

- 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:

A. ORIGINS OF FEAR

- Humans were made by God with the need to experience perfect acceptance, love, significance and security. Adam and Eve lived that way in the Garden:
 - **Acceptance:** The Living God created man and proclaimed His delight in His creation: Gen 1:31-- God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.
 - **Love:** God's purpose for the man was relationship with Him. This was wired into our DNA: Eccl 3:11b AMP-- He has also planted eternity [a sense of divine purpose] in the human heart [a mysterious longing which nothing under the sun can satisfy, except God]
 - **Significance:** People are image-bearers of the Most High God! (Gen 1:27) He has important plans for our lives:
 - Adam: Gen 1:28 NLT-- God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."
 - Everyone: Eph 2:10— For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
 - **Security:** God set boundaries to insure the safety and well-being of Adam and Eve: Gen 2:16-17 NLT— the Lord God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden— except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die."
- Adam and Eve were bonded to God in trusting relationship. Through this intimate bond all these legitimate needs were met uninterrupted in the Garden.
- The bond was broken when man chose to live independently from God. The option of having these needs met legitimately by the appropriate Source was lost in the fall.
- However, that did not remove those needs or the longing to have them fully met.
- When Adam and Eve realized this, their response was fear: Gen 3:10-- I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.
- The doorway was permanently opened to fear and all its variations even though God provided an alternate route to connect with Him. (Gen 3:20)
- Ever since the fall, people come into the world seeking to have their basic needs met through sources other than God Himself (the only One who can meet them fully).
- We can trace many common fears back to the different developmental stages of life:
 - **Infancy:** Babies learn to trust when caregivers meet their physical and emotional needs. Fear of abandonment comes in through ignorance, neglect or abuse.
 - **Early childhood:** Toddlers need the protection and affection of caregivers to keep them from being overwhelmed by all the things that are bigger than them. Fear of inadequacy can start in this stage when loving discipline is lacking.
 - **Preschool:** Children learn to initiate and be creative at this age. Fear of risking (self-protection) may arise if criticism, rigid limits, or confinement are present.
 - **Elementary years:** Kids this age are learning their gifts and abilities. Fear of failure develops if they lack encouragement, opportunity, or the proper emphasis on success/achievement.
 - **Adolescence:** This is the stage where children begin working out their identities. Fear of rejection is common, especially without safe boundaries and safe people.

- **Young adulthood:** This is the time when people learn relational intimacy through mutual vulnerability. Many fears from childhood become manifest. If unresolved, this can lead to isolation due to fear of commitment and/or exposure (shame).
- Because so much of human development depends on other people, Fear of Man (FOM) is an inevitable struggle for all of us.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to bring to mind developmental deficits and/or memories from the past. This will help you deal with your individual origins of fear.
- The most basic means of overcoming FOM (and any other fear) is by reestablishing an intimate bond with God: Rom 8:15-16-- You did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God
- This is the pathway to overcoming fear we've established in previous weeks. The most important principle is that of bonding with God:

COME → ASK → LISTEN → BONDING → TRUST → WALK OF FAITH
 (Breakthrough) (Follow-through)

- We have used lots of biblical strategies to help us practically implement this journey of bonding. Review the Tools & Techniques handouts to help you gain your freedom.

Insights:

B. SANCTIFIED BY TRUTH

- Listening prayer is our primary strategy for overcoming fear. It's an amazing bonding experience of 2-way prayer journaling where we ask the HS to lead us into all truth.
- Jesus models listening prayer in His earthly life, relying on it for all He said and did:
 - Jn 5:30 NLT-- I can do nothing on my own. I judge as God tells me. Therefore, my judgment is just, because I carry out the will of the one who sent me, not my own will.
 - Jn 12:49 NLT-- I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it.
- Whether we are battling Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) or Fear of Man, God's Spirit using God's Word is our greatest hope of escape.
- We must verify biblically that what we've heard in Listening Prayer is Gods' truth.
- In seeking to determine what is biblical truth, we must use great care: 2 Tim 2:15-- Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
- When finding verses to apply to our fears or other issues, definitely focus on the ones that speak most powerfully to you. However, use caution not to "proof text."
- Proof texting is using "a biblical text to prove or justify a theological position without regard for the context of the passage." (Theopedia)

