

Contents

Contents.....	1
1 Strategy Description.....	1
2 Strategy Structure	13
3 Forgiveness Context.....	21
4 Forgiveness Receive	28
5 Forgiveness Grant	34
6 History Vine Replacement Tool (VRT)	40
7 History Anxiety	50
8 History Fear	59
9 Mind Renovation Process	68
10 Whole Mind	79
11 Stayed Mind	91
12 Strategy End Point.....	99

1 Strategy Description

[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:

Ok –so let me start by saying...

When will it ever end???

Have you ever said something like that to yourself? It seems that my whole life has been one spiritual challenge after another. There have been several times when I wondered if I was making any progress at all.

Regarding the wider world, I have also come to recognize that the global, political, and religious trends building through the past century are going to continue at least through the rest of my life-span.

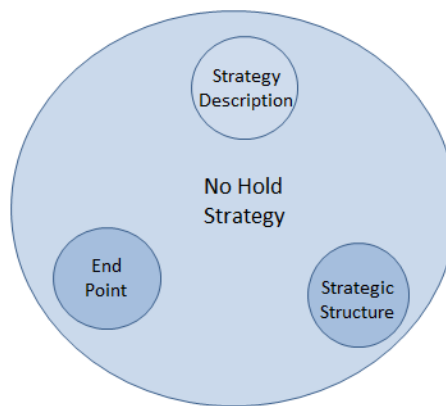
I realized several years ago that I would need to change in significant ways if I was going to be able to stand firm as a Christian. To that end, I have been searching in the Bible for specific, practical, and effective ways to change spiritually.

In this set of class sessions I plan to share some of those discoveries.

Body:

Today I will be describing a strategy for spiritual growth called **No Hold**.

[PP slide 3: Outline]



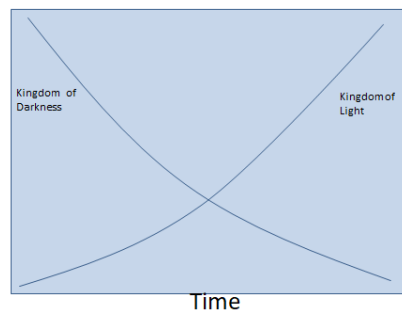
Before we go any further, we need to define the larger political context in which we find ourselves. The Bible describes two kingdoms which have authority in the universe at this time:

1. The kingdom of God (also called the kingdom of light); and
2. The kingdom of the one the bible calls the devil or Satan (also called the kingdom of darkness).

The **No Hold** strategy is generally about how Christians grow up spiritually. It is about minimizing the influence of the kingdom of darkness, and, at the same time, increasing the influence of the Kingdom of light in a believer's life.

To illustrate this idea, take a look at this graph:

[PP slide 4: Inverse graph]



This graph represents a way to illustrate the **NO Hold** strategy. We will return to this graph later, but for now, please recognize that the two kingdoms seem to play off each other in some dynamic way.

At our spiritual birth (represented by the far left point on the time line), most of us are highly influenced by the kingdom of darkness. Then, as we grow spiritually, this kingdom of darkness influence is slowly removed, and kingdom of light influence increases until the weight of influence is switched from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

So, **why No Hold?**

- So that our spiritual battles will be more winning and less losing;
- So that the spiritual injuries that we have already received in our "inner man" are healed up;
- So that we take fewer injuries going forward;
- So that we have fewer casualties in our spiritual family.

The “**why**” also has to do with being transformed, in the process of growing up, into a person who will live forever with the One who treasures us, and, in return, treasuring Him (and each other).

It’s so simple to say – win the war and be healed and transformed in the process!

Beautiful!

So where does the term “**No Hold**” come from you ask?

Well, the **No Hold** strategy is rooted in, and inspired by, a phrase found at the end of the conversation Jesus had with His disciples during the last supper. It is found in John 14.

Let’s look at it together.

[PP slide 5: John 14:30-31]

John 14:30-31

30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. **He has no claim (NIV - hold) on me**, **31** but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Let’s look closely at the phrase that Jesus uses in this passage; but, before we do, we need to understand a convention that we will be using throughout these sessions when a Biblical term is defined. 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.

Having said that, let’s see how the term is defined:

[PP slide 6: Definition]

...He has no claim/hold on me...

NT:3762 ; **oudeis** from NT:3761 and NT:1520; **not even one (man, woman or thing), i.e. none, nobody, nothing:**

[Leader: read the definition aloud starting with the word “not”.]

What does He even *mean*?

(Group discussion 2) - 5 Minutes

Starting with person #1, please discuss the following question:

[PP slide 7: Question]

...He has no claim/hold on me...

What do you think Jesus means when He says “He has no claim/hold on me”?

[Leader: read the question aloud. When the discussion time is up, share the following thoughts]

[**DRF note:** No claim/hold [lit. nothing in me] - no possession; no ability to influence; no access points]

Let’s take a look again at the John 14 passage.

[PP slide 8: John 14:30-31]

John 14:30-31

30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. **He has no claim/hold on me**, 31 but **I do as the Father has commanded me**, so that the world may know that **I love the Father**. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

Jesus says in effect, **No Hold**: **completely empty** of [possessions; influence; access points, leverage, etc.] belonging to the ruler of this world.

Also...

Completely filled with [love/compassion/charity] for the father.

And,

I do.

Amazing!

So, let's talk together about this for a moment.

(Group discussion 3) - 10 Minutes

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

[PP slide 9: Question]

...He has no claim/hold on me...

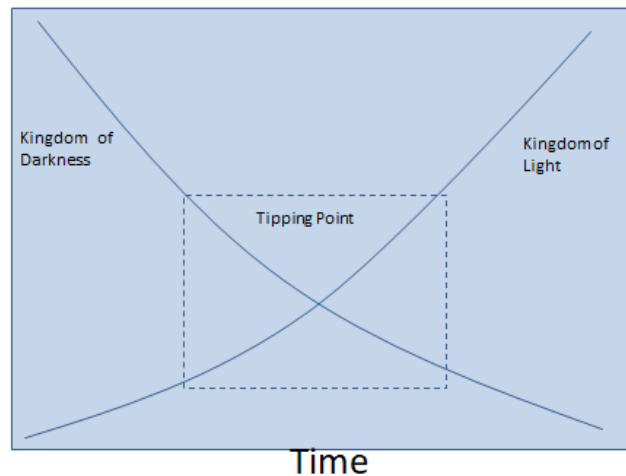
What advantages could we gain if we decrease the “hold” the ruler of this world has on us?

[Leader: read the question aloud. After the end of 5 Minutes, ask Person #2 from each group (one at a time) to please present one comment from their group. If possible, record the comments in a way that all participants are able to view them.]

The **No Hold** strategy of producing spiritual change includes two related positive processes. One side is removing (from our “inner man” landscape) places accessible by the “ruler of this world”; the other side is our “inner man” being brought to full maturity by the Spirit of God.

At this point, let's look again at the graph.

[PP slide 10: Inverse-build graphic]



This process – emptying/filling – is a dynamic process. A believer who follows the No Hold **strategy** eventually may pass a “tipping point”.

[Leader: explain “tipping Point”. Share your own experience, or quote mine.]

[**DRF note:** This is what I mean by the term “tipping point”. During my early years, it seemed that my walk was full of struggle, injury, and loss. Then, somewhere in the middle years, I gradually became aware that God was replacing what was being removed with better things. As I became more aware of this reality, my walk ceased to be “drudgery”, and became an “adventure”.]

At this time, let’s bring in a few other passages from the Bible. I hope in this way to look at some related issues.

[**DRF note:** To consider this in a wider context, it is my personal opinion that the kingdom of darkness is following its own strategy – the end point of which is to force God to treat the devil as an equal (see Ezekiel 28). If I am correct, then all of the ongoing influence from that direction is actually the result of - can I put it this way – “agents” of the devil’s kingdom following strategic pathways and “doing” a set of tactics connected to this strategy.]

Here is an example of what Paul says about places, in a person's inner man, owned by the devil. This instruction comes from his letter to the Ephesians. He's talking about unity and maturity in the church.

[PP slide 11: Ephesians 4:25-32]

Ephesians 4:25-32

25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. **26** "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** and **do not give the devil a foothold [a place to occupy/live]**. **28** He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

In this passage, Paul reveals several activities through which we give the devil a place to occupy/live in our inner lives. This list is not exhaustive. There are many other activities that produce access places. If the devil occupies a place, surely he will influence us from that place. Paul also provides alternate kingdom of light activities that do **not** provide places for the devil to occupy.

[PP slide 12: Table]

...do not give the devil a foothold [a place to occupy/live]...

Kingdom of Darkness Activity	Kingdom of Light Activity
Lying	Speak the truth
Anger	Don't let the sun go down on anger
Stealing	Do honest work
Unwholesome talk	Helpful for building each other up
Grieve the Holy Spirit	Do not
Bitterness	Be kind and compassionate, and forgiving to one another
Rage & Anger	
Brawling	
Slander	
Malice	

From the places the devil owns in a person's inner man (call them **Access points**), he promotes his own interests. It is from these access points that his agents influence a person to continue, and deepen, their involvement in his kingdom. This activity always produces an evil (which the Bible defines as injury, destruction, or waste) result in the process.

(Group discussion 3) - 10 Minutes

Starting with person #3, please discuss this question:

[PP slide 13: Question]

...do not give the devil a foothold [a place to occupy/live]...

Do you think there might be ways to remove the access points which enable the devil's "agents" to apply/do their tactics?

[Leader: read the question aloud. At the end of 5 Minutes, ask Person #3 from each group to please share the ways identified in their group. Record their comments.]

In this line of thinking, consider what Paul says to the Corinthian church. He's talking about God's hidden wisdom.

[PP slide 14: 1 Cor 2:6-8]

1 Corinthians 2:6-8

6 Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. 7 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8 **None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.** ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

[**DRF note:** If I understand this passage correctly, the devil's strategy has already failed partly due to inaccurate intelligence. Tactics are developed from strategy. Since his strategy has already failed, his tactics are probably also vulnerable to be defeated.]

In Ephesians 5, Paul seems to be saying that the removal of kingdom of darkness "hold" makes more room for the Holy Spirit. Or, maybe you could say that the Holy Spirit is able to "crowd out/remove" the influence of the devil.

[PP slide 15: Eph 5:17-21]

Ephesians 5:17-21

17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand [put together] what the will of the Lord is. **18** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but **be [continually] filled [to the brim] with the Spirit**, **19** addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, **20** giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **21** submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

An illustration may be helpful here:

Explain Jug Illustration: Suppose you have a 1 gallon/liter glass jug. Into the jug you place three chicken-egg-sized stones. Then, you fill up the jug completely (to the brim) with water.

(Group discussion 4) - 5 Minutes

As an entire class please answer the following question.

[PP slide 16: Question]

...be [continually] filled [to the brim] with the Spirit...

What are some ways that you could increase the volume of water in the jug?

[Leader: read question aloud. After 5 minutes, give (or agree if the answer is expressed in the discussion). Answer: remove the stones and add more water.]

In the following class sessions, we will learn several biblical activities (tactics) which are able to help us remove the devil (and his kingdom of darkness influence) from occupied places in our lives and replace him with the Holy Spirit and kingdom of light influence.

(Group discussion 5) - 5 Minutes

Starting with person #4, please discuss this question:

[PP slide 17: Question]

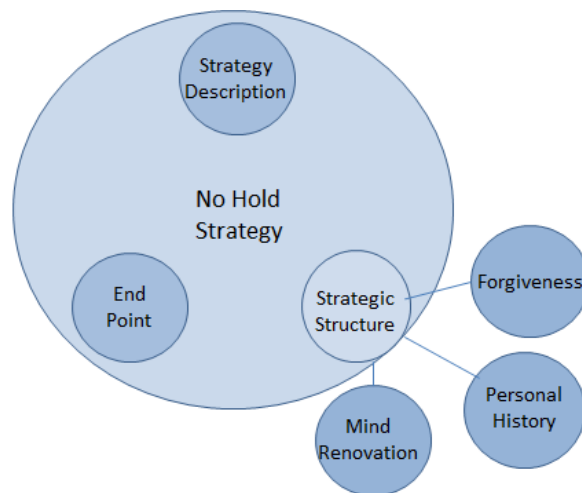
How would a person come to the point of desiring to pursue this No Hold strategy?

[Leader: read the question aloud. At the end of the time limit, move on to the Conclusion]

Conclusion:

Along with “secret wisdom” (accurate intelligence), the bible also contains tactics that are able to reduce the “hold” that the kingdom of darkness has on a Christian. Tactics are actions defined in a strategy.

