiscipleship.com](http://www.DivineDesignDiscipleship.com)).
- Which of the scriptures referenced were particularly meaningful to you? Write out those verses below and spend some time studying them this week.

C. Rewrite your One Thing into a prayer, expressing your heart's desire for God to make this truth become your experience.

### III. PRINCIPLES

Use these principles to help you understand and grow in Living Hope:

#### A. HOPING AND DREAMING

- Both dreams and disappointments impact our ability to receive, enjoy, and maintain a lifestyle of Living Hope.
  - Hope = Expectation of Good
  - LISTENING EXERCISE: *Where do you go to find a dose of goodness?*
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- If we choose Temporary goodness as our Primary source of goodness, we will become dissatisfied and, eventually, disappointed.
  - Where we go for a dose of goodness is determined by what's inside our hearts.
  - All the plans of God for our lives have been implanted in our hearts. What we desire, what brings us joy, where we are gifted are clues to help us identify those calls.
  - We have a variety of dreams, some big, lifetime dreams, while others are short term.
  - The Bible points to the heart as the seat of our deepest dreams: Pr 13:12 NLT-- Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life.
  - The word used for "dream" in this verse is *taavah*. Its definition is "an object of desire, longing, or delight." (Strong's H8378).
  - When God initiates a dream He will be faithful again and again to bring it safely to fruition despite hard times: Ps 126:5-6-- Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.
  - Though there are troubles and tears now, there's coming a day when you will see God's dream come true. And you will celebrate. And it will be worth all the labor and travail.

Insights:

## B. GOD'S DREAMS FOR US

- God's word holds some hints for us that will help us determine if the dream in our heart is also God's dream for us.
- The Lord's dreams set you apart for His purposes: Is 61:3b AMP-- So they will be called the trees of righteousness [strong and magnificent, distinguished for integrity, justice, and right standing with God], the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.
- When a dream is from God, it will release your potential, transforming you from an acorn to an oak tree: 1 Cor 3:7 TPT-- God is the one who brings the supernatural growth.
- A hallmark of God's calls and dreams is that they come with energy and passion: Phil 2:13 TPT-- God will continually revitalize you, implanting within you the passion to do what pleases him.
- The dreams that God chooses for our lives will challenge our current mindsets. They expand our thinking and our faith to new possibilities: Is 43:19 NLT-- For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.
- Sometimes these new things God has planned are never-done-before type dreams. More often, they are a piece of a larger work God is doing (Ex: John the Baptist).
- God's plans and dreams often confront the status quo. For example, Jesus made many uncomfortable carrying out His mission and its radical new perspectives: Mk 2:27 NLT-- "The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath."
- His dream motivates you onward, especially when troubles come: Phil 3:14 MSG-- By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.
- God uses our dreams to purify our hearts: Jn 12:24 Phillips--I tell you truly that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain of wheat; but if it does, it brings a good harvest.
- Circumstances that contradict your dream are a certainty. However, God will finish what He started: Phil 1:6 NLT--I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.
- No matter our age or abilities, God has purpose for our lives until our dying day.

Insights:

## C. TESTING

- The Children of God encountered many tests as they moved toward their dream of inhabiting the Promised Land: Ps 78: 1-7 AMP (selected)-- I will open my mouth in a parable (in instruction by numerous examples); I will utter dark sayings of old [that hide important truth] which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us... we will tell to the generation to come the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, and His might, and the wonderful works that He has performed...<sup>7</sup> That they might set their hope in God
- Here are a few of the ways we're tested while awaiting the fulfillment of our dreams:

### 1. Test our vision

- Ps 78:7 AMP-- That they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God
- Set = *suwn* (H776), meaning to direct, determine, establish, or fix in place
- We must set our gaze on the goodness of God that we've witnessed in our own lives or through the testimony of others to keep our hope set correctly.
- Delay, detours, and difficulty lure our vision away from gazing at God's promise and His character.
- Satan wants you to believe the lie that you can determine God's character by looking at your circumstances. Despite those circumstances, set your eyes on the truth that God is good and that He never changes: Ps 118:1—Oh give thanks to the Lord for He is good! His mercy endures forever.
- Your dream will eventually catch up with your circumstances: Hab 2:3 NAS— For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay.

### 2. Test our hearts' purity

- Ps 78:7-9 AMP-- That they might set their hope in God and...might keep His commandments and might not be as their fathers—a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that set not their hearts aright *nor* prepared their hearts to know God, and whose spirits were not steadfast *and* faithful to God. The children of Ephraim were armed and carrying bows, yet they turned back in the day of battle.
- Over the course of time, our dreams and our hearts can become corrupted.
- We are called to a partnership relationship with God where both parties' aim is to move toward a Kingdom agenda.
- Ps 78 describes a time when anger, greed and sexual sin were in the tribe of Benjamin. Their sin was the catalyst for war and sin in the other tribes as well.
- The other tribes sinned by not speaking truthfully about an incident and by executing a judgment on the offenders that was too severe: Jdg 20:48—The men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin and struck them down with the edge of the sword—form every city, men and beasts, all who were found
- Sin is costly! The entire tribe of Benjamin was reduced to a mere 600 men.
- “Uninstructed zeal, even in the cause of righteousness, often goes beyond its proper limits.” (Guzik Commentary)
- Impurity in our hearts can be obvious as with Benjamin, or more subtle as with the self-righteousness and self-reliance of the other tribes.