- As disciples of Jesus we want to know how to study the Bible. Techniques include:
 - Look at how the author used the passage in context.
 - Make sure the principle of the passage is consistent throughout Scripture. (2 Cor 13:1)
 - Consider the original readers and their culture. (Ex: OT or NT, Jews or Gentiles)
 - Put yourself in the place of each person in the story when appropriate.
 - Dig deeper by studying the original language (study bibles and online lexicons).
- Once we've "rightly divided," we can then apply a verse to our issue, taking advantage of the powerful, multifaceted nature of the Word: Heb 4:12-- For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
- The Scriptures are able to expose and impact our fearful thoughts and actions: Jn 17:17-- Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
- Sanctify-- the separation of the believer from the world in his behavior by the Father (Vines)
- Our human nature is programmed to fear and follow the world. Painful events happen that reinforce this tendency.

Insights:

C. A CASE STUDY: MOSES

- We can see this struggle in the life of Moses.
- Moses learned to fear God from his birth parents in early childhood. It's likely that some Fear of the Egyptians slipped in, too: Heb 11:23 NLT-- It was by faith that Moses' parents hid him for three months when he was born. They saw that God had given them an unusual child, and they were not afraid to disobey the king's command.
- As a relatively young adult (120 year lifespan), he had a mixed bag of fear:
 - FOL compelled Moses to embrace his godly heritage: Heb 11:24 NLT-- It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
 - FOM was evident in the murder of the slave driver: Ex 2:14-15 NLT-- Moses was afraid, thinking, "Everyone knows what I did." And sure enough, Pharaoh heard what had happened, and he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in the land of Midian.
- LISTENING EXERCISE: Lord, please identify a place in my life where Fear of Man is competing with Fear of the Lord and I've become ensnared?
- Moses was in Midian for 40 years tending sheep. Likely he did some Listening Prayer as his subsequent years indicate growth in intimacy with God and FOL: Burning Bush in Ex 3:5-6 NLT-- "Do not come any closer," the Lord warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

- Hebrews 11 commends Moses for responding in faith when there was every reason for him to be experiencing feelings of fear. He overcame Fear of Pharaoh when he chose to lead the people out of Egypt (v.27) and observed the Passover (v. 28). He even walked between the walls of the Red Sea with an army on his heels. (v. 28)
- We must deal with Fear of Man in order to be free to fear and obey God.
- In the Wilderness Moses often found himself at odds with the people. His powerful intercession for them shows his growth from FOM to FOL. (Ex 32: 10ff, Num 11:2, 12:11, 21:7)
- Let's look at some things we can learn about Fear of Man from this man of faith.

Insights:

D. OBSERVATIONS ON FOM

- As we identify which people we fear most, it reveals what our heart treasures most: Mt 6:21— For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- The thought of losing our dearest treasure is a powerful motivator! If our treasures are finite and/or changeable, it puts us at risk: Pr 29:25-- The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.
- “The person(s) to whom we ascribe most authority — to define who we are, what we're worth, what we should do, and how we should do it — is the person(s) we fear the most, because it is the person(s) whose approval we want most.” (Jon Bloom)
- The one whose approval we want most is the one to whom we've given the most power to sway our actions, either God or man: Deut 10:12-13-- What does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, *and* to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?
- There is hope for us to effectively deal with the inevitable fear, FOM.
- We will feel fear, but let's prepare our hearts to treasure, obey and fear the Lord more than the people we treasure: Acts 5:29—We must obey God rather than men.
- The proper exercise of fear, Fear of the Lord, teaches us to walk in freedom from our fear of man's opinions and approval.
- Is 8:11-13 NLT— The Lord has given me a strong warning not to think like everyone else does. He said, “Don't call everything a conspiracy, like they do, and don't live in dread of what frightens them. Make the Lord of Heaven's Armies holy in your life. He is the one you should fear. He is the one who should make you tremble. He will keep you safe.

Insights:

E. CONTINUE TO PRACTICE

- 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.
- Be sure to verify that the verses you are standing on. (See above under B. for guidelines)
- 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.