

- 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.

- Listen to the songs from this week's playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gS9e0nxHP-w&list=PLBL8waErHIN6u4NYraqyN3GhyRUxW-c4f>
- Enjoy this year's songs on Spotify or on our DDD You Tube channel (see handout):
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBL8waErHIN6ncxj-5uV0AXyVObmZeAlI>

III. PRINCIPLES

These principles will help you understand God's purposes for your Wilderness areas:

A. GOD'S PURPOSES IN THE WILDERNESS

- Some of the purposes of a Spirit-led Wilderness we've explored so far include:
 1. Testing
 2. Time Out
 3. Therapeutic
 4. Transformation
 5. Preparation
 6. Power
 7. Worship
 8. Hunger and Thirst for God and His Word
- Wilderness times give us the opportunity to develop new taste buds for God's supernatural supply instead of attempting to be satisfied with temporal things.

Insights:

B. ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE

- The heat and stress of The Wilderness don't create pride, they only reveal hidden pride that is already there.
- We are daily immersed in this world and take in ungodly messages. Our minds become polluted with prideful thinking: 1 Jn 2:16-- For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.
- Pride can seep in through significant events and environments. It may develop from hurtful experiences like trauma or neglect.
- Pride may also come from lack of boundaries or always getting your way in life.
- Attributes of pride include entitlement, anger, self-pity, resentment, discontentment, and lack of gratitude.
- God will use our Wilderness hot spots to give us the humility we need: Ex 8:16 NLT-- He fed you with manna in the wilderness, a food unknown to your ancestors. He did this to humble you and test you for your own good.
- He wants us to know the truth about the gifts in our lives as well as knowing the Giver: Jm 1:17 NIV-- Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.
- In The Wilderness, God trained Moses to be a shepherd. When called him to lead His people, He told him to throw down the symbol of his own strength, his staff.
- *What was the Lord communicating to Moses through this symbolic act?*
- God did not want Moses or the COI to think that they were to be saved by the strength or gifts of a man: Ex 4:30-31 NLT-- Moses performed the miraculous signs as they watched. Then the people of Israel were convinced that the Lord had sent Moses and Aaron. When they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.
- Dependence on God is our hope. Depending on our own gifts, wisdom, or strength will come back to bite us!

Insights:

C. PRIDE OR HUMILITY

- When we encounter situations outside of our control, it's our chance to respond with self-sufficiency (pride) or with dependence on God (humility).
- Such is the case of Naaman. His Wilderness area was his health: 2 Kings 5:1-15-- Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, *but* a leper. ² And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. ³ Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master *were* with the prophet who *is* in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy." ⁴ And *Naaman* went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who *is* from the land of Israel." ⁵ Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand *shekels* of gold, and ten changes of clothing. ⁶ Then he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which said, Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may heal him of his leprosy. ⁷ And it happened, when the king of Israel read the letter, that he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man sends a man to me to heal him of his leprosy? Therefore please consider, and see how he seeks a quarrel with me." ⁸ So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes that he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and *you shall* be clean." ¹¹ But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out *to me*, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.'" ¹² *Are* not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³ And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, *If* the prophet had told you *to do* something great, would you not have done *it*? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?" ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. ¹⁵ And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, "Indeed, now I know that *there is* no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant."¹⁶ But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." And he urged him to take *it*, but he refused. ¹⁷ So Naaman said, "Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord.
- Naaman was a "mighty man of valor." God had given him military victory over Israel. Yet his serious skin condition, leprosy, put him in touch with his limitations.
- All humans have gifts and strengths. Pride can slip in when we're unaware or forgetful about God being the Giver of all gifts: Rom 12:3 AMP-- For by the grace [of God] given to me I say to everyone of you not to think more highly of himself [and of his importance and ability] than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has apportioned to each a degree of faith [and a purpose designed for service].
- We, as fallen humanity, also possess weaknesses. Leprosy in this Bible account is symbolic of our brokenness and sin -- spiritual disease causing insensitivity to God.