In this first session we have been describing a strategy called “**No Hold**”.

[PP slide 18: Outline]

In the next session we will interact with the strategic structure: End Point, Pathways, and Tactics. Then, for the next 9 weeks, we will be interacting with several tactical families connected to this strategy. In our last class, we will be looking deeper at the end point, or big focus, of the strategy.

Strategic theory is normally not too threatening. It may often be just...**yawn**... boring.

The doing, though...actually taking some action – and living with the results - now, that’s a completely different matter.

First of all, we have to understand HOW to do an action, and then we need to Practice the action, and then, *maybe*, we might actually CONTINUE to do it. You know, make a habit out of it.

[Personal practice # 1:]

[Leader: pass out the No Hold Worksheet]

In order to get prepared, please complete this exercise before our next session. At the beginning of our next session, you will be given an opportunity to voluntarily share your insights.

[Leader: who will be willing to close our session in prayer?]

No Hold Worksheet

Please read the following passage each day between now and our next session. Before you start reading, please pray and ask God to reveal something to you from the passage. Write down what God reveals to you about the passage. You will have an opportunity to voluntarily share your insights with your small group in our next session.

John 14:30-31

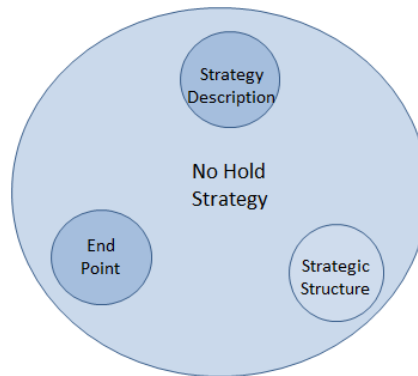
30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. **He has no claim (NIV – hold) on me,** 31 but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. ESV

2 Strategy Structure

[The review has been removed for ease of reading]

Today we will be concentrating on strategic structure.

[PP slide 7: Outline]



To this end, please get into your small groups to discuss what you learned from God this past week (or appropriate time period) as you considered the John 14 passage.

[PP slide 8: John 14:30-31]

John 14:30-31

30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. **He has no claim/hold on me**, 31 but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

[Group Discussion 1:] - 5Minutes

Starting with person #1, please share (**voluntarily**) with your group what you learned this week in your personal exercise.

Body:

In this session we will be concentrating on the **No Hold** strategy's structural elements. The structural elements of a strategy include an End Point, Pathways, and Tactics.

So, let's start with the term "Strategy" – what does that word even mean? Perhaps you have heard it used in certain ways, like War Strategy; or Business Strategy; or maybe Game Strategy.

[PP slide 9: definition]

A strategy is a general plan of action that is built to accomplish the end point in a specific contest.

[Leader: read this and the following definitions aloud]

Strategic plans contain structural elements such as "end points", "pathways", and "tactics".

[PP slide 10: Definition]

The strategic end point describes what will be accomplished.

[PP slide 11: Definition]

Strategic pathways, provide direction and support for tactics

[PP slide 12: definition]

Tactics, are the specific actions that need to be taken in order for a strategy to be successful.

Maybe an illustration would be helpful at this time: Anybody in here ever play football/soccer?

[PP slide 13: Illustration]



Let's consider the game strategy of football/soccer. Winning the game is the **end-point**. A team wins the game by using offensive and defensive **pathways**, or "plays", designed to identify and allow **tactics** regarding ball handling and body positioning to prevent or score goals.

One player may recognize and choose a pathway/play that moves along a sideline, while a different player may take a more center-of-field path. The strategy supports both pathways/plays, which are imbedded in it.

First, what is the end point of the No Hold strategy?

[PP slide 14: End Point]

The end point of the No Hold strategy is to attain full spiritual adulthood.

[Leader: read definition aloud]

This end point is expressed several different ways in the Bible. Paul points to it in Ephesians 4.

[PP slide 15: Eph 4:11-16]

Ephesians 4:11-16

11 And he (Jesus) gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12** to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to mature manhood**, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, **14** so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head**, into Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud.]

Next, “Standing firm”, as Paul uses it in Ephesians, is, in my opinion, an example of a **pathway** in the No Hold strategy.

Let’s look for a moment at what Paul says about standing firm. The context has to do with spiritual warfare. In the battle context of Ephesians 6, **No Hold** is about getting to the place where we can (stand firm [no retreat]; step forward; stand firm; step forward; stand firm) until we reach our end point.

[PP slide 16: Ephesians 6: 10-13]

Ephesians 6:10-13

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. **11** Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to **stand against** the schemes of the devil. **12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness,

against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. **13** Therefore take up the whole armor of **God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.** ESV

[Leader – read passage aloud.]

(Group discussion 2) - 5 Minutes

Starting with person #2, please discuss this question:

[PP slide 17: question]

...and having done all, to stand firm...

What are you presently doing to stand the way Paul talks about it?

[Leader: read the question aloud]

When you think about it, the Bible also uses some other terms to describe similar pathways:

- You're probably familiar with the term "overcoming".
- You've also heard about "running in a race".

Standing, overcoming, and racing are, in my opinion, all just different **pathways** supported by the same **strategic structure**. These pathways are supported by the No Hold strategy, and are imbedded in it. Any of these Biblical pathways will bring a follower to the end point.

Finally, we will focus on No Hold tactics in later class sessions.

Keeping our present focus on Pathways:

(Group discussion 4) - 10 Minutes

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

[PP slide 18: question]

How would you connect Paul's statement:

"...after you have done everything, to stand [firm/no retreat]." (Eph 6:13)

With Jesus' statement:

"... He has no claim/hold [nothing] on me" (John 14:30)?

[Leader: Read the question aloud. At the end of 5 Minutes, ask Person #4 to present one connection discussed in their group. Record the connections.]

To bring this down to a personal level:

(Group discussion 5) - 10 Minutes

Starting with person #1, please discuss the following question:

[PP slide 19: Question]

...He has no claim (hold) on me...

What benefit would there be to you if the devil had "No Hold" on you?

Leader: read the question aloud]

Person #5; please present to the large group one benefit discussed in your small group.

[Leader: Record the benefits.]

[DRF note: how well do you think you could fight, even when you were fully armored and armed, if you had an open wound on your backside, and an enemy soldier was back there sticking a stick in the wound and swirling it around?]

Conclusion:

[**DRF note:** This **No Hold** strategy that I am presenting here has grown out of my own personal struggle learning how to DO what I read in Ephesians 6 about standing firm in battle.]

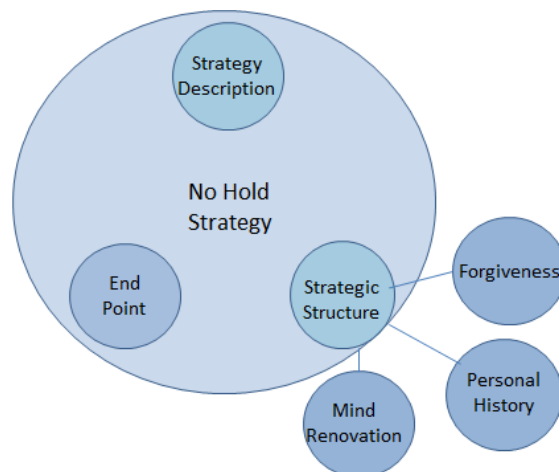
[**DRF Note:** Please remember: **Standing firm** is, in my opinion, just one **pathway** among several options. There are other pathways, or maybe just other ways that the Bible describes the same pathway; for instance, “overcoming”, or “running in the race”, to name a few. Standing firm is just the expression that has caught my attention.]

Again, let me point out: strategic theory is normally not too threatening. It may often be just boring.

The doing, though...actually taking some action – and living with the results - now, that’s a completely different matter.

First of all, we have to understand HOW to do an action, and then we need to Practice the action, and then, *maybe*, we might actually CONTINUE to do it. You know, make a habit out of it.

The rest of our class sessions (except for the final session) will focus on tactics – things to Do.

[PP slide 20: Outline]

[Leader: Explain Outline: In coming sessions, I plan to present three, can I say, **tactical families** which target some of the access points that probably exist in each one of us to some extent or other. These tactical families include: Forgiveness, Personal History, and Mind Renovation. Forgiveness and Personal History tactics focus our attention mostly on past events into the present. Mind Renovation is oriented to the present into the future. In our last class, we will return to the No Hold strategy to investigate its strategic end point in more detail.]

My hope is that we will be able together to consider, and practice, some practical **tactics** available to us Christians that will reduce our exposure to the “ruler of this world” influence and increase God’s influence.

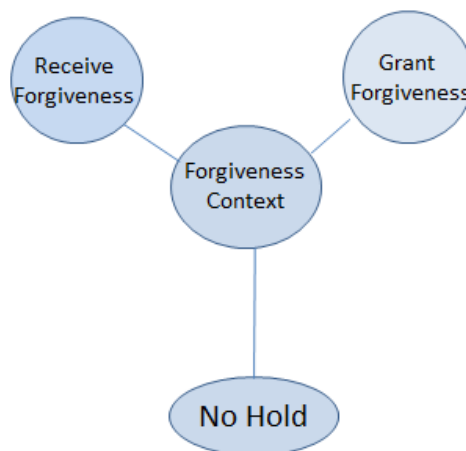
[Leader: Who would be willing to close us in prayer?]

3 Forgiveness Context

Body:

In this session and the next two, I hope to focus our attention on the **tactics of forgiveness**.

[PP Slide 9: Forgiveness graphic]



To start out, let's briefly discuss the following question.

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #2, in 1 minute each, please discuss the following question:

[PP Slide 10: Question]

When you think of forgiveness, what comes to your mind?

[Leader: read question aloud]

A. Government

In order to understand forgiveness; we must fit it into the context of Jesus' government.

First Jesus created His government by and for Himself.

We will let Paul speak to this issue from his letter to the Colossians. The context is his statement about the ***Preeminence of Christ*** in the first chapter.

[PP Slide 11: Colossians 1:15-17]

Colossians 1:15-17

15 He (Jesus) is the image [likeness/copy] of the invisible God, the firstborn [prototype] of all creation. **16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.** **17** And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

[DRF Note: Thrones, etc. refer to governmental structure. The word "Throne" refers both to the chair, and the one who sits on it. Notice that several of these words, separated by "or", refer to aspects of governmental structure.]

Second His government includes a legal system--including His court

[PP Slide 12: Revelation 20:11-12]

The context of this passage is John's vision of the defeat of Satan and the new (renewed) heaven and earth.

Revelation 20:11-12

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. **12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. **And the dead were judged [tried] by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.** ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

[DRF Note:

- Again the reference to “throne”; a description of governmental structure.
- This term - judged - describes a trial process.
 - Trial is another word for a court of law with a presiding judge.]

Third He gave us a summary of the laws of His government (10 Commandments)

[PP Slide 13: Deuteronomy 5:1-5]

Deuteronomy 5:1-5

Moses summoned all Israel and said:

1 And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, **the statutes and the rules that I speak in your hearing today, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them.** **2** The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. **3**

Not with our fathers did the Lord make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today. **4** The Lord spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire, **5** while I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the Lord. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

[DRF Note:

- The word “statutes, and rules” in this context gives a lawful form to the instruction.
- These “statutes and rules” reveal God’s character and His expectation regarding the social lifestyle of His chosen (Israelite) people.]

(Group discussion 3: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #3, please discuss the following question:

[PP Slide 14: Question]

...whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities...

How do you think that, after creating these governmental structures and establishing these laws, God might look after His government?

[Leader: read question aloud]

[**DRF note:** Please notice 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 order, but provide alternative processes to actual court action.]

B. Sin

The next concept important to describe in the context of forgiveness, is sin.

(Group discussion 4: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #4, in 1 minute each, please discuss the following question:

[PP Slide 15: Question]

When you think of sin, what comes to your mind?

[Leader: please read question aloud]

The concept of sin/lawlessness includes three ideas critical to our discussion this morning:

[PP Slide 16: Definition]

It embodies the ideas of:

- **missing the mark moving toward total destruction;**
- **the sinner not able to share in the prize (eternal life);**
- **and God's enforcement processes**
 - **including court-ordered punishment**

[Leader: read the definition aloud]

It is in the context of criminal behavior that the concept of forgiveness exists.

[PP Slide 17: Definition]

Forgiveness:

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 beginning with the word "primarily".]

[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.]

