

- 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](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.

- 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 our "In the Vault" series can be found on our Divine Design Discipleship YouTube channel. (Be sure to subscribe to our channel!) Our 2021 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 explore what God says in His Word about living a victorious life in Him. Let's use them to know God more deeply and enrich our Vaults with His truth:

##### A. UNBELIEVABLE VICTORY

- Israel has just experienced the supernatural defeat of the city of Jericho because God fought for them and He won! (Joshua 6)
- Victory is only possible in the believer's life by maintaining close fellowship with the Lord and relying on Him to achieve it: Ps 24:3-4 NLT--Who may climb the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? Only those whose hands and hearts are pure, who do not worship idols and never tell lies.
- When the Vault of our heart becomes contaminated with sin, idolatry and deceit, it compromises our intimacy and our devotion to God: 2 Cor 11:3 JBP-- I am afraid that your minds may be seduced from a single-hearted devotion to him by the same subtle means that the serpent used towards Eve.
- Whether we are aware of them or not, these things corrupt our connection with God and cause our hearts to become dull, unpliant, and lacking in childlike faith.
- We see history repeat itself for the Hebrew people – they are recipients of a miraculous deliverance and yet fell almost immediately into unbelief (Num 14): Joshua 7:1-13 NLT--But Israel violated the instructions about the things set apart for the Lord. A man named Achan had stolen some of these dedicated things, so the Lord was very angry with the Israelites. Achan was the son of Carmi, a descendant of Zimri son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah.<sup>2</sup> Joshua sent some of his men from Jericho to spy out the town of Ai, east of Bethel, near Beth-aven.<sup>3</sup> When they returned, they told Joshua, "There's no need for all of us to go up there; it won't take more than two or three thousand men to attack Ai. Since there are so few of them, don't make all our people struggle to go up there."<sup>4</sup> So approximately 3,000 warriors were sent, but they were soundly defeated. The men of Ai chased the Israelites from the town gate as far as the quarries, and they killed about thirty-six who were retreating down the slope. The Israelites were paralyzed with fear at this turn of events, and their courage melted away.<sup>6</sup> Joshua and the elders of Israel tore their clothing in dismay, threw dust on their heads, and bowed face down to the ground before the Ark of the Lord until evening.<sup>7</sup> Then Joshua cried out, "Oh, Sovereign Lord, why did you bring us across the Jordan River if you are going to let the Amorites kill us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side!"<sup>8</sup> Lord, what can I say now that Israel has fled from its enemies?<sup>9</sup> For when the Canaanites and all the other people living in the land hear about it, they will surround us and wipe our name off the face of the earth. And then what will happen to the honor of your great name?"<sup>10</sup> But the Lord said to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying on your face like this?"<sup>11</sup> Israel has sinned and broken my covenant! They have stolen some of the things that I commanded must be set apart for me. And they have not only stolen them but have lied about it and hidden the things among their own belongings.<sup>12</sup> That is why the Israelites are running from their enemies in defeat. For now Israel itself has been set apart for destruction. I will not remain with you any longer unless you destroy the things among you that were set apart for destruction.<sup>13</sup> "Get up! Command the people to purify themselves in preparation for tomorrow. For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Hidden among you, O Israel, are things set apart for the Lord. You will never defeat your enemies until you remove these things from among you.
- Sometimes we experience victory and deliverance from God, but we don't take it in deeply. Then it doesn't penetrate the heart and make it tender toward Him.

