

- 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. 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.

C. Sing about what you're learning. It's helpful in connecting emotionally to the truth.

- III. Listen to the songs from this week's playlist to aid you in taking today's principles from your head to your heart.

This playlist and our master playlist for the Expectations series can be found on our Divine Design Discipleship YouTube channel. (Be sure to subscribe to our channel!) Our 2020 playlist is also available on Spotify. See the handout provided with your notebook for instructions on how to access these resources.

IV. PRINCIPLES

These principles will help you recognize and develop biblical expectations:

A. LIFE IS HARD & UNPREDICTIBLE

- No matter how spontaneous, easy-going, and adventuresome you might be, it is built into human DNA to prefer the predictable and to feel in control.
- As much we would like to know what to expect, life is unpredictable: Eccl 10:14 NLT-- No one really knows what is going to happen; no one can predict the future.
- In additions to its unpredictability, the Bible tells us that life is not fair: Eccl 9:11 NLT-- I have observed something else under the sun. The fastest runner doesn't always win the race, and the strongest warrior doesn't always win the battle. The wise sometimes go hungry, and the skillful are not necessarily wealthy. And those who are educated don't always lead successful lives...People can never predict when hard times might come. Like fish in a net or birds in a trap, people are caught by sudden tragedy.
- These truths about the fallen world that we inhabit can have the result of knowingly or unknowingly developing negative expectations about God.
- If we don't know God very well (relationally, by experience), we often find ourselves with theological gaps, wrong expectations, and blaming God: Hosea 4:6 NLT-- My people are being destroyed because they don't know me.
- When our expectations go unrealized, it leads to disappointment. If we are honest, most of us have felt disappointed with God.
- Disappointment is 'unhappiness from the failure of something hoped for or expected to happen.' (Merriam Webster) It can be an emotion, a mindset, or both.
- Disappointment is a powerful distortion that can hinder biblical expectations.
- Moses became disappointed with God very early in his assignment to lead God's people out of Egypt. He was obedient in going to Pharaoh and things got worse: Ex 5:10-11 NLT-- So the slave drivers and foremen went out and told the people: "This is what Pharaoh says: I will not provide any more straw for you. ¹¹ Go and get it yourselves. Find it wherever you can. But you must produce just as many bricks as before!"
- Moses, true to his relational nature, took his disappointment to God: Ex 5:22 NLT--Moses went back to the Lord and protested, "Why have you brought all this trouble on your own people, Lord? Why did you send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh as your spokesman, he has been even more brutal to your people. And you have done nothing to rescue them!"
- Since the fall, mankind has chosen to question God's character and to hide from Him. (Gen 3:1-8) Being honest with God is a much healthier way to go!
- LISTENING EXERCISE: *Is there a time or an area of your life where you feel confused or disappointed with God?*

Would you be willing to approach Him about it honestly? If so, start by asking Him for wisdom, insight and revelation about your expectations and His purposes.

- Insights:

A. GOD IS LOVING & UNCHANGING

- Even though we can't expect life to be fair or easy, we can expect certain things about God. The Bible tells us that He is good, loving and never changing.
- Though God's greatness is beyond comprehension, Scripture tells us that His most essential quality is love: 1Jn 4:8-10 JBP--God is love. God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.
- God's plans for us are good: Eph 1:4-8 NLT--Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. ⁵ God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. ⁶ So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. ⁷ He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. ⁸ He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.
- God's character and ways are unwavering. Both Old and New Testaments contain many Scriptures that verify His immutable nature:
 - Num 23:19 NLT--God is not a man, so he does not lie. He is not human, so he does not change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?
 - Heb 6:18 NLT--So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us.
 - Jm 1:17 JBP--But every good endowment that we possess and every complete gift that we have received must come from above, from the Father of all lights, with whom there is never the slightest variation or shadow of inconsistency.
- Everything else in our lives is subject to change or loss. We must look to God as we formulate our expectations.
- Charles Spurgeon Quote: Remember God is the same, whatever is removed. Your friends may be disaffected, your ministers may be taken away, everything may change, but God does not. Your brethren may change and cast out your name as vile: but God will love you still. Let your station in life change, and your property be gone; let your whole life be shaken, and you become weak and sickly; let everything flee away—there is one place where change cannot put his finger; there is one name on which mutability can never be written; there is one heart which never can alter; that heart is God's—that name Love.
- Despite His love and consistent nature, God's actions are often unpredictable:
 - Eccl 11:5 NLT-- Just as you cannot understand the path of the wind or the mystery of a tiny baby growing in its mother's womb, so you cannot understand the activity of God, who does all things.
 - Job 5:9 MSG-- "If I were in your shoes, I'd go straight to God, I'd throw myself on the mercy of God. After all, he's famous for great and unexpected acts; there's no end to his surprises.
 - Is 55:8 MSG-- "I don't think the way you think. The way you work isn't the way I work." God's Decree. "For as the sky soars high above earth, so the way I work surpasses the way you work, and the way I think is beyond the way you think.
- Moses and the Children of Israel (COI) experienced God's unexpected and unpredictable ways firsthand: Ex13:17 NLT-- When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the

shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, “If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.”

- In their conversation at the burning bush, the Lord spoke of only one destination, the Promised Land! He lovingly chose to withhold some details about His plans: Jn 16:12 EXB-- “I [still] have many more things to say to you, but they are too much for you [you cannot bear them] now.”
- How well we will negotiate unfamiliar terrain will, in large part, be determined by how we think about the Lord and how we think about unexpected circumstances.
- We must be prepared to let go of control and trust God: Is 42:16 MSG-- “I’ll take the hand of those who don’t know the way, who can’t see where they’re going. I’ll be a personal guide to them, directing them through unknown country. I’ll be right there to show them what roads to take, make sure they don’t fall into the ditch. These are the things I’ll be doing for them—sticking with them, not leaving them for a minute.”
- Insights:

B. GOD’S FOCUS IS INTERNAL

- The Lord wants more for us than just getting us to the next stop on our journey!
- While our attention is most often on the outcome or destination, His expectations for us are focused on bringing about internal transformation:
 - Phil 2:13 NLT-- For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.
 - Rom 8:28-29-- We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son
- The COI thought they were ready to enter Canaan, but God knew better. They needed healing and maturing so that they’d be prepared for the new things ahead:
 1. Slave Mindset
 - These people had been used and abused for generations. Their identity needed to be upgraded from slaves to sons and daughters: Ex 6:6-7 NLT-- “Therefore, say to the people of Israel: ‘I am the Lord. I will free you from your oppression and will rescue you from your slavery in Egypt. I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment. ⁷ I will claim you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God who has freed you from your oppression in Egypt.’”
 - We must “work to believe” the new identity and freedom that God has given us: Ex 6:9-- Moses relayed this message to the Israelites, but on account of their broken spirit and cruel bondage, they did not listen to him.
 - Take some time to ponder all the freedom you have in Christ: Rom 8:15-16 JBP-- All who follow the leading of God’s Spirit are God’s own sons. Nor are you meant to relapse into the old slavish attitude of fear—you have been adopted into the very family circle of God and you can say with a full heart, “Father, my Father”. The Spirit himself endorses our inward conviction that we really are the children of God. Think what that means. If we are his children we share his treasures, and all that Christ claims as his will belong to all of us as well!
 - This internal shift will hugely impact your expectations about just about everything!

