

REFRESH, RENEW, RESTORE

Caring for Your Soul in Tough Times

Session 4: The Wilderness



PARTICIPANTS
GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

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Imagine ...

The wilderness is a _____ for times of spiritual
_____, when it's especially difficult to
_____ with God. It can also be known as a spiritual
_____ or the _____
_____ of the soul.

The causes may include:

"To trust God in the light is nothing, but trust him in the dark? That is faith."
~Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Navigate the wilderness by acting on 3 _____.

1. THE WILDERNESS IS ...

_____.

Expectation - _____ = _____.

After rescuing them, God _____ Israel into the

_____.

Those who've gone before:

"Place no hope in the feeling of assurance, in spiritual comfort. You may well have to get along without this. Place no hope in the inspirational preachers of Christian sunshine, who are able to pick you up and set you back on your feet and make you feel good for three or four days—until you fold up and collapse into despair. Self-confidence is a precious natural gift, a sign of health. But it is not the same thing as faith. Faith is much deeper, and it must be deep enough to subsist when we are weak, when we are sick, when our self-confidence is gone, when our self-respect is gone."

~Thomas Merton

John 16:33 - "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

Activity:

List five ways you can "take heart" in the wilderness.

2. THE WILDERNESS IS ...

_____ .

The wilderness is not normally a result of _____

but is _____. God is weaning you off your

_____ of him in order to grow _____.

God told Elijah about the _____ and the

_____, but not about _____. He

prayed _____ before God answered him.

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 5 - And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ... Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you.

The enemy wants you to _____ or to

_____. God wants you to _____

Spiritual maturity is not about _____ God, it's about

_____ to God.

Activity:

List 3 ways you can rest in faith this week.

3. THE WILDERNESS IS ...

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_____.

We're being prepared for more _____

_____ with God.

Those who've gone before:

Zephaniah 3:17 - The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

As a disciple-maker, don't try to _____.

Help carry the burden, but _____ back to

_____.

Activity:

List 4 ways you can ...

CONCLUSION

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The vision:

A life rooted in _____, not _____.

Unburden yourself:

Lay down your _____ of _____.

Hebrews 12:3 - Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

Take up Jesus' Yoke:

Fix your eyes on Jesus and _____ in

_____.