- Some in Israel had hard hearts, leaving them liable to temptation and deceit. Their disobedience caused trouble for the whole camp: 1 Cor 5:6 NLT--Don't you realize that this sin is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough?
- When our hearts aren't soft and open toward God, we forfeit rich relationship with Him and the abundant life that brings: Ps 95:9-10 EXB--In the desert [wilderness] there your ancestors [fathers] tested me and tried me even though they saw what I did. I was angry with [felt disgust for] those people [that generation] for forty years. I said, 'They are not loyal to me [a people whose hearts wander/go astray] and have not understood my ways.'
- Insights:

## B. FLESHLY MINDSETS

- It has been said that we are most vulnerable to the enemy after a big win: Pr 18:12 NLT-- Haughtiness goes before destruction; humility precedes honor.
- These children of God came into the Promised Land with fleshly mindsets firmly in place. The same is true for us who commit to following the Spirit to abundant life.
- We are often unaware of our fleshly mindsets. We find ourselves choosing lesser thoughts and ways instead of seeking the living God.
- Joshua and the men of war were so overjoyed about the defeat of Jericho that they were unable to recognize their over-confidence. God was never consulted about Ai.
- Following the pattern that had worked in Jericho, Joshua decided to send a scout team to Ai. He went with their advice to send a small regiment of 3000 men. (vv. 2-4)
- Joshua's failure to rely on the Lord was costly. If he had sought Him first, he could have avoided this disaster: Pr 4:13 NLT-- Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go. Guard them, for they are the key to life.
- Some of the reasons God's people don't pray about for God's guidance:
  1. Momentum carries us. Life is going well and we assume it will continue to be that way.
  2. The mindset of righteousness based on our works is a deep-seated lie. We are tempted to fix what's broken or finish what God started.
  3. We are on Autopilot, doing things the way we've always done them.
  4. Human reasoning seems adequate for our needs (even when we have unlimited access to an all-knowing and all-powerful God!).
  5. We are eager for the next thing and we get ahead of God (i.e. unwilling to wait on Him).
  6. Sometimes we are afraid of God's answer. (Ask forgiveness later vs. permission now)
  7. It's possible to be so focused on the enemy or problem that God doesn't have our full attention or whole heart.
- LISTENING EXERCISE: *Lord, as I look over the reasons given above for not praying to You, please show me my biggest reason(s) for prayerlessness.*

- Jesus Himself speaks to us over and over again about the pitfall of self-reliance:
  - John 6:63-- It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life.
  - John 15:5b—Apart from Me, you can do nothing.
  - John 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.
- “Confidence is a good thing as long as one’s confidence is in the right place. When we are walking with our hope and our confidence in the Lord, we will win the victory, but when we are walking with our confidence in the power of our ability and in our flesh, then we are destined to fail!” (Alan Carr)
- The idea that victory depends on us appeals to our fleshly nature. This type thinking boosts our ego, but hinders us from seeking and following God and His plans.
- The people must repent, seek the Lord's forgiveness, and return to dependence upon Him alone. Only then will Israel again be assured of victory. (Josh 8:1)
- Insights:

### C. FIRST FRUITS

- Possessing the Promised Land is a picture of the life the Lord intends for us. As we yield to the Spirit, He enables us to fight the good fight of faith.
- God is due the first fruits in every part of our lives because “every good and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father” (Jm 1:17)
  1. First fruits of our possessions:
    - Before taking possession of Jericho, God commanded that all the valuables were to be set apart to Him as the first fruits of the Promised Land. (Josh 6:17-19)
    - Deut 26:9-10 NLT--He brought us here and gave us this rich and fertile land. So now I bring to the Lord the first part of the harvest that he has given me.’
  2. First fruits of our endeavors:
    - Joshua let Autopilot take over and it caused trouble. We want to practice looking to God so often that it becomes our default choice!
    - Pr 16:3 NLT--Commit your works to the LORD, and your thoughts will be established.
    - Mt 6:33 EXB-- Seek first [Be concerned above all else with] God’s kingdom and what God wants [his righteousness]. Then all your other needs will be met as well [these things will be given to you].
  3. First fruits of our emotions:
    - Joshua was honest with God about his confusion, questions, doubts, and fears. Having processed his grief with the Lord, his heart could listen to Him about what happened and how to deal with the trouble at hand.

