**[PP slide 1: Title]**

[Leader:  **“**Please join me now in prayer”

Dear Heavenly Father, “May the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in Your sight, our Rock and our Redeemer.” In Jesus name, amen.]

**Introduction**

Review:

In our first session, I described a strategy called **No Hold** which is rooted in, and inspired by, Jesus’ statement in John 14.

**[PP slide 2: John 14:30-31]**

We noted that there seems to be a dynamic relationship between reducing influence and growing influence between the two “kingdoms”.

**[PP Slide 3: Inverse/build graphic]**

We next identified some tactics that the devil uses to produce **places of access and ownership** in our lives.

**[PP slide 4: Ephesians 4:25-28]**

In relation to that understanding, we emphasized the role of the **Holy Spirit** in this dynamic process.

**[PP slide 5: Eph 5:17-18]**

In session **2**, we talked about strategic structure – end point, pathways, and tactics.

We recognized our Biblical end point as full spiritual maturity,

**[PP slide 6: – Eph 4:11-13]**

and discussed a Biblical pathway called “standing firm”.

**[PP slide 7: – Eph 6:13]**

We then looked forward at several families of **tactics** connected to the **No Hold** strategy.

**[PP Slide 8: Outline]**



[Leader: Explain outline: These tactical families include: Forgiveness, Personal History, and Mind Renovation. Forgiveness and Personal History focus our attention on past events into present; then Mind Renovation is oriented to the present into the future. In our last session, we will return to the **No Hold** strategy to investigate its end point in more detail.]

In session **3** we moved forward to focus on the **tactics** of forgiveness connected to the **No Hold** strategy.

We recognized that Jesus’ **criminal justice system** is the context into which the tactics of forgiveness fit.

The next important concept we described in the context of forgiveness, was **sin** (lawlessness/criminal behavior).

The final concept we described in the context of forgiveness was the activity of Satan as the **accuser** of the Christian believers.

We then noted how forgiveness is defined:

**[PP Slide 9: Definition]**

**aphiemi** (NT:863), primarily, **"to send forth, send away"** [regarding] ‎(b) sins…

1. ‎**firstly signifies the remission [dismissal] of the punishment due to sinful conduct…**
2. **‎secondly, it involves the complete removal of the cause of offense**

[Leader: read definition aloud starting with “firstly”.]

[Leader: Remind your participants - NT or OT stands for New or Old Testament. The number is the word number in Strong’s Greek/Hebrew Definitions, and the definition is also from Strong’s reference work.]

We emphasized that a court’s sole purpose is to establish guilt or innocence and dispense justice. Mercy and forgiveness are processes that could be termed **“out of court settlements”**. They are related to the maintenance of social order, but provide alternative processes to actual court action.

We also defined a family of forgiveness tactics included in the No Hold strategy:

**[PP Slide 10: Tactics]**

1. Receiving forgiveness from God
2. Receiving forgiveness from others
3. Granting forgiveness to others

[Leader: read tactics aloud]

In session **4** we investigated **two** of these forgiveness tactics;

* receiving forgiveness from God, and
* receiving forgiveness from others;

**and practiced them**.

We also noted a way of interpreting the definition of forgiveness:

**[PP Slide 11: Interpretation]**

1. **To forgive – a sense of laying aside; getting rid of something; letting something go; sending something away.** 
   1. **Opposite of holding onto; keeping something close; grasping onto something**
2. **If it’s laid aside, it’s gone.**

In session **5** we investigated and practiced the third forgiveness tactic, which is granting forgiveness to other people. We also recognized a **warning** that Jesus gave regarding forgiveness: if we forgive, we will be forgiven; if we don’t forgive, we will not be forgiven.

In session **6** we interacted with a set of No Hold tactics oriented toward our personal history. This tactic set is referred to as a Vine Replacement Tool.

**[PP slide 12: VRT]**

Tactics 1-2 enable you, with God’s help, to take back the places (given over to, and owned by, the devil) that give the vine a rooting place. Tactic 3 cleanses those places formerly owned by the Devil. Tactic 4 fills those places with the righteousness of God. Tactic 5 gives the places once owned by the devil to the Holy Spirit. That way, the devil can’t move back in. Tactics 6 and 7 are a way to benefit the people who have used the places to influence our inner man toward the kingdom of darkness strategy. The hope is that our prayer, as the injured person, will make it easier for one or more of those people to come to follow Jesus just as we have.

In session **7**, we presented some tactics that, if practiced, could help a person walk free of anxiety. We looked at Paul’s counsel found in Philippians 4,

**[PP slide 13: Phil 4:4-7]**

and found three alternatives to walk in instead of being anxious.

**[PP slide 14: Alternatives]**

1. Rejoice always (heavily emphasized)
2. Pray saturated with thanksgiving
3. Choose to walk in the peace and understanding that comes from God

We then identified two tactics to use in order to free ourselves from anxiety.