- The first step in our healing is to admit our need. This requires humility.
- Humility is based on the Latin word “humus,” which means “earth” and is related to the word “human.”
- Humility is an attitude that is 1) open to being fallible, 2) vulnerable about any needs, 3) ready to receive help, and 4) willing to change
- Naaman showed humility when he took advice from the servant girl, sought help from the king, and even went to his enemies to find healing (vv. 3-6).
- However, self-reliance and pride were still in play in this story. This is seen in the big bribe that Naaman took into the King of Israel (750 lb silver, 150 lb gold, etc).
- Further, Naaman expected things to go a certain way. He was offended when Elisha did not meet him in person and sent a simple cure. He had more humility to learn!
- A truly humble person cannot be humiliated. Yet, many of us may feel shame and anger toward God when He calls us to expose our needs or step out in weakness.
- “There is nothing romantic about the call of God upon one’s life. The call of God to obey Him is one of the most difficult things in our lives, simply because it of necessity touches our pride. We are born with the seed of pride in us. It is good and OK to sing out our eagerness to obey God, but remember the devil also sang (as all angels do); but still he allowed pride to come into his heart, and he ultimately rebelled against God.” (mwtasblog)
- Naaman almost allowed his pride to rob him of his healing. Thank God for another of his compassionate and brave servants who pointed him back to God and to humility.
- The Lord knows how desperately we need humility and will send us to a Wilderness place in order to obtain it.
- “Here it is: the core of man’s relationship to God, the secret to blessing, is the humility and nothingness that leaves God free to be All.” (Andrew Murray)
- Eventually Naaman understood the value being humble before God. He submitted to the word of the Lord spoken by Elisha and was cleansed inside and out.
- This “great” man (v.1) received help from a little girl (v.2) and, by God’s grace, became like a little boy (v.14)! Mt 18:3-4--“Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
- Our humility is deepened when we have a need and then receive help and healing.
- Naaman displays true humility in returning to thank Elisha and expressing his desire to worship the one true God, his Healer (v.17).

Insights:

D. CULTIVATING HUMBLE HEARTS

- God highly values humility and is committed to ridding us of pride: 1 Pt 5:5-6 NIV--God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you
- Let's cooperate with God as He seeks to grow humility in our Wilderness places. These strategies will open our hearts so that God can purge any seeds of pride:
 1. Revelation
 - Let's humble ourselves before God before He has to humble us! Ask Him to reveal any prideful attitudes inside: Ps 139:23-24 NLT--Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.
 2. Reverence
 - Revere the greatness of God's ways and vantage point: Is 55:8-9 NLT--"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."
 - Instead of insisting on a certain result, develop a sense of wonder about what God has in mind: 1 Cor 2:9 NIV-- As it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"— the things God has prepared for those who love him"
 3. Recognition
 - Recognize and acknowledge God's goodness and gifts in your life. Gratitude and worship will keep your heart humble.
 - Remember what the Lord has done for you in your past and present: Ps 9:1 AMP-- I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth (recount and tell aloud) all Your marvelous works *and* wonderful deeds!
 4. Receiving
 - Open your hearts wide to receive! Ask for help and provision in time of need: Jn 16:24-- Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.
 - Understanding the role of receiving will help maintain an attitude of humility:
 - 1 Cor 4:7 MSG-- For who do you know that really knows *you*, knows your heart? And even if they did, is there anything they would discover in you that you could take credit for? Isn't everything you *have* and everything you *are* sheer gifts from God? So what's the point of all this comparing and competing? You already have all you need. You already have more access to God than you can handle.
 - John 3:27 AMP—A man can receive nothing (he can claim nothing, he can take unto himself nothing) except as it has been granted to him from heaven. A man must be content to receive the gift which is given him from heaven; there is no other source.

Insights:

III. CONTINUE TO PRACTICE

- Practice recognizing your Wilderness Hot Spots. Ask God to help you see His beneficial purposes there.
- Set aside some time to let God feed and fuel you with His Word. Use these suggested steps to help you get started:
 - Pray for God to open the eyes of your heart to see and know Him.
 - Pour out your heart to Him verbally or in your journal.
 - Go to Scriptures that are relevant to your issue (use a concordance, topical Bible, or a search engine such as Bible Gateway).
 - Write down the verses that speak to you most. Pray them back to God.
 - Listen for His response, as you are silent before Him.
 - Keep a written record of your dialogue and be sure to review it often.
 - Use the handout “Tools & Techniques: Listening to God” for practical help and Scriptural support. Contact your leader if you have questions.
- Practice Wilderness Worship to grow in intimacy with God during this season:
 - Supplication--Our faith-based prayers
 - Silence--Being still and silent in God's presence
 - Song--Singing praises and thanksgiving to the Lord
 - Surrender--Our wholehearted devotion to God in all the matters concerning us
- Our challenge on this journey through The Wilderness is to stay focused on our Rock, Jesus, and not on our circumstances
- Imitate the mindset Jesus used to overcome temptation in The Wilderness:

LEAN ON BELOVED



Lean on my
own strength
and wisdom

or

Promises
fulfilled, heavenly
provision, and rest

- May we be so changed in God's presence in this season that this will be the testimony spoken about us: Song 8:5-- Who *is* this coming up from the wilderness, Leaning upon her beloved?