C. Satan:

The third **reality** necessary to recognize is the activity of Satan. You are probably aware that "Satan" is not someone's name. It is a job title that describes a tactical position in a strategic pathway. This position is to be an adversary, one that opposes or resists. In the Biblical context, the one we call "Satan" opposes/resists God's sovereignty

This adversarial activity fills Satan's kingdom, and focuses on God's reign and God's people. His activity in God's government, including the legal system is documented. The following passage summarizes his activity regarding God's people.

[PP Slide 18: Rev 12:10-12]

Rev 12: 10-12

10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, **for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.** **11** And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. **12** Therefore, rejoice O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

[**DRF note:** This statement begs a few questions:

- Where does he lodge these accusations "before our God"?

In my opinion, he formally lodges them in God's heavenly court (and also often in our media - and spreads them through gossip networks.)

- Where does he get his ammunition?

Probably from our sinful actions (you know – when we **do** Satan's tactics).]

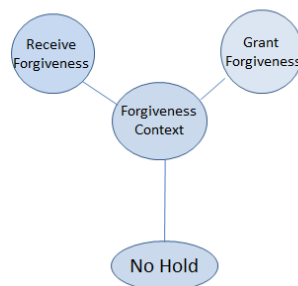
[**DRF note:** In my opinion, forgiveness is not the same as being justified (justice having been served). Justification is court action whereby Jesus takes his suffering and death and places them as full payment for a guilty person's punishments. The court then "acquits" [discharges completely] that person and has no more legal interest in them.

Forgiveness, on the other hand, has to do with people living at peace with one another. This process could be termed an "out of court settlement". It is related to the maintenance of social order, but provides an alternative processes to actual court action. When I speak of "people", I am referring to our relations with God as well as each other.]

Conclusion:

To summarize this session, Forgiveness needs to be understood in the context of God's governmental structure. God's government includes a way to deal with criminality. His court system is set up to establish guilt or innocence and dispense justice. Forgiveness is a part of His legal system that allows for "out of court" settlements.

[PP Slide19: forgiveness Graphic]



In the next two sessions we will focus on, and practice, the **tactics** of receiving and granting forgiveness.

What, you ask, does all this have to do with **No Hold**? Now that's a very good question. I'm glad you asked.

Group discussion 5: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #1, in 1 minute each, please discuss the following question:

[PP Slide20: Question]

Can you think of any ways that forgiveness might reduce the devil's influence in your life?

[Leader: please read question aloud]

"Receiving Forgiveness" involves both seeking forgiveness from another person, and granting forgiveness to another person.

Receiving forgiveness from another person often needs to be pursued with much Godly counsel, quietness, and sensitivity.

Receiving forgiveness involves humbly approaching the other person:

No excuses, rationalizations, blaming, etc.

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

4 Forgiveness Receive

Body:

We ended our last session thinking about a question. **Let's start at this same point today.**

(Group discussion 1: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #1, please discuss the following question:

[PP Slide 11: Question]

Can you think of any ways that forgiveness might reduce the devil's influence in your life?

[Leader: read question aloud]

Remember, forgiveness exists in the reality of our guilt. We have, in some way, participated in doing kingdom of darkness tactics toward another person (or, sometimes, toward our self). In other words, we have committed a crime (or many crimes).

Another way of stating criminality is doing evil.

[DRF Note: The Bible defines evil as injury, destruction, or waste.]

Doing the tactics of forgiveness, we are able to **receive** forgiveness from God and others, and **grant** forgiveness to others (who are also able to receive forgiveness from God).

Let's now move out of the theoretical and make it personal.

Today we will focus our attention on **doing** two of the forgiveness tactics, and processing the results. These tactics are:

1. Receiving forgiveness from God
2. Receiving forgiveness from another person

Ok, let's start out,

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 5 minutes

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

[PP Slide 12: Question]

What has been the result inside of you when you have received forgiveness?

[Leader: read question aloud]

[DRF note: It is my personal opinion that all sin, no matter who perpetrates it, or who is the victim, is ultimately against God and His government, and so will be addressed by Him.

- Our sin penalty is ultimately paid in full (Paul calls this action “being justified”) by Jesus. He takes His suffering and death to God’s court and completely pays off all our punishments with them. The court, then, has no more legal interest in our case, and releases us.
- Forgiveness is different than being justified in the court. Forgiveness is a relational solution that maintains good relations between people (in this case, between each of us and God).

Tactic 1: We confess (freely admit) our sins to God, and receive His forgiveness.

[PP Slide 13: 1 John 1:7-10]**1 John 1:7-10**

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship [partnership] with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses [purifies] us from all sin [lawlessness]. **8** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9 If we confess [freely admit] our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse [purify] us from all unrighteousness.** **10** If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. ESV

[Leader: Read the passage aloud]

(Group discussion 3: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #3, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 14: Question]

How difficult (or easy) has it been for you in the past to seek God's forgiveness?

[Leader: read question aloud]

(Individual practice 1: Seek forgiveness from God) – 5 Minutes

[Leader - instruct class members: For the next 5 minutes please quietly ask God to remind you of something you may need to confess (freely admit) to Him in order to receive His forgiveness. If you are willing, **quietly** confess it/them now and receive His forgiveness.]

Receiving forgiveness from God is a critical step since it maintains a peaceful relationship between Him and us. Receiving and granting forgiveness to other people is also important since it has the same ability to maintain peace between us.

Tactic 2: “We seek forgiveness from others” by confessing a sin we have done against them and asking them to forgive us.

This next passage comes out of James’ final instructions to the churches.

(PP Slide 15: James 5:13-16)

James 5:13-16

13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. **14** Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. **And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to**

one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. ESV

[Leader: Read the passage aloud]

[**DRF Note:** To confess means to freely admit. The word translated here as “sin” means unintentional errors or willful transgressions. A piece of advice: confess personal (private) sins to God alone; **confess privately** to a person (or persons) against whom **you** have sinned; only **confess publically** when you have **publically** sinned.]

(Group discussion 4: Question) - 5 - 10 minutes

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

[PP Slide 16: Question]

What has been the result inside of you when you have received forgiveness from another person? [Leader: Read the question aloud]

(Individual practice 2: Seek forgiveness from someone else) – 5 Minutes

For the next 5 minutes please quietly ask God to remind you of something you may need to confess (freely admit) to another person in order to receive their forgiveness. If you are willing, make an effort this week to accomplish what God has brought to your attention.

[**DRF note:** Please carefully consider how this tactic might be accomplished. Approaching certain people may cause more harm than could be gained. Time, place, and circumstances all need to be taken into consideration. Ask God for good judgment.

Remember, it needs to be something of which the other person is already aware in order to avoid the embarrassing “what are you talking about?”

Also remember some advice: confess personal (private) sins to God alone; **confess privately** to a person (or persons) against whom **you** have sinned; only **confess publically** when you have **publically** sinned.]

We will pursue **Tactic 3**: “We grant forgiveness to others” in our next session.

Conclusion

OK, so now to review:

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

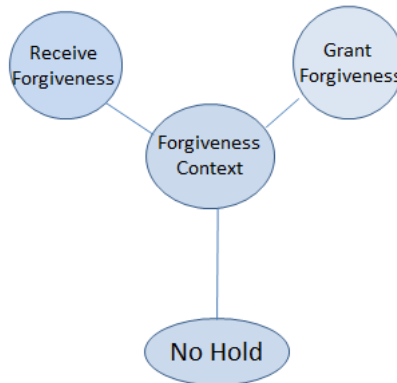
[**DRF note**: I would like to share a few more personal opinions at this point:

- Forgiveness is always a personal choice.
 - It can’t be forced, purchased, or manipulated.
 - It’s one of those few pure choices that a person can make.
- Forgiveness is more of a relational issue than an emotional issue.
 - A person can be angry and still forgive.
 - You can forgive even in the middle of a very active contentious situation.
- Forgiveness is a family of tactics in the general No Hold strategy
 - Able to reduce the hold of the devil’s kingdom, and increase the hold of God’s kingdom on a person’s life.]

In our next session we will interact with some issues surrounding **granting forgiveness**.

[

PP Slide 16: forgiveness graphic]



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

5 Forgiveness Grant

Body:

In today's class we will interact with some issues surrounding the **third** forgiveness tactic, which is granting forgiveness to another person.

To get us thinking about this reality,

(Group discussion 1: Question) - 5 minutes

As a full class, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 12: Question]

If it's laid aside, it's gone. What advantage would "having it gone" be to you?

[Leader: read question aloud]

Before we interact today with the tactic of granting forgiveness, we need to consider the relationship of confession (free admission) and repentance (changing your mind) to forgiveness.

[**DRF note:** In my concordance, the word “forgive” is used, by my count, 32 times in the New Testament; the word “confess” is used 10 times; and the word “repent” is used 27 times.]

The word “confess” is directly connected with “forgive” only twice, and “repent” is never directly connected with “forgive”. Last week we investigated both of the passages that directly connect confession with forgiveness.

[**DRF note:** maybe this research tells us is that forgiveness is not tied tightly to confession. It, of course, is better when confession is connected to forgiving because then peace can be established between the people involved. But neither confession nor repentance seems to be required in order for you to choose to forgive someone else. If it were, then you could be held in perpetual injury by a person who chooses to continue your injury by simply not confessing it.]

With this understanding in mind, let’s investigate the **No Hold strategic tactic** of granting forgiveness to another person.

Tactic 3: We grant forgiveness to others.

[PP Slide 13: Tactic 3]

The circumstances continue to get more complex as we move deeper into the tactics of forgiveness. So let’s try to set up our thinking by discussing the following question:

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 5 minutes

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

[PP Slide 14: Question]

What kinds of difficulties have arisen regarding forgiving other people who have injured you in some way?

How have you solved the difficulties?

[Leader: read question aloud]

This tactic operates in two different mind-set environments:

1. Mind-set 1 - A person who freely admits their evil work against you (whether they are a believer or not)
 - a. In effect, the person apologizes to you
2. Mind-set 2 - A person who does not freely admit their evil work against you
 - a. A brother (fellow believer)
 - b. A non-believer

The mechanics of the first mind-set can be relatively simple – they confess, you forgive (if you are willing to), and peace then is restored between to two of you.

Jesus speaks to the second mind-set in the following ways:

Regarding a brother (relative or fellow believer):

This passage is part of a general teaching section in Matthew. It seems to be a brief side conversation Peter had with Jesus.

[PP Slide 15: Matt 18:21-22]

Matt 18:21-22

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" **22** Jesus said to him, "**I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven...** ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Notice that Jesus doesn't counsel Peter about how to get his brother to "confess" his sin. He just says to forgive.

Regarding a non-believer:

This passage is part of Luke's account of Jesus' crucifixion.

[PP Slide 16: Luke 23:32-34]

Luke 23:32-34

33 And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. **34 And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."** And they cast lots to divide his garments. ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Who was Jesus referring to when He said that "they know not what they do"?

He didn't explain.

It could be any or all, from the Romans, to the Jews, or even the "rulers of this age". None of them really understood what the full results of their actions would be. And, as far as we know, none of them ended up confessing their sin.

(Group discussion 3: Question) - 10 minutes

Starting with person #3, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 17: Question]

...Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."...

What do you think the results would be for the two of you if you chose to forgive a person who didn't confess an evil work done to you?

[Leader: read question aloud]

(Individual practice 1: Grant forgiveness to another person) – 5 Minutes

[Leader: read the following instruction to your class]

For the next 5 minutes please quietly ask God to remind you of something that has been done to you, but not willingly admitted to by another person. At this time, or during the coming week, please seriously consider forgiving the person(s) involved. Continue doing this tactic if God brings other situations to your mind.

Warning:

At this time, we need to look seriously at a warning Jesus gave us about forgiving:

[PP Slide 18: Matthew 6:9-15]

This warning is part of the Lord's Prayer. We say this prayer every once in a while, but maybe don't catch the warning in it.

Matthew 6:9-15

9 Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. ESV

[Leader: read the passage aloud.]

Each of us needs to consider what this teaching of Jesus might imply for our personal situation.

- But - there is a practical solution:
 - Forgive *EVERYTHING/EVERYONE*

Conclusion

[**DRF note:** I would like again to share a few personal opinions at this point:

- It is to my personal advantage to forgive others whether or not they ask for forgiveness.
 - It is beneficial, but not absolutely necessary, for the other person to ask for the forgiveness in order for me to forgive them.
- Forgiving does NOT mean that what the other person did is OK.
 - If what they did was all right, there would be no need to forgive anything.
- Forgiving does not mean that I am required to allow the behavior to continue.
 - It is my personal decision, under God, to resist, or not resist, continued aggression.
 - However, if the aggression continues, I choose to continue forgiving the actions perpetrated against me even as I am, or am not, resisting.