**[PP slide 15: Tactics]**

Anxiety Tactics

1. Use the VRT to remove the vine(s) of worry/anxiety.
2. Keep the worry vine from growing again:
   1. It’s a matter of choosing [changing your mind] to trust God, and continuing to walk out that decision in your immediate situations.

**Body**

In this session we will investigate the fear of death. The Bible calls this type of fear “slavery”. This is a type of slavery that is almost universal and lifelong for most people.

Fear is a mind-set – a way of emotionally thinking about an event. It is an activity of our inner man. The way a person thinks will be expressed in outward behavior. In other words, when we are afraid we will usually act afraid.

In order to start thinking about the fear of death;

**(Group discussion 1: Question)**  - 5-8 minutes

As a full class, interact with the following questions by calling out one sentence.

**[PP Slide 16: Question]**

**In what ways could the mind-set of fear be a beneficial motivation?**

[**DRF note**: maybe when it helps a person to recognize and understand their need for salvation.]

[Leader: at the end of about 4 minutes, ask the following question]

Fear also has another side. Let’s consider it.

**[PP Slide 17: Question]**

**In what ways could the mind-set of fear be a destructive motivation?**

[Leader: read the question aloud]

[**DRF note**: maybe when it ties a person into slavery.]

The fear [terror] of death is probably the well-spring of all fear. It also produces a mind-set of slavery.

Here is how the Bible talks about fear [terror] from the point of view of a **nonbeliever**:

This first passage comes out of the account of Jesus casting out a legion of demons. It describes how the regular citizens reacted.

**[PP Slide 18: Luke 8:35-37]**

**Luke 8:35-37**

**35** Then people went out to see what had happened, and **they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid [terrified].** **36** And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessedman had been healed. **37 Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear [terror].** ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

This second passage is part of the resurrection account. It describes how the soldiers reacted.

**[PP Slide 19: Matthew 28:2-4]**

**Matthew 28:2-4**

**2** There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow**. 4 The guards were so afraid [terrified] of him that they shook and became like dead men.** ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Here is how the Bible talks about fear [terror] to us **believers**:

**[PP Slide 20: 1 Peter 3:13-14]**

**1 Peter 3:13-14**

**13** Nowwho is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? **14** But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. **Have no fear [terror] of them, nor be troubled [agitated], 15 but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy,** ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

**(Group discussion 2: Question)**  - 5 minutes

Starting with person # 2, please discuss the following question.

**[PP Slide 21: Question]**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **…Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear [terror]…** | **…Have no fear [terror] of them, nor be troubled [agitated], 15 but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy…** |

**What is the difference between these two passages?**

The writer of Hebrews makes a very profound statement about the fear [terror] of death:

**[PP Slide 22: Hebrews 2:14-18]**

**Hebrews 2:14-18**

**14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear [terror] of death were subject to lifelong slavery.** **16** For surely it is not angels that he helps, but hehelps the offspring of Abraham. **17** Therefore he hadto be made like his brothers in every respect,so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priestin the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help [aid/relieve] those who are being tempted [tested].** ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Fear of death [terror] is able to hold either nonbeliever or believer in slavery.

Forcing someone to do something due to the threat of suffering or death is a fundamental process in the kingdom of darkness. In the life of a believer, fear is a vine of wrong thinking (how many times does the Bible admonish us to not fear?)

[**DRF note**: around 50 times.]

Becoming free of this type of slavery requires **first** the removal of the fear. **Secondly**, becoming free might require a person to be willing to suffer or die instead of submitting to one who is pursuing mastery.

1. Choose, with the Lord’s help, to
   * + Believe [walk in] the reality that the devil has been/is being destroyed [rendered useless].
     + Trust that Jesus is able to relieve/help during testing because he has also walked the path of testing. Thank Him for His help in advance.
     + Recognize that testing often is accompanied by suffering, and choose to be OK with that - (he who suffers is done with sin 1Peter 4:1).
       - This kind of choosing also is trusting.

**(Group discussion 3: Question)**  - 10 minutes

Starting with person # 4, please discuss the following question.

**[PP Slide 23: Question]**

**…that through death he (Jesus) might destroy [render useless] the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil…**

**Jesus destroys the devil, but how do we take advantage of what Jesus has done?**

[Leader: read the question aloud]

John speaks directly to this issue in his first letter. We come in to his thinking as he is talking about God’s kind of love.

**[PP Slide 24: 1 john 4:15-18]**

**1 John 4:15-18**

**15** Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides [dwells] in him, and he in God. **16** Sowe have come to know [absolutely] and to believe the love [affection and beneficial generosity] that God has for us.God is love, andwhoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. **17** By thisis love perfected [completed] with us, so thatwe may have confidence [bold assurance] for the Day of Judgment, becauseas he is so also are we in this world. **18 There is no fear [terror] in love [affection and beneficial generosity], but perfect [complete] love casts [throwing a spear] out fear [terror]. For fear has to do with punishment [‎penal infliction/torment], and whoever fears [is terrified] has not been perfected in love.** ESV [Leader: read the passage aloud.]