- Impatience, selfish ambition, and rivalry were also revealed in the people of God. Interesting that both parties were seeking to live out the same dream.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any sin in your heart that may be hindering the fulfillment of your God-given dreams.
- LISTENING EXERCISE: *Are any of the sins mentioned above lurking hidden in your heart—anger, greed, lust, judgment, self-righteousness, self-reliance, selfish ambition, or rivalry?*
  
- If impurity is uncovered, respond with repentance. Ask the Lord to guide you back to His will His way.

### 3. Test our actual source of hope

- Ps 78:18-20-- They tested God in their hearts by asking for the food of their fancy. Yes, they spoke against God: They said, “Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Behold, He struck the rock, so that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed. Can He give bread also? Can He provide meat for His people?”
- When our hope begins to wane, it may be because we’ve put our hope in the provision not the Provider. We begin to doubt His love and generosity.
- God’s children were disrespectful, demanding, and dissatisfied with God.
- They wanted what they wanted when they wanted it. They forgot how God had delivered them so miraculously from bondage to the Egyptians.
- Their unbelief accused God of not desiring their best. They demanded Him to prove His love by sending their provision of choice.
- Instead of acting like ungrateful children, let’s find fresh hope by remembering that God’s love never fails even when we do: Ps 78:23 AMP-- Yet He had commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of heaven
  
- Let’s learn from the children of Israel’s mistakes! Let’s keep our vision fixed on the One who is able to make our heaven born dreams come true: Ps 126:1-2 NIV-- When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”

Insights:

D. GROW IN LIVING HOPE by applying the principles we have previously learned:

- Use the Promise Pages provided to make a list of your God-given dreams. Add the verses that apply to each one. Pray them back to God to keep your hope strong.
- Mediate on these verses that illustrate how we can choose to be Prisoners of Hope:
  - Rev 3:20 TPT-- Behold, I'm standing at the door, knocking. If your heart is open to hear my voice and you open the door *within*, I will come in to you and feast with you, and you will feast with me.
  - Ps 37:3-7 TV-- Live in the land *He provides; roam*, and rest in God's faithfulness.<sup>4</sup>Take great joy in the (Lord)! His gifts are coming, and they are all your heart desires! <sup>5</sup>Commit your path to the (Lord); *let Him direct you*. Put your confidence in Him, and He will follow through *with you*. <sup>6</sup>He will spread out righteousness for you as a sunrise *spreads radiance over the land*; He will deliver justice for you into the light of the high sun. <sup>7</sup>Be still. Be patient. Expect the (Lord) to arrive *and set things right*.
- Use your emotions as an indicator of where God can offer Living Hope. Bring your feelings to God in prayer in your over-reactions, numbness, or hardness of heart.
- Embrace the Limp when you are dealing with an area of weakness or wounding. Call on your Abba Father as a beloved little child. Allow your trustworthy, like-minded friends to support and speak into these areas. Offer your strength to them where you are mature.
- If you have not done so, take the assessment on Emotionally Healthy Spirituality. Use the results to pinpoint areas of growth in your relationship with God and others.
- Be alert for any Negativity Bias (focus problem) or Confirmation Bias (belief problem). Ask for hope (an expectation of good) where you're struggling.
- Keep asking: *What am I pursuing and prizing that indicate that my worship is off?*
- "Remember the Deeds of the Lord" and be encouraged by His faithfulness.
- Bring glory to God and grow in hope and faith by giving more weight to what He says than to your emotions, evidence, and errors. The resistance will make you stronger!
- Review regularly the benefits of being "In Christ" and having Christ is in you:
  - Surety—We can have confidence in God's unchanging character.
  - Purity—Our salvation is sure and our record is spotless because of Jesus.
  - Security—The Lord's acceptance, love, and worth for us is unconditional.
  - Maturity—We grow in Christ as we abide, repent, wait and watch for His word to be fulfilled.
  - Authority—In Christ we have authority to overcome the flesh, the world, and the enemy.
- The Scripture verses on the handout "Tools & Techniques: God Makes Things Right" offer comfort and hope when you have been wronged.
- Invite the Spirit to speak through His word and breathe His life-giving power where you have been lifeless and dry. Believe that those Dry Bones can dance again!
- For helpful hints about hearing God's word and allowing the Spirit to apply it to your life, refer to the handout "Tools & Techniques: Listening to God."
- Explore what Forgiveness is and is not using the handout "Tools & Techniques: Understanding Forgiveness."
- Discover gaps in your belief system that may be responsible for some of your Dry Bones areas. Use the handout "Tools & Techniques: Hope of Glory Applications" to help you renew your mind and begin the transformation process.
- Yield to the Spirit's transforming power each day. Thank God that it's not all on you.
- Be sure to journal your prayers and God's answers. Come back ready to share!