It is not my intent in sharing these personal opinions to stimulate debate, but only to give you a sense of my personal thinking.]

OK, so now to review:

[PP Slide 19: Review]

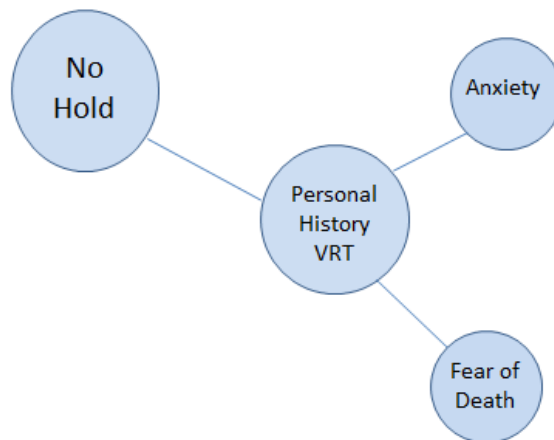
- To forgive – a sense of laying aside; getting rid of something; letting something go; sending something away.
 - Opposite of holding onto; keeping something close; grasping onto something
- Forgiving also removes places in our souls owned by the kingdom of darkness.

- If we then turn that place over to the Holy Spirit – asking Him to live in that place – the devil won't be able to take it back.

You may have already picked up on a final point about the tactics of forgiveness: all of these forgiving processes interact with and support each other.

In our next three sessions we will attempt to deal with some of the **No Hold strategic tactics** targeted at personal history issues.

[PP Slide 19: Personal History Graphic]



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

6 History Vine Replacement Tool (VRT)

Body

In this session, I hope to discuss how we can empty ourselves of those places of access owned by the devil connected to personal history issues, and fill those

places with the Holy Spirit and the love that comes from the Father. The result will be healing, new ways of thinking, maybe some remodeling of our inner man.

Let's first focus on a couple of examples of personal history issues found in the Bible:

A. First example: Results of past actions

○ **Paul's public failure**

[PP Slide 13: Acts 17:32-34; 1Cor 2:1-5]

The Acts passage describes how many people in the city of Athens responded to Paul's best public speaking effort. The Corinthians passage describes Paul's response to the same event.

Acts 17:32-34; 1Corinthians 2:1-5

Acts 17:32 ...Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this."...

1 Corinthians 2:1-5...And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. **2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God...** ESV

[Leader: read passages aloud]

Paul recognized his failure, and experienced a sense of weakness, fear, and much trembling.

(Group discussion 1: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #1, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 14: Question]

...I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling...

Have you ever had that sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach as a result of a public failure?

[Leader: read question aloud]

Maybe you resolved to **never** put yourself into a situation of possible failure **ever** again. And maybe you continue to hold that resolve to this day, and absolutely stay in safe places.

Paul found a different solution. He said:

- “ I decided [resolved] to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified...my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”
- Paul repented (changed his thinking) and made a deliberate choice based upon his personal experience and knowledge of God’s ways.
 - He removed the “kingdom of darkness influence” regarding his failure at persuasive speech,
 - stopped depending upon his own public speaking skill,
 - and set his reliance instead on the power of God to do the persuading.

B. Second example: Present hauntings of bad memories

This passage from Laminations records Jeremiah’s memories of the fall of Jerusalem – infighting, starvation, disease, cannibalism, rape, and pillage.

[PP Slide 15: Laminations 3:18-24]**Laminations 3:18-24**

18 so I say, "My endurance has perished; so has my hope from the Lord."

19 I remember my affliction [depression] and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall!

20 My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down [sunk/humbled] within me.

21 But this I call to mind [recall/remember], and therefore I have hope [wait expectantly]:

22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;

23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness [firm fidelity].

24 "The Lord is my portion [allotment]," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." ESV

- Memories of difficult experiences – either as a perpetrator or as a victim, can produce an endless loop of pain. Memories are able to capture our attention, sometimes locking a person into a prison with no view of escape.
- Like Paul, Jeremiah repented (changed his mind).
 - He finally came to remember/recall the great love/mercies of the Lord.

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 5 minutes

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

[PP Slide 16: Question]

...The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases...

How could our remembering the “steadfast love” of our father help to heal our memories?

[Leader: read question aloud]

(DRF note: my dad’s concentration camp liberation experience:

- He came home from World War2, and asked God to remove his memories of liberating the prison camp.
- He walked with God, and raised his family
- About 40 years later, one of his grandchildren asked him to share his memories as part of a school assignment
- His response was “I asked God to remove those memories, and He has. I am not going to bring them up again.”)

We aren’t told how long it took Paul and Jeremiah, nor are we told the processes they went through to end up in the place that they did. We only know their final mental choices.

The No Hold strategy uses a **model** that contains a set of tactics that are able to move a person from an original mindset to a new mindset.

In order to start thinking about this model, we need to review a passage that we looked at in session 1:

[PP Slide 17: Eph 4:25-28]

Ephesians 4:25-28

25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. **26** “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** and **do not give the devil a foothold [a place to occupy/live]**. **28** He who has been stealing must steal no

longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

[Leader: read passage aloud]

Paul reminds us that certain of our past actions could have provided the devil an access place in our soul. It only makes sense that if he has a way to access us, he will do so to influence us to do his strategic tactics. Remember also that any influence from the kingdom of darkness will only produce an evil result – injury, destruction, or waste.

[Leader: pass out the VRT Worksheet]

With this reminder seriously in mind, please fill out instruction #1 on your worksheet. – 3 Minutes

[PP Slide 18: Instruction]

Think of a past uncomfortable event that continues to come to mind occasionally during your quiet remembering times. Write it down and label it “History A”.

[Leader: read the instruction aloud.]

[**DRF note:** When I think of my “History A”, I think of it as part of a climbing vine. It has both roots and branches. The vine’s roots start at a place occupied by the devil, sometimes even before the remembered place/event. As time goes on, the vine may have attached itself to other places/events of the same type/flavor; and also grown unattached between these events. I call these the “places and traces” of this vine.

This “**vine**” is my mental picture of a process that has been infused with poison; nurtured and maintained by agents of the kingdom of darkness. The historical events themselves are not part of the vine; only the “works” of the devil are part of the vine. The idea is to get rid of the vine, and give the place(s) once occupied

by the devil (giving him access to our souls) to the Holy Spirit and, in the process, get our inner man empty of kingdom of darkness influence, and get healed up.

This model might give us the ability to think about our own personal history in a structured/organized way. It is a model that works for me, but you may need to customize it so that it works for you, since each of our mental “wiring” is a little different from anyone else’s.

My model is a vine. In another setting (thank you all so much for your input), a person chose a string of imperfect pearls as their model. Another chose a stream that had swamps connected to it. Another chose a song with some off-tune notes. Someone may choose a chain. The point is; chose a model that is meaningful to you – that allows you to think about your history in a structured way.]

At this time, please fill out instruction #2 on your worksheet. – 3 Minutes

[PP Slide 19: Instruction]

What model would you prefer to use? Please record your preferred model on your worksheet in a way that will help you remember it.

[Leader: read the instruction aloud.]

Now, please fill out instruction #3 on your worksheet. – 5 Minutes

[PP Slide 20: Instruction]

Consider if you commonly or occasionally respond to events in the same way that you responded to your “History A” event.

[Leader: read the instruction aloud.]

When considering how you might respond to instruction #3, you could think about your response like you “keep going around the same mountain”, or “they keep pushing my button”.

Whatever our model, we need to have some way of working with it. Here is my way. I call it my **“Vine Replacement Tool (VRT)”**.

[Leader: pass out the Vine Replacement Tool, or instruct class members to turn the Worksheet page over]

This tool is a family of No Hold strategic tactics targeted at our past history issues. Each tactic comes directly from the Bible. Anchoring the tactics solidly in the Bible is a **critically important** part of the tool.

[Leader: As your students are reviewing the VRT, make the following explanation.]

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

[Leader: Read each tactic aloud, and make sure each student understands the statements.]

Vine Replacement Tool (VRT)

1. Reclaim the places owned by the Devil. If you haven’t yet done so, confess (freely admit) the sin that gives the vine a place to put in roots. (1 John 1:9 ...If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins)
2. Ask Jesus to totally destroy the vine. (1John 3:8 ... The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil...)
3. Ask Jesus to cleanse/purify the places and traces previously occupied by the destroyed vine. (1 John 1:7 ...the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin...)

4. Ask Jesus to fill the places and traces of the vine with His righteousness.
(Rom 5:17 ... If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ...)
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to extend his dwelling space to include the area that was once filled with the vine, and to write His word there. . (1Cor 6:19 ... your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,...); (Eph 5:18... be [continuingly] filled [to the brim] with the Spirit,...); (Jer 31:33..." I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts")
6. Formally [before your heavenly Father] forgive all the misdeeds by any of the agents of the kingdom of darkness done in order to maintain the vine.
(Matt 6:14...For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you...)
7. Ask your heavenly Father to bring every person involved in the misdeeds into salvation. (John 6:44 [Jesus said] ...No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws [drags] him...)

[Leader: Present these two points while your students are reviewing the tool.]

[DRF note:

- Another important understanding: Be specific – down to the level of a specific vine. I have discovered multiple vines growing through my personal history. I was covered with them at one time. For me, anyway, it's way too confusing to try to chop down a whole jungle all at once. I also don't attempt to recognize all the details of a specific vine. I trust Jesus to deal with the total detail organization/matrix.
- Also, recognize that a vine may become visible more than one time (it may not be destroyed/removed immediately). Keep putting it through your replacement tool each time it becomes visible (a vine could be thick and

tough; Jesus may enjoy removing it slowly in order to develop a more intimate relationship with you while the two of you together get it replaced; it may actually be another vine that just has a similar appearance to the first vine).]

(Individual practice 1: Practice the VRT) – 10 Minutes

For the next 10 minutes, silently

[PP Slide 21: Instruction]

Process the results of your instruction #3 into the Vine Replacement Tool

This tool may or may not work perfectly for you. If it doesn't, develop your own way of accomplishing the same results. My suggestion: use this tool between 7 and 12 times before you make any changes since brain science says that it takes our brains that often to really be able to use a new practice.

Anchoring your own processes in the bible is the most critical foundation of whatever process you find workable.

Conclusion:

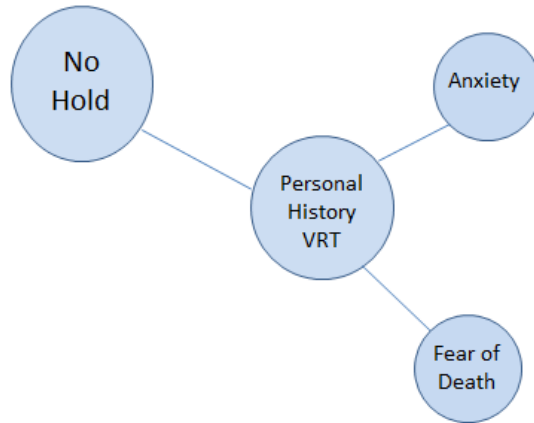
Repentance [changing your mind / turning and walking in a different direction] based on your knowledge of God and His word, is often a **result** of doing the Vine Replacement Tool family of tactics.

Put your "Vine Replacement Tool" into regular practice; asking God to remove the vines from your injured inner man places; and fill those places with the Holy Spirit and a stronger/more vibrant recognition of His:

- never failing affection/mercy, and
- firm fidelity/faithfulness

In our next two sessions we will be interacting with a couple of tactic sets that, if practiced, may be able to help us walk without fear.

[PP Slide 22: Personal History Graphic]



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

7 History Anxiety

Body:

In this session, and next, we will investigate how to deal with one of the most common health challenges of our generation – that of fear. In this session we will deal with anxiety, and in the next we will interact with the fear of death.

[PP Slide 13: Question] - 5 Minutes

To get us thinking about this subject, starting with person #1, please discuss this question.

When you think of anxiety, what comes to your mind?

[Leader: read the question aloud]

Anxiety could be considered a continual state of mind lasting over many years. Terror, on the other hand, is usually associated with an immediate credible threat of serious injury or death.

Anxiety/Worry/Care is defined in the New Testament in the following way:

[PP Slide 14: Definition]

merimna NT:3308; probably connected with merizo; "to draw in different directions, distract," hence signifies "that which causes this, a care, especially an anxious care."