- Ps 25:16-18 NLT-- Turn to me and have mercy, for I am alone and in deep distress. My problems go from bad to worse. Oh, save me from them all! Feel my pain and see my trouble. Forgive all my sins.
- 4. First fruits of our love
  - God's desire for us is that we love Him whole-heartedly. He is intended to be our primary source of happiness, security, and satisfaction.
  - When we love lesser things above God we are like Achan who "acted unfaithfully." (v. 7:1 NASB) It's like adultery or a broken vow in our relationship.
  - Exodus 20:5 GNT-- Do not bow down to any idol or worship it, because I am the Lord your God and I tolerate no rivals.
- Straying away from God and His plan for victorious living allows defeat, doubt, and disappointment to gain entrance into our minds and hearts.
- Insights:

#### D. HIDDEN THINGS

- This defeat at Ai exposed the fleshly mindsets hidden within the hearts and minds of Joshua and his military leaders. But there was more to be revealed.
- Before the battle of Jericho, God commanded that *everything* there would be set apart to Him as the first fruits of possessing the Promised Land.
- Once Joshua began to pray, the Lord uncovered another hidden thing – blatant disobedience by one of the military men in the Jericho conquest. (v. 11)
- The Lord tells Joshua there is sin in the camp and the method for discovering the guilty party: Josh 7:18b-21 NLT-- Achan was singled out. Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, by telling the truth. Make your confession and tell me what you have done. Don't hide it from me." Achan replied, "It is true! I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. Among the plunder I saw a beautiful robe from Babylon, 200 silver coins, and a bar of gold weighing more than a pound. I wanted them so much that I took them. They are hidden in the ground beneath my tent, with the silver buried deeper than the rest."
- God had already made provision for this sin. Had Achan come forward voluntarily, he could have been forgiven under the Old Covenant: Lev 5:16 NLT--You must make restitution for the sacred property you have harmed by paying for the loss, plus an additional 20 percent. When you give the payment to the priest, he will purify you with the ram sacrificed as a guilt offering, making you right with the Lord, and you will be forgiven.
- Today we are under the New Covenant and have the assurance of forgiveness when we fail to yield to God: Heb 10:10 NLT-- For God's will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.
- Instead of confessing his hidden sin, Achan chose to stay in hiding. The consequences of his choice were catastrophic for himself and all the people.
- As God's people, we must deal with unaddressed sin and purge our allegiance to the flesh. That's the way to enjoy certain victory over our foes:

- Num 32:23b NLT--You may be sure that your sin will find you out.
- Josh 7:13 NLT--Hidden among you, O Israel, are things set apart for the Lord. You will never defeat your enemies until you remove these things from among you.”
- Because Jesus has already covered every sin that is uncovered in our lives we are safe to come into the light so hidden things lose their power: Heb 10:19-23 NLT-- And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.
- As the promise of God’s merciful presence penetrates our Vaults, we can begin to walk in the power and victory of Jesus’ resurrection more and more consistently: Deut 20:4 NLT-- For the Lord your God is going with you! He will fight for you against your enemies, and he will give you victory!’
- Insights:

## II. CONTINUE TO PRACTICE

- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the hidden things in your life that are keeping you from walking in the power and victory of the Lord. Let Him purify and soften your heart.
- *Where in your life are you withholding from God your first fruits? Will you give to Him whatever it may be for the sake of greater depth of relationship with Him?*
- Pray for greater awareness of God’s presence with you throughout your days. Ask the Lord to keep you focused on knowing Him in a relational way.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you recognize what is currently in your Vault. Watch for times when your actions and emotions reveal what you value highly.
- Use “Tools & Techniques: I Feel But God Says” to process your feelings, fears or unbelief. Ask God to address them and begin to replace them with His truth.
- Study “Tools & Techniques: Listening to God” for practical help and Scriptural support in your pursuit of making God’s truth your own.
- Refer to the handout “Tools & Techniques: Spiritual Blessings.” The truths and biblical references there are part of your inheritance. Target them for your Vault!
- Keep on considering the questions we’ll be exploring this year:
  - 1) *At the center of my being, what things do I firmly and completely believe to be true?*
  - 2) *Where is it that I ultimately go to find the security I was created to experience?*
- Keep a record of what you discover in your notebook or spiritual journal. Come back next week ready to share what you experienced!