

- 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).
- 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. WANT

- Hannah's dream of having a baby had been delayed for years: 1 Sam 1:1-7— Elkanah...had two wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. This man went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. Also the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, *were* there. And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although the Lord had closed her womb. And her rival also provoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the Lord had closed her womb. So it was, year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, that she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat.
- As she waited, Hannah became discouraged, disappointed, and possibly depressed.
- That can happen to us as we focus on what's missing rather than what we do have.
- Matthew Henry quote: Though she had just reason to be troubled, yet let her consider whether she had reason to be troubled to such a degree...Our sorrow upon any account is sinful and inordinate when it diverts us from our duty to God and embitters our comfort in him, when it makes us unthankful for the mercies we enjoy and distrustful of the goodness of God to us in further mercies, when it casts a damp upon our joy in Christ.
- As Hannah processed her disappointment, she eventually found Living Hope.
- Her barrenness allowed her to get in touch with her unrealized potential and weakness. That's a necessary part of the process with God-given dreams.
- Wherever we have dry bones and barrenness, it's a place for God to come in power: 2 Cor 12:9 NLT-- "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.
- Hannah dreamed of a baby. The Bible doesn't specifically say that Hannah's dream was from God, but we know it was because of its fruit. Her baby was Samuel the prophet.
- Our own dreams are our babies. We need to rock them!
- LISTENING EXERCISE: *What is your "baby," that deep desire your heart dreams to see come to pass?*

Insights:

B. WHY

- Hannah had an unfulfilled dream. It became a source of shame, rejection, ridicule, and misunderstanding.
- It's possible that she also wanted a baby because the other woman had children.
- We need to check out the motivation for our dreams: James 4:2-3 AMP-- You are jealous *and* covet [what others have] and your desires go unfulfilled; [so] you become murderers.

[To hate is to murder as far as your hearts are concerned.] You burn with envy *and* anger and are not able to obtain [the gratification, the contentment, and the happiness that you seek], so you fight and war. You do not have, because you do not ask. [Or] you do ask [God for them] and yet fail to receive, because you ask with wrong purpose and evil, selfish motives.

- In that culture, motherhood was equal to a woman's identity and worth. Obviously, that is not true biblically.
- Over time, we can all be tempted to believe the lie that our unfulfilled dream has become our identity or has diminished our worth.
- Hannah's worth wasn't diminished in the eyes of Elkanah or her Heavenly Husband:
 - 1 Sam 1:8-- Then Elkanah her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? *Am* I not better to you than ten sons?"
 - Song 1:8 TPT-- Listen, my radiant one— if you ever lose sight of me, just follow in my footsteps where I lead my lovers. Come with your burdens and cares. Come to the place near the sanctuary of my shepherds.
- We are invited into God's presence. In that place of intimacy with Him, we are transformed: Ps 73:17, 21-28 NLT-- Then I went into your sanctuary, O God... Then I realized that my heart was bitter, and I was all torn up inside. I was so foolish and ignorant—I must have seemed like a senseless animal to you. Yet I still belong to you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny. Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth. My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever.
- Waiting in God's presence, we learn to trust His heart. There we can find joy and a sense of purpose: James 1:17-18 TV-- My dearly loved brothers and sisters, don't be misled. Every good gift bestowed, every perfect gift received comes *to us* from above, courtesy of the Father of lights. He *is consistent*. He won't change His mind or play tricks in the shadows. We have a special role in His plan. He calls us to life by His message of truth so that we will show the rest of His creatures *His goodness and love*.
- God wants knowing Him to be our greatest dream. All the others are secondary to our intimacy with Him.

Insights:

C. WOMB

- Prayer is like a womb, a place to receive and conceive Heaven Born Possibilities: Isaiah 45:8 AMP-- Let fall in showers, you heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness [the pure, spiritual, heaven-born possibilities that have their foundation in the holy being of God]; let the earth open, and let them [skies and earth] sprout forth salvation, and let righteousness germinate *and* spring up [as plants do] together; I the Lord have created it.