[Leader: read definition aloud starting with the word "to"]

This is the word that the writer of Matthew uses in the following passage where Jesus focuses on this very challenge.

[PP Slide 15: Matt 6:25-34]

Matt 6:25-34

25 "Therefore I tell you, **do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?** **26** Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, **29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **32** For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. **33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to

you. **34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. ESV**

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

This is a very familiar passage. We all probably have it memorized. But we should probe our interaction with it.

[PP Slide 16: Question] – 10 Minutes

Starting with person 2, please discuss the following question:

...Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow...

What do you think is the reason that we so commonly disregard Jesus' urging?

[Leader: Read the question aloud. Record a few reasons at the end of 5 minutes]

Let's now look at another New Testament passage. This one is from Paul. It's found in his letter to the Philippians. It is part of his general encouragements to them.

[PP Slide 17: Phil 4:4-7]

Phil 4:4-7

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. **5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; **6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ESV**

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

Let's decode this a little bit, starting with verse 7.

First, the Greek word for "peace" is defined as:

[PP Slide 18: Definition]

eirene NT:1515; probably from a primary verb eiro (to join); **peace (literally or figuratively); by implication, prosperity:**

[Leader: read definition aloud starting with the word “peace”]

Next, the word “surpasses” is defined as:

[PP Slide 19: Definition]

huperecho NT:5242; from NT:5228 and NT:2192; **to hold oneself above, i.e. (figuratively) to excel; or superior, superiority:**

[Leader: Read definition aloud starting with the word “to”]

So, maybe the phrase could be read “the peace of God that is superior to”.

The object of the phrase is the word “understanding”. We need now to look to another Biblical passage to capture Paul’s meaning.

[PP Slide 20: Prov 2: 6-8]

Prov 2: 6-8

6 For the Lord gives wisdom;

from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;

he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

8 guarding the paths of justice

and watching over the way of his saints. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

Here is the definition of the word “guarding”:

[PP Slide 21: Definition]

shamar OT:8104; properly, to hedge about (as with thorns), i.e. guard; generally, to protect, attend to, etc.:

[Leader: Read definition aloud starting with the word “properly”]

So, maybe a fair understanding of what Paul is saying might be something like: “the peace of God that is superior to understanding (which also is a thorny hedge or guard)”.

Or maybe, “God guards His people with understanding (as a thorny hedge), but also with a superior guard which is His peace”.

We need to look at one more term to capture Paul’s complete thought. That term is the “guard” that the peace of God provides, which is superior to understanding.

[PP Slide 22: Definition]

phroureo NT:5432 ; from a compound of NT:4253 and NT:3708; to be a watcher in advance, i.e. to mount guard as a sentinel (post spies at gates); figuratively, to hem in, protect:

[Leader: Read definition aloud starting with the word ‘to’]

Whew! Well, we’re almost there. Bear with me for another moment, and we will have unpacked Paul’s message.

Maybe we could paraphrase this passage like:

[PP Slide 23: Paraphrase]

Phil 4:7

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses [is superior to] all understanding [which is a thorny hedge of protection], will guard [which is like a military guard at a town gate] your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ESV

[Leader: Read paraphrase aloud]

[**DRF note:** So here is my take: we have two layers of security around our hearts and minds. One is sort of passive (a thorny hedge); the other is very active (military).]

[PP Slide 24: Question] -- 5 Minutes

Let's take a deep breath now. Starting with person 3, please interact with the following question:

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses [is superior to] all understanding [which is a thorny hedge of protection], will guard [which is like a military guard at a town gate] your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

How does Paul's statement help an anxious person to forsake their anxiety?

[Leader: Read question aloud]

To get the rest of Paul's message, we need to backtrack a little bit.

(PP Slide 25: Phil 4: 4-7)

Phil 4:4-7

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. **5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; **6** do not be anxious about anything, but **in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ESV**

[Leader: read passage aloud]

Paul gives three alternatives to anxiety in this passage:

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

So now let's see if we can tie all this together.

[PP Slide 26: Question] -- 5 Minutes

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

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

What condition/mind-set, in your opinion, supports/enables all three of these alternatives?

[Leader: read the question aloud]

[DRF note: The condition, in my opinion, is a mind-set of actually TRUSTING God. Trusting God, for me, always seems to be a matter of choosing to trust in an immediate situation – an act of my will.]

Notice what **Peter** says about repentance, which is defined as changing your mind:

[PP Slide 27: 2 Pet 3:9]**2 Pet 3:9**

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. **He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish [utter destruction], but everyone to come to repentance [think differently, reconsider].** ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

OK, now it's time to talk **tactics**.

[DRF note: To start, we need to understand something about fear. Fear, in my opinion, is not, in itself, a legal issue; *but*, actions done out of a mind-set of fear can certainly produce legal complications. For instance; stealing bread because you are anxious about what you will eat is still thievery, and could produce legal complications for the thief.

We also need to understand that a habit of being anxious – an ongoing, daily walking in anxiety, can be identified as a vine. So, removing the vine could go a long way in changing a mind-set habit. This result happens because the weight of “kingdom of darkness” influence that has accumulated over (possibly) years is now removed, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in those places once occupied by the devil is now bringing different influences.]

So we have two tactics regarding worry:

[PP Slide 28, Tactics]

1. Use the VRT to remove the vine(s) of worry/anxiety.
 - a. **(individual practice 1)** --5 Minutes
 - i. Remove a vine of worry – for the next 5 minutes, quietly ask God to reveal to you a vine of anxiety (if one exists).
 - ii. If a vine exists, remove it with your VRT.
2. Keep the worry vine from growing again:

- a. It's a matter of choosing [changing your mind] to trust God, and continuing to walk out that decision in your immediate situations.
[Leader: instruct your students to get out their VRT]

[Reader: see Vine Replacement Tool in session 6]

Here is a final encouragement from John.

[PP Slide 30: 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:

The Bible counsels us around 50 times to stop, or not start, or keep from fear/worry/anxiety.

And Paul gives three alternatives to anxiety:

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

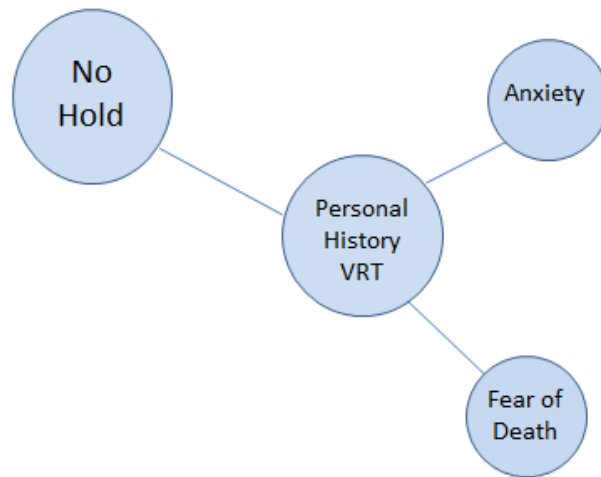
Also, the Bible plainly says that we need to, and are able to (with God's help), change our minds.

The only question left to answer is: Are we *willing* to change our minds? The tactics will only be effective if we **do** them.

[Leader: instruct your students to bring their VRT with them for each of the remaining sessions. They will be using them often.]

In our next session, we will be establishing tactics which may be able, for whoever chooses to do them, to help us walk free of the fear of death.

[PP Slide 31: Personal History Graphic]



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

8 History Fear

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-possessed man 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 Now who 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]

<p>...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]...</p>	<p>...Have no fear [terror] of them, nor be troubled [agitated], 15 but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy...</p>
---	--

What is the difference between these two passages?

[Leader: Read the question aloud]

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 he helps the offspring of Abraham. **17** Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in 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** So we have come to know [absolutely] and to believe the love [affection and beneficial generosity] that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. **17** By this is love perfected [completed] with us, so that we may have confidence [bold assurance] for the Day of Judgment, because as 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 whom every family in 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, being rooted and grounded [firmly established] in love, **18** may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, **19 and to know [absolutely] the love of Christ that surpasses [goes beyond] [academic/experiential] knowledge**, that you may be filled with all the 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 you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. **14** For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of 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, then heirs—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.

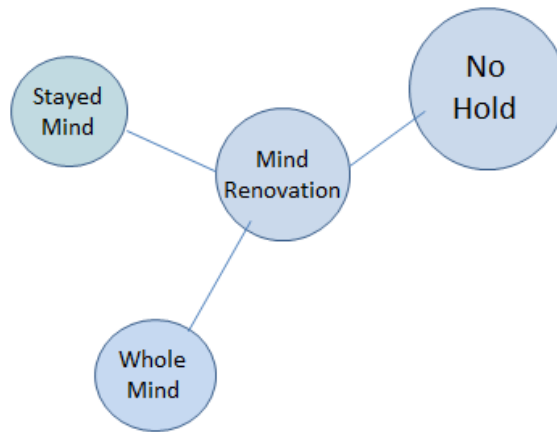
Tactic 3 – Walk in the perfect [complete] love that drives out fear.

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?]

9 Mind Renovation Process**Body**

We will start this session by viewing the No Hold strategy from a different point of view. Up to now we have been interacting with it from a tactical point of view – from the “boots on the ground” perspective. In this session we will also be viewing the strategy from a bird’s eye view. The Bible calls this point of view **“renovation of your mind”**.

The Bible word translated renovation means:

[PP Slide 17: Definition]

anakainosis NT:342 ; from NT:341; **renovation**:

renovation: "To make new" - not recent but different (not different in kind, but from what existed in the recent past). – Webster's Dictionary

[Leader: read definition aloud starting with the word "renovation".]

Renovation happens when a person chooses to take some kind of organized action to make an old thing new (for example, renovating a building). It is an **organized process** that takes place over time.

[**DRF note:** God's renovation process starts inside a person – in our "Inner person", or "soul" - when we first believe. Then it is worked out in action according to God's own plan.]

Here's how Jesus talks about it.

[PP Slide 18: Matt 12: 34-35]

Matt 12: 34-35

34 ...For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

So let's see how God's renovation process is revealed in the Bible.

Let's first look at God's desire for the people He has made:

[PP Slide 19: 2 Peter 3:9]**2 Peter 3:9**

9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but **is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish [be utterly destroyed], but that all should reach repentance [change of mind-set].** ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

This statement reveals God's plan built around the renovation of our minds. It also reveals His heart's desire for the plan – the reason He developed this organized, ongoing process.

This ongoing process starts before a person makes a decision to receive and follow Jesus.

[PP Slide 20: John 6:44-45]**John 6:44-45**

44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws [drags] him. And I will raise him up on the last day. **45** It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' **Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me** ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

In this next passage Jesus reveals God's "starting point". Jesus is teaching his disciples about His return to the Father.

(PP Slide 21: John 16:7-8)**John 16:7-8**

7 ...for if I do not go away, the Helper (Holy Spirit) will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict

[rebuke/convince] the world concerning sin and righteousness [justice] and judgment [court action]: ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

The next step would be when a person finally comes to the place where they become ready to change their mind [repent]. This is the window of salvation.

[PP Slide 22: Romans 6:23]

Rom 6:23

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

God's renovation process isn't finished at the time of salvation. His continues it without interruption.

Here is where we will begin to interact with His process today.

[PP Slide 23: 2 Cor 4:16-18]

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

16 So we do not lose heart. **Though our outer nature is wasting away [ruin/decay], our inner nature is being renewed [renovated] day by day.** **17** For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, **18** as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

(Group discussion 1: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #1, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 24: Question]

...our inner nature is being renewed [renovated] day by day...

What is one way that you notice God's renovation process presently working in your life?

[Leader: read question aloud]

Let's, for a moment, look at the **end point** of God's renovation process. Hint: it's the same end point seen by the No Hold strategy. We will be investigating this end point in more detail in our last session, but take a look at what Paul says in this next passage:

[PP Slide 25: Col 3:5-10]

Col 3:5-10

5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. **6** On account of these the wrath of God is coming. **7** In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. **8** But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. **9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off [wholly divested] the old self with its practices 10 and have put on [sunk into] the new self, which is being renewed [renovated] in knowledge [full discernment] after the image [likeness/resemblance] of its creator.** ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

As believers, we have already, with God's help, taken off our old self and put on our new self. That was accomplished in the portion of God's renovation plan related to our salvation experience. That much of repentance [changing our mind-set] has been completed. Getting rid of all the old habits of thought that

still are part of our experience will require us to continue the process of **changing or minds**. We need to continue walking in God's renovation process.

At this point, we will come back to the tactical point of view. Tactics speak to what **we do** to cooperate with God in this renovation process.