**(Group discussion 4: Question)**  - 5 minutes

Starting with person # 4, please discuss the following question.

**[PP Slide 25: Question]**

**… whoever abides [dwells] in love abides in God, and God abides in him. 17 By this is love perfected [completed] with us…**

**How is love made perfectly complete in our everyday experience?**

[Leader: read question aloud]

[**DRF note**:

* To “abide [live/dwell] in” implies constant contact over time (different than just visiting).
  + Experiential knowledge of this living arrangement is a strategic component in the process that drives out fear.
* Living [dwelling] now in love from God toward us, and from us toward ourselves and others will, with God’s help, bring love to perfect completion. Perfectly completed love will force out [drive/throw out] fear.]

Regarding this tactic of walking in perfect [complete] love, there is an additional piece of the puzzle to be explored. It has to do with how a believer comes to absolutely know this love. The following passage is a prayer that the apostle Paul prayed for each one of us.

**[PP Slide 26: Eph 3:14-19]**

**Ephesians 3:14-19**

**14** For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, **15** from whomevery familyin heaven and on earth is named, **16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, beingrooted andgrounded [firmly established] in love, **18** may have strength tocomprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length andheight and depth, **19 and to know [absolutely] the love of Christ that surpasses [goes beyond] [academic/experiential] knowledge**, thatyou may be filled with allthe fullness of God. ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Notice that Paul asks God to strengthen us with power [might] in our inner being so that love will be firmly established in us and so that we will absolutely know that love. Also notice that absolute knowledge grows through, and moves past educational and experiential knowledge.

Finally, listen to Paul’s encouragement regarding the involvement of the Holy Spirit regarding the slavery of fear [terror].

**[PP Slide 27: Romans 8:12-17]**

**Romans 8:12-17**

**12** So then, brothers,we are debtors,not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. **13** For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit youput to death the deeds of the body, you will live. **14** For all who areled by the Spirit of God aresonsof God. **15 For you did not receive [take] the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear [terror], but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba [daddy]! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,** **17** and if children, thenheirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Here, then, are some No Hold strategic tactics able to help **a believer** escape slavery through the fear [terror] of death. These tactics require a total change of mind-set [repentance] from our natural way of thinking.

**[PP Slide 28: Tactics]**

Fear of Death Tactics

Tactic 1 – Choose, with the Lord’s help, to change your mind-set [repent].

Tactic 2 – Treat the whole history of a specific fear as a vine, and use your Vine Replacement Tool.

Tactic 3 – Walk in the perfect [complete] love that drives out fear.

Remember this final encouragement from John.

**[PP Slide 29: 1 John 5:14-15]**

**1 John 5:14-15**

**14 And this is the confidence [boldness] that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have [hold] the requests that we have asked of him**. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

**Conclusion**

Our heavenly Father wants us to walk free of slavery resulting from the fear [terror] of death, so He will support every effort on our part that agrees with His revealed will. He will also, if we request it, strengthen our inner man so that we are able to stay free.

The No Hold strategy holds three strategic tactics that together are able to drive out the fear of death.

Tactic 1 – Choose, with the Lord’s help, to change your mind-set [repent].

Tactic 2 – Treat the whole history of a specific fear as a vine, and use your Vine Replacement Tool.

Tactic 3 – Walk in the perfect [complete] love that drives out fear.

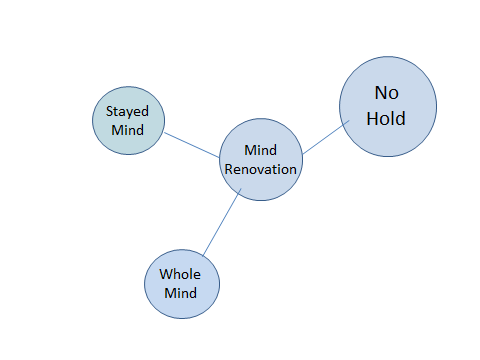
We have learned that love is perfectly completed in us when we habitually live in God and love other people. If we pray Paul’s prayer, we will be strengthened with power in our inner being.

Ongoing relationships and inner man power both contribute to walking in complete love. This love will cast out fear with the strength of throwing a spear.

Thank God that He doesn’t place us back into the slavery of fear.

In our next three sessions we will investigate Mind Renovation issues.

**[PP Slide 30: Mind Renovation Graphic]**



**Please bring your Vine Replacement Tool with you for the rest of our sessions. You will be using it often.**

[Leader: who would be willing to close us in prayer?]