- God planted a dream in Hannah’s heart and she was not shy about expressing it: 1 Sam 1:9-16 NLT—Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. ¹⁰ Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord. ¹¹ And she made this vow: “O Lord of Heaven’s Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut.” ¹² As she was praying to the Lord, Eli watched her. ¹³ Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought she had been drinking. ¹⁴ “Must you come here drunk?” he demanded. “Throw away your wine!” ¹⁵ “Oh no, sir!” she replied. “I haven’t been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord. ¹⁶ Don’t think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow.”
- Notice that Hannah was specific. She asked for a son, not just any baby. (v. 11)
- Hannah voiced her deep longing for a baby to God. In so doing she found peace from the shaming voices of the accuser and other people: Pr 22:10 NIV-- Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended.
- Prayer is a great way to express our suffering and dissipate negative emotions!
- Hannah’s petitions to God were fervent. Eli hadn’t seen anyone pray like that in so long that he thought she was drunk: Judges 21:25-- In those days *there was* no king in Israel; everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes.
- Our human dreams cannot compare to God’s dreams for us: 1 Cor 2:9-10 Phillips-- But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love him’. But God has, through the Spirit, let us share his secret.
- When God wants to reproduce, He uses His word. It is His seed:
 - Mt 13:23 NLT-- The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!”
 - Is 55:10-11 NLT-- “The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to and it will prosper everywhere I send it.
- When our dreams are implanted and confirmed by God’s word to us, they will surely come to pass. Our part is to receive and believe God’s word to us: 1 Sam 1:17-20 NLT-- Eli said, “go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him.” “Oh, thank you, sir!” she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad...and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, “I asked the Lord for him.”
- We must ask the Lord what He has to say about our barrenness: Ezek 37:2-4 NIV-- I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said, “Sovereign Lord, you alone know.” Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!’
- As we pray, the Spirit reveals, at least in part, what God has in store for us--1 Cor 2:9ff Phillips-- But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love him’. But God has, through the Spirit, let us share his secret. For nothing is hidden from the Spirit, not even the deep wisdom of God. For who could really understand a man’s inmost thoughts except the spirit of the man himself? How much less could anyone understand the thoughts of God except the very Spirit of God? And

the marvelous thing is this, that we now receive not the spirit of the world but the Spirit of God himself, so that we can actually understand something of God's generosity towards us.

Insights:

D. WORSHIP

- Dreams are an opportunity for the Lord to be glorified by using ordinary people.
- God will raise up new things (“babies”) through us as we partner with Him. His glory flows through our lives and He reproduces His character in us in the process!
- The Lord does want to bless our lives but He also wants to do something beyond us: Gen 12:2-- I will bless you...and you shall be a blessing.
- God's dream for Hannah was to bless her more abundantly than she ever dared to ask: 1 Sam 2:21 NLT-- And the Lord blessed Hannah, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.
- Recognizing, praising and sharing God's goodness are acts of worship. He desires that we allow that goodness to spill over to other people who are without hope:
 - 1 Pt 3:15 NIV-- Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.
 - 2 Cor 2:14 TPT-- God always makes his grace visible in Christ, who includes us as partners of his endless triumph. Through our yielded lives he spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of God everywhere we go.
- When God answered Hannah's prayer and fulfilled her dream, she rejoiced in God's faithfulness and goodness: 1 Sam 2:1ff MSG-- Hannah prayed: I'm bursting with God-news! I'm walking on air. I'm laughing at my rivals. I'm dancing my salvation. Nothing and no one is holy like God, no rock mountain like our God. Don't dare talk pretentiously— not a word of boasting, ever! For God knows what's going on. He takes the measure of everything that happens. The weapons of the strong are smashed to pieces, while the weak are infused with fresh strength. The well fed are out begging in the streets for crusts, while the hungry are getting second helpings. The barren woman has a houseful of children, while the mother of many is bereft. God brings death and God brings life, brings down to the grave and raises up. God brings poverty and God brings wealth; he lowers, he also lifts up. He puts poor people on their feet again; he rekindles burned-out lives with fresh hope!

Insights:

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

- Continue seeking the Lord about your own God-given dreams. Dream = a personal & specific God-given idea, plan, agenda, or goal that leads to God honoring results.
- If you desire, create a Vision Statement for this year (or for any specific area). The handout “Tools & Techniques, Living By Vision” will guide you through the process.
- 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.⁴ Take great joy in the (Lord)! His gifts are coming, and they are all your heart desires! ⁵Commit your path to the (Lord); *let Him direct you*. Put your confidence in Him, and He will follow through *with you*. ⁶He 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. ⁷Be 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 Forgiveness principles using “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!