[**DRF note:** One word of caution:

Let me emphasize, and emphasize again, with the **strongest possible intensity**, that **God is actively involved in this process**. I am **NOT** advocating, in **ANY WAY** self-developed mind expansion/control efforts. ALL SUCH EFFORTS ARE USELESS, WORTHLESS.]

With that said,

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 5 minutes

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

[PP Slide 26: Question]

...Put to death therefore what is earthly in you...

What would a believer have to do in order to kill old habits?

[Leader: Read question aloud, and continue the discussion discussing this follow-up question:]

[PP Slide 27: Question] - 5 minutes

...put on [sunk into] the new self, which is being renewed [renovated] in knowledge [full discernment] after the image [likeness/resemblance] of its creator...

How would a believer be renewed (renovated) in knowledge?

[Leader: read question aloud]

[**DRF note:** God will be involved in bringing us to the point of change, and will help us do the things (tactics) that need to be done. Within that understanding, Use your Vine Replacement Tool. Treat each habit as a separate vine].

To bring these concepts into the **No Hold** orientation:

- The tactics of the Vine Replacement Tool, **when practiced**,
 - Are able to remove influence from agents of the kingdom of darkness because the places that they once occupied in our “inner man” due to our past sinful behavior have been reclaimed and turned over to the Holy Spirit.
- The other tactics of Forgiveness, Past History, and Mind Renovation, **when practiced**,
 - Are able to prevent much ongoing kingdom of darkness influence by choosing to change our natural mind-set with the Holy Spirit’s help.
 - Are able to increase the kingdom of Light influence making future mind renovation more likely.

It’s now time to look at Romans 12.

[PP Slide 28: Romans 12:1-2]

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. **2 Do not be conformed [fashion alike] to this world, but be transformed [metamorphose] by the renewal [renovating] of your mind**, that by testing [examination] you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

(Group discussion 3: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #3, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 29: Question]

...Do not be conformed [fashion alike] to this world...

How does “not conforming” contribute to the renewing of your mind?

[Leader: read question aloud]

- Do not conform – a starting point for change.
- Provides a “structural framework” for renewal

Please note that transformation through the process of mind renovation is a process that happens over time. The renovating of our minds produces gradual behavior transformation. The time frame could be different for each individual.

Note also that testing [examination] appropriately starts as soon as the renovation process starts.

“Testing” [examining] with your renovating mind is the Bible process that, over time, produces discernment [thorough separation] regarding the **value** of the will of God

[**DRF note:** In the early stages it is easy to misunderstand the results of our examination since our minds still hold old ways of thinking. Expect, in the early years, to go through periods of frustration lamenting something like “I tried it and it didn’t work”. Our God is able to clear up the misunderstandings as time goes on.]

(Group discussion 4: Question) - 5-10 minutes

As a full class, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 30: Question]

...by testing [examination] you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect...

How would a person go about “testing” the will of God?

[Leader: read question aloud and record class contributions]

- Careful experimentation (scientific method)
- Comparison (recognize the similarities and differences)
- Validation (how something works in experiences)

At this time we will interact with the No Hold strategic tactics focused on the renovation of our minds.

[Leader: pass out the “Renovation of Our Mind” tactics sheet]

[PP Slide 31: Renovation Tactics]

[Leader: read tactics aloud and insure that each student understands the meaning of the words]

Renovation of our Mind tactics:

Tactic 1: use your Vine Replacement Tool and

- Treat each old habit as a separate vine (or set of vines)

Tactic 2: Cooperate with God’s mind renovation process

- Offer your body to God as a living sacrifice (1 Thes 5:23: May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify [set aside for holy use] you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.)
- Effectively resist, with God’s help, the efforts of kingdom of darkness agents to convince/force you to surrender your new mind-set and return to your old slavery. (Eph 6:13: Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.)
- Be transformed through ongoing mind renovation
 - Continue your education! (Col 3:10: the new self, which is being renewed [renovated] in **knowledge** [full discernment] in the image

[likeness/resemblance] of its Creator; 2 Tim 3:16: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.)

- Become continually stuffed full of the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18: Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, [continually] be filled [filled to the brim] with the Spirit.)

[Leader: instruct students to turn over the tactics sheet]

Tactic 3: Test and approve God's will. Test His ways of doing things in the fire of experience. Prove to yourself that His ways really are good, pleasing and perfect.

- Regular Bible study and meditation (reveals God's will)
- Research
 - Biblical (similar phrases; word searches; consistent actions)
 - Comparison (recognizing the similarities and differences)
- Careful experimentation (scientific method)
- Validation (how God's will works in experiences)
 - History (verification of God's ways in the past)
 - Personal journal (reveals renovation changes)
 - Practice No Hold tactics

[Leader: pass out a sheet of blank paper and a writing instrument to each of your students if they didn't happen to bring one with them.]

(Individual practice 1: Ungodly Beliefs study) – 5 Minutes

For the next 5 minutes, silently ask your heavenly Father what beliefs (mind-sets) you may still accept that are not yet renovated. Write down what He reveals to you.

[Leader: at the end of 5 minutes, pass out **Ungodly Beliefs worksheet**]

This **worksheet** has been provided with permission and with our thanks by the Restoring the Foundations ministry.

During this week, please fill out the form “Ungodly beliefs”, and pray through the results. Please bring the form back with you to our next session. We will process them at that time (**the information that you enter will not leave your hands, and will remain strictly confidential to you**).

Remember this final encouragement from John.

[PP Slide 32: 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]

We have demonstrated that our recommended mind renovation tactics are God’s will for us. Please ask...and keep on asking.

Conclusion

Each of us is in a different stage of renovation, and has different personalities and histories. So God might have a “custom made” renovation plan for each of us.

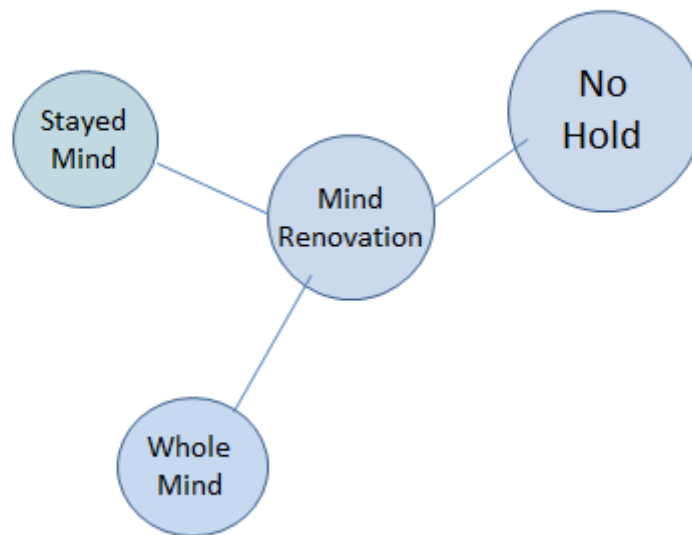
The mind renovation tactics work with the other No Hold tactics to reduce kingdom of darkness influence and increase kingdom of light influence.

Please keep in mind that the mind renovation process takes time – please don’t get discouraged.

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

We will investigate what the Bible says about a single [whole] mind in our next session.

[PP Slide 33: Mind Renovation Graphic]



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

10 Whole Mind

Body:

(Individual practice 1: Ungodly Beliefs study) Follow-up to Ungodly Beliefs worksheet: - 5 Minutes

Did you bring your completed Ungodly Beliefs worksheets with you?

[Leader: pass out UGB Teaching Aids to students who have worked through their copy of the ungodly Beliefs worksheet.]

We will not be reviewing your Ungodly Belief worksheets in class. Instead, here is the UGB Teaching Aid. This week please prayerfully work through the Teaching Aid that accompanies your Ungodly Beliefs worksheet. If you have any questions, please share them privately in our next session.

This week I hope to focus our attention on becoming single, or whole minded.

Having said that let me emphasize, and emphasize again, with the strongest possible force, that God is actively involved in this process. I am **NOT** advocating, in **ANY WAY** self-developed mind expansion/control efforts. ALL SUCH EFFORTS ARE USELESS, WORTHLESS.

Before going any further, a couple of definitions will be helpful. In the definitions, “OT” or “NT” means Old or New Testament. The number is a reference number from Strong’s Greek/Hebrew Definitions.

Both Old and New Testaments use the following two words: “heart” and “mind”. Quite a bit of confusion swirls around these two words, so we will find out how Strong’s dictionary defines them.

The Old Testament, written in the ancient Hebrew language, uses the same word for both “heart” and “mind”.

PP slide 19: Definition]

leb (OT:3820), "heart; mind; midst... Can be used of the man himself or his personality: Can be used of the inner man, contrasted to the outer man: The seat of desire, inclination, or will: is regarded as the seat of emotions: Could be regarded as the seat of knowledge... Memory is the activity of the "heart": May be the seat of conscience and moral character.

[Leader: read the definition aloud]

The New Testament, written in the ancient Greek language, uses two different words for “heart” and “mind”, but both are defined much like the other.

[PP slide 20: Definition]

kardia (<u>NT:2588</u>), " the heart " By an easy transition the word came to stand for man's entire mental and moral activity, both the rational and the emotional elements.	nous (<u>NT:3563</u>), " mind " ...the seat of reflective consciousness, comprising the faculties of perception and understanding, and those of feeling, judging and determining.
--	--

[Leader: read the definitions aloud]

[**DRF note:** The word translated “Heart” and “Mind” is the same Hebrew word in the OT; and two close Greek synonyms in the NT when they are used in relation to our “inner man”. They each refer to both mental and emotional processes, and often seem to be used interchangeably.]

Another word critical to our understanding in this session is “all”, or “whole”.

Both Hebrew and Greek use a single word that can be translated either “all” or “whole”.

[PP slide 21: Definition]

kol (OT:3605); from (OT:3634); **properly, the whole; hence, all...**

holos (NT:3650); for which **see ALL, and ALTOGETHER, signifies "whole,"...**

[Leader: read the definitions aloud]

OK – so let’s start.

(Group discussion 1: Question) - 5 minutes

As a “**whole**” class, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 22: Question]**How would you describe singleness of mind?**

(Leader: record audience suggestions)

The Bible uses the term “all/whole” instead of “single” mind, but it **does use** the phrase “double minded”. This passage out of James shows how it is used:

[PP Slide 23: James 1:5-8]**James 1:5-8**

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. **6** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting [opposing/hesitating/wavering], for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded [vacillating] man, unstable [inconsistent] in all his ways.** ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

Double minded – bouncing back and forth between – blown and tossed by outside influences. Wavering; Unpredictable – who or what is such a person going to believe next?

So let's consider this passage for a moment:

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 5 minutes

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

[PP Slide 24: Question]

...he is a double-minded [vacillating] man...

What do you think causes a “double minded” condition?

Jesus gives us a solution to doubting. He says the following to Peter when he tried to walk on water:

[PP Slide 25: Matthew 14:31]

Matthew 14:31

31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, **"O you of little faith [lacking confidence], why did you doubt [waver]?"** ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

I think that Jesus revealed a solution to doubting, but He doesn't talk about how to go about the change process.

So how does a person build confidence in God?

John may provide a solution:

[PP Slide 26: 1 John 3:21-24]

1 John 3:21-24

21 Beloved, **if our heart does not condemn [find fault with] us, we have confidence [assurance] before God;** **22** and whatever we ask we receive from him, **because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.** **23 And this is his commandment that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another,** just as he has commanded us. **24** Whoever keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us. ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

John says the solution is to believe Jesus and love each other. He goes on to talk more about confidence. We interacted with his teaching in the session on slavery due to the fear of death.

[PP Slide 27: 1 John 4:17]

1 John 4:17

17 By this is love perfected [completed] with us, so that we may have confidence [bold assurance] for the Day of Judgment, **because as he is so also are we in this world.** ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

James provides another step for walking in this whole mind condition:

[PP Slide 28: James 4:7-10]

James 4:7-10

7 Submit [subordinate/ obey] your selves therefore to God. Resist [stand against] the devil and he will flee from you. **8 Draw [approach] near to God, and he will draw near to you.** Cleanse your hands; you sinners, **and purify [make clean] your hearts, you double-minded.** **9** Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. **10** Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

James provides several life-style instructions in this passage, but he doesn't tell us how to go about doing them. So...

(Group discussion 3: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person #3, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 29: Question]

...purify [make clean] your hearts, you double-minded...

How would you go about cleansing a double (flopping back and forth) mind?

[Leader: Read question aloud]

The No Hold strategic Forgiveness and Personal History tactics are targeted on this heart/mind cleansing process.

