



## Into the Wilderness – Understanding & Embracing the Dark Times of Your Life

Words translated as “wilderness” occur nearly 300 times in the Bible. Wilderness seasons are brutal, but God is powerfully at work in the wilderness seasons of our lives. The only question is, do we have eyes to see it?

In order for God to give us the choice whether or not to trust him, He must present us with a moment of crisis, and, since he wants us to seek help from Him, he brings us through the wilderness to remove all other help first. When we’re in a wilderness season, it’s easy to lose sight of God’s protection, provision, and preparation. We might even wonder, “How can I trust God’s goodness when I’m in this desolate place?” But remember Jesus! He went through the ultimate wilderness—the desolation and humiliation of dying under the curse of God. If that is the measure of God’s love and commitment to us, we can trust him in our own wilderness seasons. Let’s journey together!

Highland Colony Men’s Roundtable  
[www.MensTable.com](http://www.MensTable.com)

**Wilderness: You Will Need Wise Counsel!** - I Peter 4:1-2; Exodus 18:1-27  
**A Man Understands how God uses the wilderness to shape and train.**

May 14, 2020

**Bible Verses:** I Peter 4:1,2; Exodus 18:1-27; Proverbs 11:13; Proverbs 13:10; Proverbs 15:22; Psalm 33:10-12

**Music:** Vince Gill and Patty Loveless - "Go Rest High On That Mountain" at George Jones' Funeral

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l11oCvBxnQ0>

**Videos:** MAJ Richard "Dick" Winters - Army Leadership

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmhGxIwIoJc>

**Resources:** *Walking with God through Pain & Suffering* by Timothy Keller.

*Suffering and the Heart of God: How Trauma Destroys and Christ Restores* by Diane Langberg.

*Restoring the Shattered Self – A Christian’s Counselor’s Guide to Complex Trauma* by Heather Davediuk Gingrich.

### Into the Wilderness: The Wisdom of Counsel!

1. \_\_\_\_\_ → Seeing that Moses was taking upon himself the responsibility to decide all the judicial cases of the people of Israel, his father-in-law Jethro saw that he would soon be worn out. Jethro wisely exhorted Moses to appoint other men to help him judge the nation so that he would be able to endure. Moses complied (Ex. 18:13–27), and he regarded this advice as important enough to record for God’s people, as a piece of wisdom that would benefit the church forever.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ → The Bible does not teach that a large number of people automatically ensure that good choices will be made; we all know the disaster that can occur when unwise leaders join together. Scripture assumes that the counselors who bring safety are *wise* counselors. When we seek out the advice of experienced, godly people, we will be more apt to make wise decisions. Proverbs 11:13; 13:10; 15:22; Psalm 33:10-12.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ → It is good to have at least one wise person to whom you can turn when you need advice, a TEAM of FOUR (you and 3 others) is even better.

### Into the Wilderness: Stages of Manhood – Becoming a Wise Man!

1. \_\_\_\_\_ → The boy stage is when you are young and enjoying doing boy stuff like playing outside, exploring, climbing trees, basically having fun and being delighted in by his parents and family. This is the time to develop your imagination!
2. \_\_\_\_\_ → The cowboy/ranger stage is when you move more into the young manhood stage where you go out exploring on your own and begin learning the things of the masculine world such as how to fix a car, working with power tools, going on backpacking journeys in the woods either alone or with some of his friends. This could also include such adventures as backpacking across Europe. The main part of this stage is learning the answer to the question “do I have what it takes/can I handle this?”
3. \_\_\_\_\_ → The warrior stage is when the you begin your quest and mission in life which may include beginning a career such as a teacher, lawyer, doctor, consultant, mechanic, salesman, or becoming a missionary overseas. This is the stage in which you find your cause to fight for and the things that are important to you and what you will work towards during your life.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ → The lover stage sometimes crosses over with the warrior stage. This is when the you are learning to appreciate beauty and how to love. It is not necessarily when you pursue a woman and learn to love in that sense but can also include the awakening to the beautiful things in life such as nature, art, and music. Full development in this stage will include learning to love and be loved by God in an intimate way.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ → The king stage is when you become responsible for leading others. This might include being the head of your household, becoming a manager at work, or a coach of a team. During this stage, warriors may be working for the king.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ → The final stage is that of the sage. This occurs when a man steps down as a king but does not fade into the distance. He will commonly be an adviser to kings and provide the wisdom that comes only through years of living through the various stages. The most important characteristic of a true sage is that he points others to God.

**NOTE:** During each of the stages, the man will likely experience parts of all the stages but will generally be centered upon one of them.

### ACTION: Journal this!

1. Who is your mentor, coach, father, wise counselor for wilderness challenges?
2. For whom are you are wise counselor?
3. Who do you know that is in the wilderness NOW?

