

- 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=rvR4vD1ZiuY&list=PLBL8waErHIN4Dsd66Naea667fj-YkVbhw>
- 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

- So far we've discovered these purposes of a God-appointed Wilderness:
 1. Testing
 2. Time Out
 3. Therapeutic
 4. Transformation
 5. Preparation
 6. Power
 7. Worship
 8. Hunger and Thirst for God and His Word
 9. Humility
 10. Shaping Character
 11. Waiting on God's Word
- We can see from the biblical accounts that we've covered to date, these benefits take time and require our participation. We must cooperate with God to get them!

Insights:

B. PERSISTANT PAIN

- The Wilderness, by nature, is a place of hardship, confusion, and waiting. Job experienced all this plus the deep pain of great loss.
- Job was a man living in patriarchal times in a place east of Egypt. He was likely a Gentile that worshiped the one true God: Job 1:1 NLT-- He was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil.
- In Job's story we see Satan at work. He has the power to manipulate weather (1:16, 19), health (2:7), and people (1:15, 17) in his ongoing battle with God.
- Though Satan is involved, this is clearly a God-appointed Wilderness initiated and limited by the Lord: Job 1:8,11-12 MSG— God said to Satan, "Have you noticed my friend Job? There's no one quite like him—honest and true to his word, totally devoted to God and hating evil." Satan retorted... "What do you think would happen if you reached down and took away everything that is his? He'd curse you right to your face, that's what." God replied, "We'll see. Go ahead—do what you want with all that is his. Just don't hurt *him*." Then Satan left the presence of God.
- Job loses practically everything at the beginning of His Wilderness experience—his children, his wealth, and his health. His response is remarkable: Job 1:20-22 NLT-- Job got to his feet, ripped his robe, shaved his head, then fell to the ground and worshiped: Naked I came from my mother's womb, naked I'll return to the womb of the earth. God gives, God takes. God's name be ever blessed. Not once through all this did Job sin; not once did he blame God.
- Job demonstrates a very powerful strategy in his tragedy – turning his attention to God's character and His name. Specifically, he blesses His name (1:21).
- "Blessed" in Hebrew is *barak*. Barak's definition is to kneel, praise, honor or trust.
- It blessed God for Job to trust Him in the midst of excruciating emotional and physical pain. He grieved so deeply that he wished he'd never been born (3:3).

- As his Wilderness season continued over the months, he leaned on a specific name of God for comfort: Job 19:25 AMP-- For I know that my Redeemer *and* Vindicator lives, And at the last He will take His stand upon the earth.
- Redeemer -- avenger, revenger, ransom, do the part of next of kin (Strong's H1350)
- Job looked to God for what he knew to be true of Him. God would reckon all this suffering and redeem it for good purpose whether in his lifetime or the next.
- Persistent pain creates a greater awareness of our need for God and of our inability to have control over our circumstances. We're generally more humble and hungry.
- Job put his trust in his Redeemer to help him endure The Wilderness: Jm 1:5-8 TV— If you don't have all the wisdom needed *for this journey*, then all you have to do is ask God for it; and God will grant all that you need. He gives lavishly and never scolds you for asking. The key is that your request be anchored by your single-minded commitment *to God*. Those who depend only on their own judgment are like *those lost on the seas*, carried away by any wave or picked up by any wind. Those *adrift on their own wisdom* shouldn't assume the Lord will *rescue them* or bring them anything. *The splinter of divided loyalty shatters your compass and* leaves you dizzy and confused.
- LISTENING EXERCISE: *Lord, as I think of a specific Wilderness place in my life (name it: _____), I want to trust in Your character by calling upon Your name. In light of that, I ask: "Who do You want to be for me in this place?"*

Insights:

