

- 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

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

III. PRINCIPLES

The following principles will aid you in overcome anxiety, worry, doubt and fear:

D. FEAR OF THE LORD

- Scripture speaks often about the Fear of the Lord. Two different motivations are:
 1. Fear of Consequences: Mt 10:28 NLT-- Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.
 2. Fear of Displeasing: Heb 12:28 NLT-- We are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe.
- Bible scholars provide us with several helpful definitions of FOL:
 - "The fear of the Lord' ultimately expresses reverential submission to the Lord's will and thus characterizes a true worshiper." (Ross)
 - The fear of the Lord is "an inward attitude of humble reverence toward God, in light of His self-revelation, that results in outward expression of Christlikeness." (Bible.org)
 - Martin Luther's view was that those who have FOL are like "a child who has tremendous respect and love for his father or mother and who dearly wants to please them. He has a fear or an anxiety of offending the one he loves, not because he's afraid of torture or even of punishment, but rather because he's afraid of displeasing the one who is, in that child's world, the source of security and love." (Ligonier.org)
- FOL is the starting point for a lifestyle of knowing God: Pr 1:7-- The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of knowledge, *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.
- Proper and wise fear of God causes us to seek and prize God's opinion more than man's. FOL helps us overcome FOM and propels our growth in faith and obedience.

Insights:

B. FAVOR

- FOM is a spiritual and emotional issue. These are intertwined, but it can be helpful to address the different components separately.
- Knowing God's favor is huge in developing emotional security so that FOL > FOM: Ps 147:11-- The Lord favors those who fear Him, those who wait for His lovingkindness.
- Favor, defined:
 1. Goodwill, acceptance, grace, precious (Strong's)
 2. Excessive kindness or unfair partiality; preferential treatment (dictionary.com)
- When Moses faced the daunting task of leading the Israelites through the wilderness there was very high potential for Fear of Man due to the hardship, criticism, and quarreling of the people: Ex 33:3-4—"Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, because you are an obstinate people, and I might destroy you on the way." When the people heard this sad word, they went into mourning

- Moses overcame FOM by trusting God (emotional safety) and praying with the understanding that he and his followers were the Lord's favored people: Ex 33:12-14 NIV--Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people." The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."
- "Moses (says) to God, 'I am asking for this something extra, because I am concerned. Here we are thy people. How are all the other nations to know that we really are your people? They are looking on at us, they are laughing at us, mocking us and jeering at us, they are ready to overwhelm us. Now, I am asking for something,' said Moses, 'that will make it absolutely clear that we are not just one of the nations of the world, but that we are thy people, that we are separate, unique, altogether apart.' " (Lloyd-Jones)
- How was Moses sure that he had God's favor? He'd experienced it in these ways:
 1. God Is On Our Side
 - Moses had experiential knowledge of God's favor when He defeated the Egyptians: Ex 14:13-14 NIV-- Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."
 - God bestows this same kind of favor when we face our enemies:
 - Ps 41:11-- By this I know that you favor me, because my enemy doesn't triumph over me.
 - Rom 8:31, 37--If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? ... In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.
 - The real enemy is a spirit of fear sent from the devil, but people can become our secondary enemies through conflict, opposition, competition, or harm.
 2. God Is Our Confidant
 - A confidant is an intimate, a sounding board, or a best friend! (google.com)
 - Moses knew the favor of God's friendship as their relationship grew in intimacy:
 - Ex 33:7, 11-- Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting... Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.
 - Num 12:8 NLT-- I speak to him face to face, clearly, and not in riddles! He sees the Lord as he is. So why were you not afraid to criticize my servant Moses?"
 - God's favor through prayer can be enjoyed as we engage in 2-way dialogue with Him:
 - Heb 4:16 AMP-- Let us [with privilege] approach the throne of grace [that is, the throne of God's gracious favor] with confidence *and* without fear, so that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find [His amazing] grace to help in time of need [an appropriate blessing, coming just at the right moment].
 - Mt 13:16 AMP-- Blessed [spiritually aware, and favored by God] are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.
- Meditating on our favor as children of God is a potent way to develop proper FOL.