## Bible Verses – The Message

**I Peter 4:1,2 – 1** Since Jesus went through everything you're going through and more, learn to think like him. Think of your sufferings as a weaning from that old sinful habit of always expecting to get your own way. **2** Then you'll be able to live out your days free to pursue what God wants instead of being tyrannized by what you want.

**Exodus 18:1-27 – 1** Jethro, priest of Midian and father-in-law to Moses, heard the report of all that God had done for Moses and Israel his people, the news that God had delivered Israel from Egypt. **2** Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had taken in Zipporah, Moses' wife who had been sent back home, **3** and her two sons. The name of the one was Gershom (Sojourner) for he had said, "I'm a sojourner in a foreign land"; **4** the name of the other was Eliezer (God's-Help) because "The God of my father is my help and saved me from death by Pharaoh." **5** Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought Moses his sons and his wife there in the wilderness where he was camped at the mountain of God. **6** He had sent a message ahead to Moses: "I, your father-in-law, am coming to you with your wife and two sons." **7** Moses went out to welcome his father-in-law. He bowed to him and kissed him. Each asked the other how things had been with him. Then they went into the tent. **8** Moses told his father-in-law the story of all that God had done to Pharaoh and Egypt in helping Israel, all the trouble they had experienced on the journey, and how God had delivered them. **9** Jethro was delighted in all the good that God had done for Israel in delivering them from Egyptian oppression. **10** Jethro said, "Blessed be God who has delivered you from the power of Egypt and Pharaoh, who has delivered his people from the oppression of Egypt. **11** Now I know that God is greater than all gods because he's done this to all those who treated Israel arrogantly." **12** Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a Whole-Burnt-Offering and sacrifices to God. And Aaron, along with all the elders of Israel, came and ate the meal with Moses' father-in-law in the presence of God. **13** The next day Moses took his place to judge the people. People were standing before him all day long, from morning to night. **14** When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What's going on here? Why are you doing all this, and all by yourself, letting everybody line up before you from morning to night?" **15** Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me with questions about God. **16** When something comes up, they come to me. I judge between a man and his neighbor and teach them God's laws and instructions." **17** Moses' father-in-law

said, "This is no way to go about it. **18** You'll burn out, and the people right along with you. This is way too much for you - you can't do this alone. **19** Now listen to me. Let me tell you how to do this so that God will be in this with you. Be there for the people before God, but let the matters of concern be presented to God. **20** Your job is to teach them the rules and instructions, to show them how to live, what to do. **21** And then you need to keep a sharp eye out for competent men - men who fear God, men of integrity, men who are incorruptible - and appoint them as leaders over groups organized by the thousand, by the hundred, by fifty, and by ten. **22** They'll be responsible for the everyday work of judging among the people. They'll bring the hard cases to you, but in the routine cases they'll be the judges. They will share your load and that will make it easier for you. **23** If you handle the work this way, you'll have the strength to carry out whatever God commands you, and the people in their settings will flourish also." **24** Moses listened to the counsel of his father-in-law and did everything he said. **25** Moses picked competent men from all Israel and set them as leaders over the people who were organized by the thousand, by the hundred, by fifty, and by ten. **26** They took over the everyday work of judging among the people. They brought the hard cases to Moses, but in the routine cases they were the judges. **27** Then Moses said good-bye to his father-in-law who went home to his own country.

**Proverbs 11:13 – 13** A gadabout gossip can't be trusted with a secret, but someone of integrity won't violate a confidence.

**Proverbs 13:10 – 10** Arrogant know-it-alls stir up discord, but wise men and women listen to each other's counsel.

**Proverbs 15:22 – 22** Refuse good advice and watch your plans fail; take good counsel and watch them succeed.

**Psalms 33:10-12 - 10** God takes the wind out of Babel pretense, he shoots down the world's power-schemes. **11** God's plan for the world stands up, all his designs are made to last. **12** Blessed is the country with God for God; blessed are the people he's put in his will.

## Go Rest High On That Mountain By Vince Gill

I know your life  
On earth was troubled  
And only you could know the pain  
You weren't afraid to face the devil  
You were no stranger to the rain

Go rest high on that mountain  
Son, your work on earth is done  
Go to heaven a shoutin'  
Love for the Father and the Son

Oh, how we cried the day you left us  
We gathered round your grave to grieve  
I wish I could see the angels faces  
When they hear your sweet voice sing

Go rest high on that mountain  
Son, your work on earth is done  
Go to heaven a shoutin'  
Love for the Father and the Son

**Philip K. Hardin, M.A., M.Div.**

Director of Business & Professional Outreach, Intl. - Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Licensed Professional Counselor, and Certified Life Coach  
563 Johnson Avenue – Fairhope, Alabama 36532  
Phone: 601-925-0707

Email: [phil@bpointl.org](mailto:phil@bpointl.org)

Webpage: [www.bpointl.org](http://www.bpointl.org)