C. PURIFICATION

- Job, in his ongoing pain, became weary and began looking for someone to blame seeing as God Himself had pronounced him blameless (Job 1:8, 2:3).
- Eventually Job's trust wavers when accused by his friends. He's defensive, speaking wrongly of God: Job 13:23-24 NLT-- Tell me, what have I done wrong? Show me my rebellion and my sin. Why do you turn away from me? Why do you treat me as your enemy?
- The Wilderness had originally been about Job remaining faithful when blessing was removed. As the suffering continued, another of God's purposes is revealed.
- It became necessary for The Wilderness to purify Job's heart. Seeds of pride had begun to germinate in the continuing hot and hostile environment.
- God is seeking to create in us hearts completely committed to His will, that desire to validate His glory and not our own: 1 Pt 1:16 NLT-- You must be holy because I am holy.
- Job, though he sought to justify himself, did acknowledge his need for purity: Job 23:10-- He knows the way that I take; *when* He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold
- When gold is discovered, it's usually found in tiny quantities and is mixed with lesser materials. Heat is used to purge these other materials that hide and harden the gold.
- Pure gold is soft and transparent: Rev 21:21-- The street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass
- Our hearts can be corrupted by exposure to wrong thinking and worldliness: Jm 1:27 NIV—Don't let the world make you impure
- Certainly those who came to try to explain away his trials exposed Job to erroneous theology. They said Job's suffering was the result of sin.
- God rebukes this notion: Job 42:7-- The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me *what is* right, as My servant Job *has*."
- However, Eliphaz started well with the principle of God's correction, a thing all of God's children should welcome: Job 5:17-18 NLT-- Consider the joy of those corrected by God! Do not despise the discipline of the Almighty when you sin. For though he wounds, he also bandages. He strikes, but his hands also heal.
- Throughout Scripture we see God entreating us to submit to His purifying work: Jn 15:2 NLT-- He prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more.
- The Greek word for pruning can be translated "to cleanse." (Strong's G2508)
- Refining takes what is already valuable and improves its strength and purity: 1 Pt 1:7 MSG-- Pure gold put in the fire comes out of it *proved* pure; genuine faith put through this suffering comes out *proved* genuine. When Jesus wraps this all up, it's your faith, not your gold, that God will have on display as evidence of his victory.
- "Why?" Job asks this question 25 times but God never answers it. The Almighty then asks over 50 questions of Job that were way beyond his comprehension.
- Job responds to these humbling questions in repentance and submission: Job 42:3 NLT-- You asked, 'Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorance?' It is I—and I was talking about things I knew nothing about things far too wonderful for me
- "Wonderful" in the Hebrew is the word *pala*: great, difficult, too hard, hidden, things too high, marvelous, miracles (Strong's H6381)
- Job finally got it! He bows before our sovereign Lord, in the realization that He is marvelous, awe-inspiring, and worthy of our worship. All He does is glorious.

- The testimony of Job's life, despite his complaining and questioning toward God, is one of patience and perseverance: Jm 5:11-- You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.
- When the heat of purification comes, let's respond in a way that gives us a powerful testimony, too: Jer 15:19 AMP-- If you repent [and give up this mistaken attitude of despair and self-pity], then I will restore you [to a state of inner peace] So that you may stand before Me [as My obedient representative]; And if you separate the precious from the worthless [examining yourself and cleansing your heart from unwarranted doubt concerning My faithfulness], You will become My spokesman.
- Ps 18:25-31 NLT-- To the faithful you show yourself faithful; to those with integrity you show integrity. ²⁶To the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd. ²⁷You rescue the humble, but you humiliate the proud. ²⁸You light a lamp for me. The Lord, my God, lights up my darkness. ²⁹In your strength I can crush an army; with my God I can scale any wall. ³⁰God's way is perfect. All the Lord's promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to him for protection. ³¹For who is God except the Lord? Who but our God is a solid rock?

Insights:

II. CONTINUE TO PRACTICE

- Call upon the names of God in the midst of your Wilderness. Ask Him this powerful question again and again: “*Who do You want to be for me in this place?*”
- Use “Tools & Techniques: Elevation and Articulation” (I Feel But God Says) to help you hold the truth of what God has said higher than your thoughts and emotions.
- Set aside some time for listening to God. He will feed and fuel you with His Word. Use these suggested steps to help you get started:
 1. Pray for God to open the eyes of your heart to see and know Him.
 2. Pour out your heart to Him verbally or in your journal.
 3. Go to Scriptures that are relevant to your issue (use a concordance, topical Bible, or a search engine such as Bible Gateway).
 4. Write down the verses that speak to you most. Pray them back to God.
 5. Listen for His response, as you are silent before Him.
 6. Keep a written record of your dialogue and be sure to review it often.
 7. Use the handout “Tools & Techniques: Listening to God” for practical help and Scriptural support. Contact your leader if you have questions.
- Our mindsets can keep us in The Wilderness. Allow the Holy Spirit to identify ungodly beliefs and how they got started through Listening Prayer:
 - Get in touch with your predominant emotions. Write them down and feel the feelings.
 - Ask the Lord to show you an event or environment where these feelings got started. It could be something in your recent or distant past. Write it down.
 - What is the message you came to believe? Usually the first thing that springs to mind is your “truth” even though you may know better. Record that thought.
 - Ask the Lord: What’s the truth about this? Write down the thoughts that come to mind.
 - Be sure to check that this truth is consistent with the character of God and His Word. If you need help with this, reach out to your leader or other trusted spiritual advisor.
- Remember and practice the different ways we’ve learned to lean on God:
 - Make His character attributes (such as love and faithfulness) your foundation.
 - Let Him use the pain and pressure of The Wilderness to mold your character.
 - As you wait on God, embrace the call and the promises you’ve received in the past.
 - Make it a habit to ask the Lord: “Is there anyone I need to forgive?”
 - Receive every circumstance with childlike faith and thanksgiving to our Sovereign Lord
- Learn to recognize your Wilderness and its beneficial purposes. Be on the alert for any seeds of pride that begin to spring up.
- Practice Wilderness Worship to grow in intimacy with God during this season using Supplication, Silence, Song, and Surrender.
- Our challenge on this journey through The Wilderness is keep our eyes off of our circumstances and to stay focused on our Rock, Jesus.
- May we be so transformed 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?*