Insights:

D. THE FATHER'S BLESSING

- When we have received the blessing from parents and other key influencers, we're less susceptible to Fear of Man.
- What is The Blessing? According to John Trent, co-author of a book by that name: The Blessing is a life-changing gift of unconditional love and acceptance passed down from one generation to the next. Through The Blessing, children (and adults) find out what it means to be highly valued and loved by someone else using five specific actions first laid out in the Bible:
 - Meaningful Touch
 - A Spoken Message
 - Attaching High Value
 - Picturing a Special Future
 - An Active Commitment
- Blessing in Hebrew means, "to affirm, to favor, make prosper or abound." (Gesenius)
- Throughout Scripture there are many examples demonstrating the extreme importance children being blessed (from the OT to the life of Jesus).
- God is the Author of blessing. We first see this in His promise to Abraham that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:3)
- The desire for blessing was great and was accompanied by powerful emotions:
 - Zeal/Longing/Desperation: Gen 21:13, 18—"I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he *is* your seed... Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation." (Abe asked for Ishmael)
 - Competition/Lust/Greed: Gen 27:36 NLT-- Esau exclaimed, "No wonder his name is Jacob, for now he has cheated me twice. First he took my rights as the firstborn, and now he has stolen my blessing. Oh, haven't you saved even one blessing for me?"
 - Jealousy/Resentment/Hatred: Acts 7:9-- Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him
- The blessing was passionately sought out. It signaled the father's acceptance and emotional support. Children who had this gift feel less insecurity and FOM.
- God desires to bless His children and He makes many promises in this regard.
- For all those under the Old Covenant, the blessings of God were conditional.
- Right before Moses died, he reminded the people of all the requirements to be met to receive God's blessings in Deuteronomy 27:
 - To listen to God (vv. 1-2)
 - To walk in His ways (v. 9)
 - To keep His commandments (v. 13)
 - To not turn their hearts toward other gods (v. 14)
- Experiencing conditional blessing from earthly parents and authorities can indirectly lead to Fear of Man. Some examples of missed blessing include:
 - Certain conditions were placed on the blessing.
 - The blessing was used to manipulate and control.
 - Blessing was given in some areas but not in others.
 - One child was blessed while the siblings were not.
 - The blessing was blatantly withheld.
- It's important to identify specific ways we missed the blessing at home. Dealing with this loss will enable us to receive the blessing of God, have our legitimate emotional needs met in Him, and diminish the power of FOM in our lives.
- It's helpful to explore childhood memories of unstated rules or mixed messages. This may indicate lack of the blessing and explain a history of giving up or rebelling.

- Whether we realize it or not, the desire for blessing remains deep within our hearts.
- Under the New Covenant, we have God’s unconditional blessing despite falling short of His glory: Eph 2:8-9 NLT-- God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.
- He has promised to bless us lavishly in Christ and to meet our every need:
 - Eph 1:3 NLT-- All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.
 - Phil 4:19-- God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.
- Our Father in Heaven desires that we know His love so deeply that fear is banished from our lives: 1 Jn 4:17-18 JBP-- We have come to know and trust the love God has for us. God is love, and the man whose life is lived in love does, in fact, live in God, and God does, in fact, live in him. So our love for him grows more and more, filling us with complete confidence for the day when he shall judge all men—for we realize that our life in this world is actually his life lived in us. Love contains no fear—indeed fully-developed love expels every particle of fear
- Receiving God’s love more and more deeply begins to alleviate fear/FOM and allows us to look to God instead of men for our emotional needs.
- As we experience the Father’s love and gain freedom from fear, we begin to fulfill His purpose that we become a blessing to others: Gen 12:2 NLT-- I will bless you...and you will be a blessing to others.

Insights:

E. CONTINUE TO PRACTICE

- Be alert for anxious thoughts and fearful emotions that indicate Fear of Man in your life.
- Use the Handout “Tools & Techniques: Liberation” to reinforce that truth that your love and acceptance by God are unconditional.
- Keep a record of your 2-way prayer conversations with God. Be sure to confirm what you’ve heard by being sure it is consistent with the whole counsel of Scripture.
- Use “Tools & Techniques: Listening to God” for biblical support and practical suggestions.
- Find general promises for all God’s children on “Tools & Techniques: Spiritual Blessings” or look up verses using an online search engine such as BibleGateway.com.

- Here is a suggested format for Listening Prayer:
 - Pay attention to your places of fear, dread, doubt, worry, and anxiety this week. These are places you need a promise or a word from God! Choose one to share.
 - Take 5-10 minutes for Listening to the Lord:
 - Spend a few minutes focusing on God. Use a song or a Psalm to stir thanksgiving and worship in your heart.
 - ASK: "Where in my life do I need a promise from You? Is there a specific circumstance or relationship?" Let the thoughts flow. Choose the one place or relationship that rises to the top.

 - ASK: "How am I feeling about this circumstance or relationship?" Write down what comes to mind.

 - Picture yourself giving your negative emotions to the Lord. What do you see or hear?

 - ASK: "What do you want to give me in return?"

 - ASK the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth as you search the Scriptures. Record the most meaningful ones here or in your spiritual journal. Make sure the verses are in agreement with the whole counsel of Scripture.

 - Meditate on those verse(s) until they become your personal promise(s).

 - Come next week prepared to share something that you learned from the lesson or this listening exercise, and how you are using that truth to combat your fear.