

Single & Single-Again TUES NITES Meal, Message & Mixer

Let's Have Some Fun....It Doesn't Have To Be Scary!

Jane Stolz' video teaching, handout, and audio Mp3 file of this message will be online to share with others at www.christiansinglesindenver.com

None of us expect the adverse circumstances that come our way; life merely brings them our way. Jesus said, "In this world you will have trouble: (John 16:33) He didn't say might or maybe, He said we WILL!

When trouble comes our way, emotions like fear, anger, remorse, disappointment, anxiety, sadness, discouragement, jealousy, and worry are not unusual. They are part of our human experience. If emotional responses were unusual, the Bible would not be filled with statements like, "Fear not", "In your anger do not sin," and "Do not worry about tomorrow."

Sooner or later, T visits everyone. Sometimes the T is of our own making. Other times it is caused by the work or decisions of others. Either way, these situations can bring us emotional pain.

The apostle Paul went through some of the most difficult circumstances anyone could ever imagine.

2 Corinthians 11, he describes what his life was like:

*I have....been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles, in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea, and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked....
Verses 23-27*

**He wants to teach us about the
sufficiency of His love and
grace in the midst of our
difficulties.**

2 Corinthians 12:9 "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"

We eventually have to come to terms with ourselves that we are totally incapable of being S on our own. We have no alternative other than to turn to the One who has overcome the world.

We think, if I can just end the emotional pain, everything will be okay.
That sounds good, but life doesn't work that way.

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**If we want to change our
emotions, we must change our
thinking!**

We have a Choice!

**You can choose to allow God to transform your mind.
This approach produces Peace!**

You might not be able to **C**_____ your circumstances, but you can **D**_____ how you will respond to them.

Depression is never cured by treating the symptom (emotions); it's cured by treating the mind.

Fear is a paralyzing emotion. A person who continuously lives in **F**_____ **manifests it through being angry all the time.** If we fail to realize this, we will end up living in a cycle of trying to deal with the outward symptoms of anger without ever identifying the fears that are the root of our problem.

If you are depending upon someone to make you happy, you will experience **D**_____!

A person immersed in **S**_____ **-P**_____ usually develops unrealistic attitudes and says, "God is against me. The whole world is against me. No one is on my side." Or, "I'm nothing but a failure. I've always been a failure. I will always be a failure." Like a recording, the mind keeps on playing: "Nothing is going my way. Nothing will ever go my way."

We come into this world with the idea that everything and everyone is here to make us happy. By nature, we are self-centered.

Unrealistic expectations arise when we don't face life as it really is, but instead look at life and people as we think they should be. When we go through life thinking unrealistically, we buy into Satan's lie. We will believe a false reality that will always let us down.

A few unrealistic expectations:

- Everyone should like me
- Life will always be good
- He/She can bring me happiness
- I can be secure in this world
- Ambitions of independence
- My children are perfect
- Quick fixes to problems
- My old desires will eventually go away
- A real Christian would never do that

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Christianity is not about how well we behave but who we are in Christ. If we could act perfectly, why would we need Jesus? He is the only perfect One. That is why we live by faith in Him and His perfection.

Misplaced dependencies result when a person depends upon someone or something other than God for his or her happiness, self-worth, or meaning in life. Misplaced dependencies naturally follow unrealistic expectations.

When we experience God's unconditional love, we take the pressure off others in our life to meet that need, and only then can we enjoy each other.

Some misplaced dependencies:

- Money
- Drugs/Alcohol
- Appearance and talent
- Job or career
- Spiritual experiences of feelings
- Trying to perfect ourselves
- Trying to perfect others
- Making ourselves acceptable to God before He will answer our prayers

**Your true identity comes from God and how He sees you-
not from how the world treats you...**

**Do you think you have overcome a lot of fears in your life?
Do you think you're strong enough to take on a new challenge?
Why?**

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Discussion Questions:

- **What was your experience with the fear exercise? Did it change during the exercise? Why do you think you felt that way?**
- **When you go through adversity, can you see how your thinking can change the way you deal with the situation?**
- **Have you believed the lie of any of The Unrealistic expectations? Which one impacted you the most?**
- **Under the Misplaced Dependencies, have you found yourself placing your trust more in one or more of them? What do you think of that?**
- **How does changing our thinking allow us to have more Fun with life?**
- **How did this lesson encourage you to Trust God more?**

HELPFUL TIPS for

Great Table Discussions

Each table should have a designated Table Host.

1. Use God's ear-to-mouth ratio:

Listen two times more than you speak. 1 or 2 people should not dominate the time, and EVERYONE should contribute during the discussion.

2. Smile and be friendly.

Avoid excessive complaining about people or personal problems.

3. God's grace rules the day

Recognize that everyone will not always agree – be gracious and give grace to one another. People are at different places in their spiritual walk and in their life journey.

4. Moving the discussion along.

Table host/facilitators are to move the discussion along. They have permission to limit any negative comments, to invite people to answer a question, to ask someone for their perspective, to limit the amount of time some people speak, and to move on to the next question.

5. Help for the hurting:

This is a supportive group, but it is not a support group or a therapy session. But if someone is really hurting, take a moment and have someone in the group specifically pray for them.