2. Entitlement Attitude

- Entitlement has been defined as “the feeling that you have the right to do or have what you want without having to work for it or deserve it.” (Cambridge English Dictionary)
- God uses unexpected and unfamiliar things to expose entitlement and other erroneous thinking: Ex 16:4-5 NLT-- Then the Lord said to Moses, “Look, I’m going to rain down food from heaven for you. Each day the people can go out and pick up as much food as they need for that day. I will test them in this to see whether or not they will follow my instructions. ⁵On the sixth day they will gather food, and when they prepare it, there will be twice as much as usual.”
- When the Lord provided food in the wilderness, the COI didn’t respond with thanksgiving or acceptance: Ex 16:15 AMP-- When the Israelites saw it, they said one to another, Manna [What is it?]. For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.”
- They were expecting something different than this unknown substance that required gathering, grinding and cooking. They were disappointed and offended with God.
- This entitlement and lack of gratitude flared up over and over in the desert: Num 11:18-20 NLT-- Say to the people, ‘Purify yourselves, for tomorrow you will have meat to eat. You were whining, and the Lord heard you when you cried, “Oh, for some meat! We were better off in Egypt!” Now the Lord will give you meat, and you will have to eat it. ¹⁹And it won’t be for just a day or two, or for five or ten or even twenty. ²⁰You will eat it for a whole month until you gag and are sick of it. For you have rejected the Lord, who is here among you, and you have whined to him, saying, “Why did we ever leave Egypt?”’
- Even when God gave the people what they wanted, it didn’t satisfy their inner issue of unbelief and wrong expectations. They never let their hunger lead them to God’s heart.
- Moses was the only one who went to God with his disappointment. Let us follow his example when we are feeling entitled to something different or better.
- “Cling to the promise that God loves you, even when you don’t get what you desperately want. Use these feelings as a catalyst into prayer. We can’t save ourselves from these feelings of entitlement. We can’t make our hearts better. But God can, and he will do so as we pour out our desires and disappointments to him and hope in his promises.” (desiringgod.org)

3. Trust Issues

- God’s children saw His mighty miracles again and again, yet they remained untrusting and suspicious of God: Ps 106:7 AMP-- Our fathers in Egypt did not understand *nor* appreciate Your miracles; They did not remember the abundance of Your mercies *nor* imprint Your lovingkindnesses on their hearts, But they were rebellious at the sea, at the Red Sea.
- It’s possible for God’s people to receive His blessings but never internalize them in such a way that produces faith, trust, or godly expectations: Ps 78:52-57 NLT-- He led his own people like a flock of sheep, guiding them safely through the wilderness. ⁵³He kept them safe so they were not afraid; but the sea covered their enemies. ⁵⁴He brought them to the border of his holy land, to this land of hills he had won for them. ⁵⁵He drove out the nations before them; he gave them their inheritance by lot. He settled the tribes of Israel

into their homes. ⁵⁶ But they kept testing and rebelling against God Most High. They did not obey his laws. ⁵⁷ They turned back and were as faithless as their parents. They were as undependable as a crooked bow.

- Disappointment, discouragement, and difficulty can cause us to build walls of self-protection. We seek to keep God (and others) out, but at great cost to ourselves.
- Trust would have grown if the people had learned to listen to God and set their expectations on what He has said: Ps 95:7-11 MSG--Drop everything and listen, listen as he speaks: Don't turn a deaf ear as in the Bitter Uprising, as on the day of the Wilderness Test, when your ancestors turned and put *me* to the test. For forty years they watched me at work among them, as over and over they tried my patience. And I was provoked—oh, was I provoked! 'Can't they keep their minds on God for five minutes? Do they simply refuse to walk down my road?' Exasperated, I exploded, 'They'll never get where they're headed, never be able to sit down and rest.'"
- We can nurture our mustard-seed-sized trust by spending time in Gods presence, renewing our minds and hearts in worship. Let's rehearse who God is and all that He has done for us:
 - 2 Cor 3:18 AMP--And we all, with unveiled face, *continually* seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are *progressively* being transformed into His image from [one degree of] glory to [even more] glory, which comes from the Lord, [who is] the Spirit.
 - Ps 92:4 AMP-- For You, O Lord, have made me glad by Your works; at the deeds of Your hands I joyfully sing.
- Insights:

II. CONTINUE TO PRACTICE

- Use the handout "Tools & Techniques: Spiritual Blessings" to help you connect to the wonderful things you can expect from God as He does internal work in you.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you recognize your current expectations. Pray for His help as you cultivate attitudes like Moses: Humble, Relational, and an Expectation of More.
- Each step of our journey with God is intended to teach us to know and trust Him relationally. Developing a relational mindset could be depicted this way:

**EXTEND FAITH
INCREMENTALLY**

→ **GOD PROVES
TRUSTWORTHY**

→ **DEVELOP CONFIDENT & ACCURATE
EXPECATIONS IN GOD**

- Keep a record of what you discover in your notebook or spiritual journal. Come back next week ready to share what you experienced!