In addition, maybe Paul is on to something when he says in his letter to the Philippian church:

[PP Slide 30: Philippians 4:8-9]

Philippians 4:8-9

8 Finally, brothers, **whatever is true [unconcealed], whatever is honorable [honest] , whatever is just [right, innocent] , whatever is pure [clean/perfect], whatever is lovely [friendly towards], whatever is commendable [reputable], if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about [take inventory of] these things.** 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

Choosing carefully what we think about [pay attention to, keep track of] is able to produce clean thinking. According to James, clean thinking produces a whole mind.

Maybe looking at this Whole Mind condition through the No Hold “Mind Renovation” lens might provide a wider point of view.

[PP Slide 31: Inverse/build graphic]

Remember, God’s Mind Renovation process starts with His action, and He is involved throughout the process.

[DRF note: The following is my personal understanding of this renovation process:

This Mind Renovation process seems to reveal several, can I say, “stages” of maturation. The first stage is a condition in which a person recognizes some kind of “Need”. It then moves into a condition that I call the “Salvation Window”. This condition of salvation would be the second stage. The next stage would be the

condition of some kind of “Tipping Point” where we come to value the good ways of the Lord more than our old lifestyle. As we become more mature [completed], we may come to a stage of choosing the condition of a “Whole Mind”. The next stage would be the condition of a “Stayed Mind”. The final stage would be a condition of “Full Maturity [completion]”.

While a person is walking in stages 1-3, a double mind will be gradually reduced through a cooperative relationship between a person and our heavenly Father (our Father doing the “heavy lifting”). By the time a person is brought to the stage of a “whole mind”, our double mind will be mostly removed.

The stages of “Whole Mind”, “Single Mind” and “Full Maturity” do not mean that a person becomes more “perfect”. The issue of perfection or “sinless perfection” does not have a place in this process. We are all saved by grace through faith, not by how we behave. This renovation process assumes that we still have a capacity for sinning and will still find a necessity to stay humble before God and confess [freely admit] our sin. But, my pastor has a saying that I appreciate: As long as we live in our mortal body “we will never be sinless; but we can sin less!”.]

May each of us walk (at least a short while) in full maturity before God calls us home.

Leader: substitute your own experience, or use my following testimony]

[DRF’s testimony:

“Let me share my experience with this issue. In my early years following Jesus, my mind would have been described as “double”. Sometime during my “tipping point” time frame, I became aware of an inner emptiness. It persisted in spite of healthy family and friend relationships. As I continued to mature spiritually (having my mind renovated), I came into a growing hunger to experience more direct, real-time interactions with God. I remember saying to several people, ‘I know a lot about God, but I don’t know *Him*’. During this time the following passage captured my attention...”]

This passage comes out of a letter that Jeremiah wrote to the exiled Jews living in Babylon.

[PP Slide 32: Jeremiah 29:10-14]

Jeremiah 29:10-14

10 "For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. **11** For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for wholeness and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. **12** Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. **13** **You will seek [search for] me and find me. When you seek me with all your heart,** **14** I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile. ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

And much later, Paul caught my attention:

[PP Slide 33: Romans 1:8-10]

Romans 1:8-10

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. **9** **For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit [whole heart]** in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you **10** always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. ESV

(Leader: read passage aloud)

[DRF's testimony continued]

"...The highlighted statements stood out boldly to me when I read them. It took several more years before I finally understood the value of a whole heart/mind. During those years, I tried several times to solve my "inner man" issue. Nothing

worked, and I seriously wondered if my emptiness would ever be filled. Finally, in late December 2013, I lay on my back in bed crying like a baby – desperate. I recognized that my heart was scattered [competing loyalties] instead of whole. I begged God to help me make my heart whole. I kept up my prayer every night. The night of 1/3/2014 the Lord helped me come into a whole heart condition. That night everything changed for me. My “inner man” has not been the same since.”]

(!!! Caution: each person will have a different experience as they seek to establish a whole heart!!!)

Just to review:

[PP Slide 34: Review]

A whole heart/mind would be:

- Without doubt (opposition/hesitation), (James 1:5-8)
- Cleansed/purified (James 4:8; 1John 1:7,9; Phil 4:8)

[Leader: read the review aloud]

Here are the No Hold strategic Whole Mind tactics:

[PP Slide 35: Tactics]

Whole Mind Tactics

Tactic 1: Choose to stop doubting

- Building confidence by believing Jesus and loving our fellow believers removes doubting. (1 John 3:21-24, 4:17 - , because as he is so also are we in this world.)

Tactic 2: Clean up our minds

- Choose carefully what we think about (pay attention to, keep track of). Clean thinking produces a whole mind. (Phil 4:8-9 - ... think (take inventory of) about these things)

- The No Hold strategic Forgiveness and Personal History tactics are also targeted on this heart/mind cleansing process.

Encouragement:

Some of us, who are in the earlier stages of maturity, might be saying to ourselves something like: “these tactics are impossible to attain”. Others might say “I can’t just *change* my mind”. If you are experiencing this sense of frustration as you interact with these tactics, please be **encouraged**; and be patient. Growing in relationship with Him, our Lord **will** bring each of us into full maturity according to His plan.

Each of us, however, **are** able to pray into our own future development. We are emphasizing here the encouragement of **asking**. Hear and remember the Word of the Lord regarding this matter:

[PP Slide 36: Encouragement]

Encouragement: Ask God to help you (1 John 5:14-15 - **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.**

[Leader: pass out the Whole Mind Tactics worksheet]

(Individual practice 2:) 5 Minutes

For the next 5 minutes, if you are willing, please ask your heavenly Father to help you make your heart whole. He wants us to have a whole heart, so **will** help us. He also appreciates the relational contact as we humbly ask Him.

Record on your worksheet what issues you think could be changed in your thinking right now. Through the coming week, if you are willing, use your No Hold tactics to remove doubt and clean your thinking. Record your progress. This information will not leave your hands or be made public in our class session.

[Leader: At the end of 5 minutes, instruct class participants to turn over their Whole Heart/Mind worksheets]

Here are some of the opportunities attractive to a person walking in the stage of Whole Heart/Mind. All believers interact in some way in these opportunities, but the activity blossoms in the stage of Whole Heart/Mind.

Conclusion

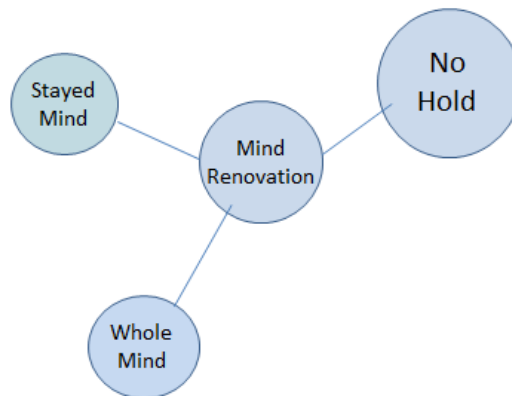
Here's the point: getting to a condition, with God's help, where we are actively walking in a whole heart, provides increased steadiness, ability to focus, and ability to find and interact with our heavenly Father. It is an important milestone in the No Hold Mind Renovation process that reduces our vulnerability to kingdom of darkness influence and increases our capacity of Godly influence.

“Whole Heart” is a condition of Mind Renovation short of full maturity. We recognize that a whole heart/mind is not to be equated with perfection. We do have the opportunity, however, to actively pursue a whole heart/mind, and, with God's help and timing, are able to come to a condition where we are able to walk in it through our salvation position and the power of the Holy Spirit.

A whole heart is a gigantic advantage. Please pursue it sooner and harder than I did. Any place would be a good starting place – start right where you are right now.

In our next session we will deal with how to walk in a stayed mind.

[PP Slide 37: Mind Renovation Graphic]



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

11 Stayed Mind

Body

In this session, I hope to help us move into a “stayed” whole mind condition. This opportunity is revealed by Isaiah:

[PP Slide 21: Isaiah 26:1-4]

Isaiah 26:1-4

1 ..."We have a strong city; he sets up salvation as walls and bulwarks.

2 Open the gates that the righteous nation that keeps faith may enter in.

3 You (God) keep [guard] him in perfect peace [health, prosperity, peace, safety] whose mind [conception] is stayed [rooted, cabled down] on you, because he trusts [is confident, sure] in you.

4 Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock. ESV

[Leader: read passage aloud]

[**DRF note:** Isaiah is prophesying about a time probably still in the future, but the promise in v. 3 says a lot about the character of God. I am choosing (maybe boldly) to appropriate it now as a “foretaste”, or first fruit.]

In this session we again need to understand some terms:

The first term is “keep”.

[PP Slide 22: Definition]

OT:5341 **natsar**; a primitive root; **to guard, as with a hedge of thorns; in a good sense (to protect, maintain)**

Another critical term is “peace”.

[PP Slide 23: Definition]

OT:7965 **shalom**; from OT:7999; safe, i.e. (figuratively) **well, happy, friendly; also (abstractly) welfare, i.e. health, prosperity, peace:**

OT:7999 **shalam**; a primitive root; **to be safe (in mind, body or estate [property])**

[**DRF note:** The Hebrew word means much more than peace of mind or safety. It includes health and prosperity as well.]

How is the term “stayed” defined?

[PP Slide 24: Definition]

Em^s (OT 5564): A verb meaning to lay on, to uphold, to sustain...

How is the word translated in Isaiah 26:3?

- NIV – steadfast; KJV,RSV, ESV – stayed; NLT – fixed on
 - DRF note: I prefer the sense of stayed
 - Like cables that hold sailing ship masts in place; holding radio towers in place; or guy wires keeping a pole stable.
 - Anchored firmly (rooted)

Let's start our interaction here:

(Group discussion 1: Question) - 5 minutes

As a whole class, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 25: Question]

3 You (God) keep [guard] him in perfect peace [health, prosperity, peace, safety] whose mind [conception] is stayed [rooted, cabled down] on you, because he trusts [is confident, sure] in you.

What advantages are there to being “kept by God in perfect safety”?

(Leader: record offered advantages)

- A growing calmness when strange or dangerous events are happening.
 - As a person's experience of being kept safe grows, so does calmness
- The earlier adventure of witnessing God reveal Himself, and His ways, becomes a life-style.
 - Increasing trust produces increasing boldness
 - Increasing willingness to say “not my will but yours be done”
 - Sharpened willingness to do scriptural, but personally uncomfortable, things
- An increased willingness and ability to stand firm against Satan and his tactics.

Isaiah reveals a huge hint in this regard.

The path flows through **trust** [be confident, sure].

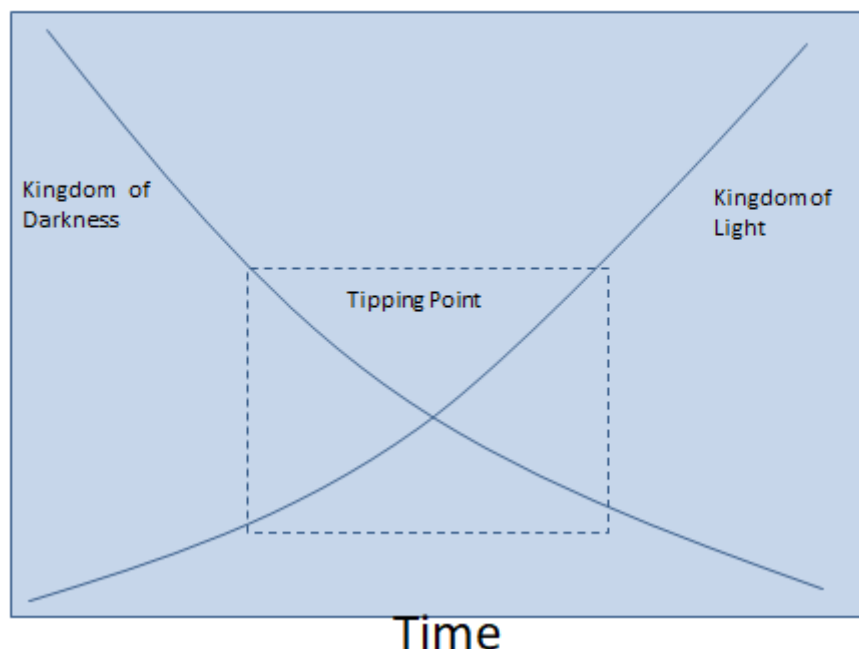
Jesus touches in a general way regarding trust in his riddle about the growth of His kingdom (which holds “trust in God” in itself).

