



A Gentle Whisper

Focus A “wilderness experience” can be described as a season marked by disappointment, frustration, suffering or challenge. God has a divine plan for our wilderness experiences.

Open Where’s your favorite place to vacation?

Read Life often doesn’t go according to plan. God assures us in Jeremiah 29:11 that His plan is to prosper and bless us, whether we understand His plan or not. When life is confusing, run to the wilderness. You’ll discover that God has a divine plan for your life that He wants to share with you.

The wilderness is a place of **isolation**. Jesus’ example was to regularly get away alone with God to hear His voice and be refreshed. Many people have “Hurried Life Sickness,” in which they try to do more things in less time. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus invites the weary and burdened to come to Him and *learn* from Him to find rest for our souls. We’re refreshed in our alone times with God.

The wilderness is also a place of **confrontation** where God desires to reshape your priorities, revise your plans and give you a new perspective on life. Isaiah 55:8–9 tells us that His thoughts and ways are not like ours, but are infinitely higher and better. In the wilderness, we become honest with ourselves and with God. We come to the end of ourselves, submit to His ways and receive His blessing.

God’s finest work is done in the wilderness. It is a place of **transformation**. God calls us to a life of change. He wants to change us from the inside out.

Philippians 1:6 says that He is faithful to complete the work He's begun in you. He has a better plan for your life if you're willing to run to the wilderness.

Talk

1. Have you felt like nothing was working “according to plan” in your life? When has the feeling struck you the hardest?
2. What's the purpose of “running to the wilderness” when we're feeling overwhelmed or like life is out of control?
3. Jesus modeled a rhythmic life in which He regularly got away by Himself to be with God. This is in stark contrast to the Hurried Life Sickness of our culture.
 - a. In your opinion, what are symptoms of Hurried Life Sickness?
 - b. How would you describe your pace of life?
 - c. Practically speaking, how can you “run to the wilderness” more often?
4. How is the wilderness a place of confrontation? How does God use it to show us what's in our heart and to change our perspective?
5. Read the following passages. What does each passage promise, especially as they relate to the wilderness?

Jeremiah 29:11

Matthew 11:28–29

Isaiah 55:8–9

Philippians 1:6

Romans 12:2

Live

The wilderness is a place of transformation where God changes our perspective about Him and ourselves. What do you think God is currently teaching you about Who He is? About who you are? In what way is He changing your identity?

Pray

Quiet your heart before the Lord and ask Him to speak to you, especially relating to any “wilderness” experiences you are currently facing.