[PP Slide 26: Mark 4:30-32]**Mark 4:30-32**

30 And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable [riddle] shall we use for it? **31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown [planted] on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, 32 yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."**
ESV

[DRF note: The key understanding that provides an answer to Jesus' riddle is this: "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20). It's an "inner man" condition at the present time. Does that remind you of "Tipping Point", "Mind Renovation", and "Whole Mind"? Is this No Hold strategy just another way of viewing the growing process of Jesus' kingdom? I hope each of us can see the resemblance.]

So let's view "trust [be confident, sure]" through the lens of the No Hold strategy.

[PP Slide 27: Inverse Graphic]

[Leader: point to locations on the graphic as you explain the following paragraph. Time runs from left to right on the graph. Salvation to the left of the Tipping Point, while Whole Heart/Mind and Stayed Mind would be found to the right of the Tipping Point]

[DRF note: Trust starts as a small seed when we choose (with our heavenly Father’s help) to trust Him enough to receive His salvation through His son. It grows as we “test and approve” His ways during our Tipping Point stage. It continues to grow during our “Whole Heart” stage. And, by the time we are ready to fully cable our mind down on God, our trust has probably grown into a good-sized shrub.

Having said that; it is my personal opinion that a person is able to *start* pursuing the Whole Mind and Stayed Mind conditions as their trust is growing in earlier stages of maturity.]

Ok: So now it’s time to consider tactics.

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 10 minutes

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

[PP Slide 28: Question]

...because he trusts [is confident, sure] in you (God)...

Within your trusting relationship, what tactics could enable you to anchor your mind onto your heavenly Father?

Here are the No Hold strategic tactics for anchoring your mind down on God.

[Leader: pass out the Mind Anchor Tactics sheet]

Mind Anchor Tactics

Tactic 1: Continue to hide [hoard] God's word in your heart. (Psalm 119:11; I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.)

Tactic 2: Walk, with God's help, in God's ways. (Matt 7:24; Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.)

Tactic 3: Cable down every individual Vine Replacement.

Completed Vine Replacement Tool

1. Reclaim the places owned by the Devil. If you haven't yet done so, confess (freely admit) the sin that gives the vine a place to put in roots. (1 John 1:9 ...If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins)
2. Ask Jesus to totally destroy the vine. (1John 3:8 ... The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil...)
3. Acknowledge my sin, and ask Jesus to cleanse/purify the places and traces previously occupied by the destroyed vine. (1 John 1:7 ...the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin...)
4. Ask Jesus to fill the places and traces of the vine with His righteousness. (Rom 5:17 ... If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ...)
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to extend his dwelling space to include the area that was once filled with the vine, and to write His word there. . (1Cor 6:19 ... your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,...); (Eph 5:18... be [continuingly] filled [to the brim] with the Spirit,...); (Jer 31:33..." I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts")

6. Formally [before your heavenly Father] forgive all the misdeeds by any of the agents of the kingdom of darkness done in order to maintain the vine. (Matt 6:14...For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,...)
7. Ask your heavenly Father to bring every person involved in the misdeeds into salvation. (John 6:44 [Jesus said] ...No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws [drags] him...)
8. Ask the Holy Spirit to renew/renovate the part of your mind affected by the vine. (Rom 12:2... be transformed by the renewing of your mind.)
9. **Cable** the places down on your Heavenly Father.
 - a. This is a “whole-man” action that includes both an “inner man” choice and a physical action.
 - i. I tell God that I choose to cable the replaced places of my inner man down on Him. I also symbolically emphasize my choice by slapping my thigh (or another convenient part of my body). (Isa 26:3... You will keep in perfect peace [peace, health, abundance, safety] him whose mind is steadfast [rooted, propped up]...)
 - b. I trust my Heavenly Father to insure that it gets locked down and stays secure. (Isa 26:3...because he trusts in you.)

[Leader: read through the tactics aloud]

(Individual practice 1:) 5 Minutes

In the next 5 minutes, (even if you are not yet at the Stayed Mind stage of growth) quietly ask God to show you something (or things) that you can, right now, cable down on Him. It may be a word from the Bible that you have already hoarded in your heart, or a vine that has already been replaced. Use VRT Tactic # 9 as a guide.

Throughout the week keep cabling down things that He reveals to you. As you use the Vine Replacement Tool to remove old places of access owned by the Devil, be sure to get them cabled down immediately. If you are journaling, be sure to record your activity.

Again, be encouraged, and ask God to help you

[PP Slide 29: Encouragement]

1 John 5:14-15

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.

[Leader: read passage aloud]

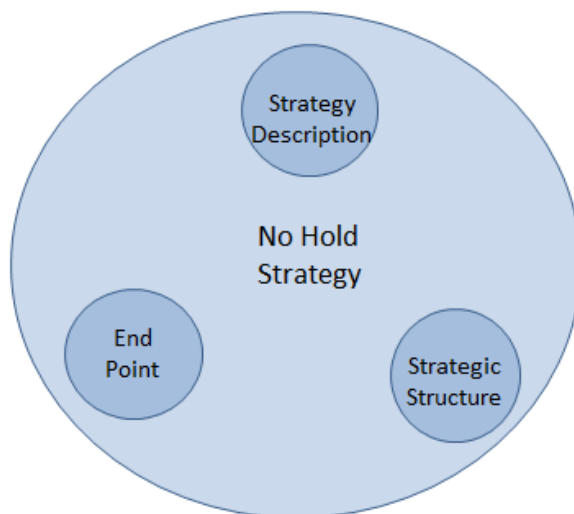
Conclusion

Perfect peace is something only God can provide. This is a promise with a condition. He will perform it when He knows His condition is met.

Perfect peace comes as a result of getting your “whole mind” cabled down on God. Cabling is an ongoing process of getting more and more cables anchored securely. There seems to come a time when enough cables are secured so that peace starts to become noticeable. That doesn’t mean that a person then disregards appropriate physical safeguards – “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” (Matt 4:7). Rather, a person will probably become more humble and trusting and obedient.

In our next session we will focus once more on the No Hold strategic end point of Full Maturity

[PP Slide 30: End Point]



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

12 Strategy End Point

Body:

So now we have come full circle, and in this session we will examine the No Hold strategic End Point in more detail.

First, what is the end point of the No Hold strategy?

[PP slide 22: End Point]

The end point of the No Hold strategy is to **attain [reach] full spiritual adulthood**.

This end point is expressed several different ways in the Bible. Paul describes it from the perspective of whole church maturity in Ephesians 4.

[PP slide 23: Eph 4:11-16]

Ephesians 4:11-16

11 And he (Jesus) gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12** to equip [complete; perfect] the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, **13** until we all attain to [reach] the unity [oneness; unanimity (unanimous)] of the faith [(the system of religious truth)] and of the knowledge [full discernment] of the Son of God, **to mature [perfect; complete] manhood**, to the measure of the stature [size] of the fullness of Christ, **14** so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head**, into Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud.]

Paul lists several areas of maturity in this passage.

[**DRF note:** Notice, he divides the areas into three general groups; one of which is the general group of “grow up in every way”. He doesn’t populate the group in this passage, but does discuss other areas of maturity in different passages. I have added to this category a few of the areas he discusses elsewhere.]

[PP slide 24: Areas of Maturity]

- **“Until we all attain to [reach]”:**
 - Unity of the faith
 - Knowledge of the Son of God
 - Mature manhood
 - The fullness of Christ
- **“Grow up in every way”**
 - Image of Christ
 - Unity of relationship
- **“Builds itself up in love”**
 - Complete [perfect] love

[Leader: Read areas aloud.]

To begin let's interact with Paul:

(Group discussion 1: Question) - 5 minutes

Starting with person # 1, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 25: Question]

Which of these areas is most interesting to you?

[Leader: Read question aloud.]

Due to time constraints, we will be able to interact with only a few of these areas. Also, we will look at them from the perspective of an individual reaching maturity rather than the whole church reaching maturity.

The three areas of maturity we will interact with today are:

[PP Slide 26: Maturity Areas]

- 1) The maturity of Unity with Christ
- 2) The maturity of the Image of Christ
- 3) The maturity of the Fullness of Christ

[DRF note: Christ is not a name – it's a Title: Christ=Messiah=Anointed One]

[Leader: Read aloud.]

Regarding the Unity of Relationship:

Paul talks about this unity of Relationship earlier in Ephesians chapter 4:

[PP Slide 27: Eph 4:1-6]

Eph 4:1-6

1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, **2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **3 eager to maintain the unity of the**

Spirit in the bond of peace. **4** There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.**
ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud.]

Jesus prayed that we would be in unity of relationship with Himself and His Father.

This request, found in John 17, is one of several He makes to His Father while praying for those (including you and I) who come after the original disciples and also believe.

[PP slide 28: John 17:20-26]

John 17:20-26

20 "I do not ask for these [original disciples] only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, **21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us**, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **22** The glory that you have given me I have given to them, **that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one [unity], so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.** **24** Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. **25** O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. **26** I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them." ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud.]

(Group discussion 2: Question) - 10 minutes

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

[PP Slide 29: Question]

...just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us...

What does it mean to your maturity to be “in” Jesus and the Father in the same way that they are in each other?

[Leader: Read question aloud]

Regarding the Image of Christ:

According to Paul, we are being fashioned into the image of Jesus. He talks about it in relation to present suffering and future glory in his letter to the Roman church:

[PP Slide 30: Rom 8:28-30]

Rom 8:28-30

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. **29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to [fashioned like] the image [likeness] of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.** **30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

Paul says in his letter to the Colossians that Jesus is the exact image of the invisible God. He says this in his teaching about the supremacy of Jesus:

[PP Slide 31: Col 1:15-17]

Col 1:15-17

15 He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn [prototype] of all creation. **16** For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. **17** And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

(Group discussion 3: Question) - 10 minutes

Starting with person # 3, please discuss the following question.

[PP Slide 32: Question]

...(those) he also predestined to be conformed to [fashioned like] the image [likeness] of his Son...

...He (Jesus) is the image [likeness] of the invisible God...

Putting these two statements together, what is Paul saying about the maturity of image in you?

[Leader: Read question aloud]

Regarding the Fullness of Christ:

Paul prays for us to be stuffed full of everything God is.

[PP Slide 33: Ephesians 3:14-19]

Ephesians 3:14-19

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, **15** from whom every family in 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, being rooted and grounded [firmly established] in love, **18** may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know [absolutely] the love of Christ that surpasses [goes beyond] [academic/experiential] knowledge, **that you may be filled [stuffed full] with all the fullness [complete fullness] of God.** ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

Jesus holds all the fullness of God in bodily form

(PP Slide 34: Col 2:9-10)

Colossians 2:9-10

9 For in him the whole fullness [complete fullness] of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you have been filled [stuffed/crammed full] in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. ESV

[Leader: Read passage aloud.]

(Group discussion 4: Question) - 10 minutes

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

[PP Slide 35: Question]

...that you may be filled [stuffed full] with all the fullness [complete fullness] of God...

...you have been filled [stuffed/crammed full] in him...

What would the maturity of being stuffed full of God mean to you?

[Leader: Read question aloud]

Again, be encouraged:

[PP Slide 36: Encouragement]

Encouragement: Ask God to help you

(1 John 5:14-15 - **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.**)

[Leader: Read passage aloud]

Conclusion:

The No Hold strategy is formulated to help a believing person be less and less influenced by the kingdom of darkness, and more and more influenced by the kingdom of God. This strategy is just a different way to think about the process of spiritual maturity [growth]. The end point (objective) of the strategy is to reach and live in the condition of full spiritual maturity.

Every believer is involved from the moment of their spiritual birth in these maturity areas. As spiritually immature people, we do have a personal relationship with Jesus and our heavenly Father, but it is relatively unformed, and we are still highly influenced by our former ways of thinking and acting.

Gradually (for most of us) our inner man becomes restructured, and we are better able to hold, recognize, and cooperate with the God who lives in us. When we are fully mature these areas are fully structured and the influence of our former life is minimized. Living in both educated and experience-tested ways with God, and recognizing His continual presence and activity is a significantly different life-style than are the earlier life-style stages.

We looked today at three areas involved in that mature condition:

1) The maturity of Unity with Christ

2) The maturity of the Image of Christ

3) The maturity of the Fullness of Christ

Most of us are still looking forward at these areas in their fullness. For me, personally, realizing that my mature condition would be similar to how Jesus lived is still a bit unsettling. I do recognize, however, that I am able to pray into my future condition and know that God is granting those requests that are according to His revealed will. May we all be encouraged to ask, and receive [hold] our requests.

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