



### 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: 7 Men Who Faced the Wilderness – A Father

*A Man Understands how God uses the wilderness to shape and train.*

November 04, 2020

**Bible Verses:** I Peter 4:1,2; Mark 9:14-32; John 15:5-8

**Music:** Don Williams - Lord, I Hope This Day Is Good

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fE08Qid5IhA>

**Videos:** The Secret of Greatness: Jackie Robinson – Eric Metaxas

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgl7Owd38io>

**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: A Father in the Wilderness.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ → Here is a father with a son who’s mute and has seizures. He takes his son to the disciples of Jesus to be healed and comes away no different. Wrestling with his faith, he brings his son to Jesus asking if Jesus can help. Jesus points to his faith. But knowing he’s wrestling with his faith, the father responds honestly. He cries for help to win his faith-wrestling match with the words “I believe, help mine unbelief.” Jesus responds with grace to his wrestling match and brings healing to the father’s heart and his son’s illness.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ → Self-reliance and walking with God Christian cannot coexist in anyone who truly follows Jesus. our Lord and Savior. The kind self-reliance that does not turn to Jesus for spiritual strength but rather tries to muster up the power necessary for Christian growth and for defeating Satan without Christ is powerless. Jesus shows the disciples that they are to be fully reliant on Him. No Christian would ever say that absolute dependence on Jesus is optional. However, it is nonetheless easy even for believers to go through their day as if they can do so under their own power. See John 15:5.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ → Jesus demonstrated to the boy’s father that all things are possible for those who believe, and now he tells his disciples that the reason they couldn’t cast out the demon was because they had not spent enough time in prayer. Prayer and faith are closely related. Prayer brings us closer to God, more in line with his will. That can only increase our faith. All those times Jesus went off by himself to pray, what were the disciples doing? That’s why they couldn’t cast out the demon. Too little prayer equals too little faith.

#### Into the Wilderness: Lessons in the Wilderness – Issue of Boundaries.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ → Who/what has control of your life? Demons like control freaks, manipulators, “irresponsible”, volume of work, or personal life demands that derail you, and every other person or circumstance that we allow to have control over our lives.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ → A boundary is a personal property line, or limit, that defines where you end and someone else begins. Think of your home. There is a property line and you are in control of what goes on there, who is allowed to visit, and on and on. In short, you have control.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ → Most times, whatever state you find yourself in, you are either creating it or allowing it to exist.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ → Own the reality, that most of the time, you are creating, or allowing, this scenario, and ask yourself a few questions:
  1. What are the “main” things that I want, personally and professionally?
  2. What are the specific activities (time and energy) that must occur for these to be realized?
  3. When, specifically, will I do those activities?
  4. What, or whom, do I need to say “no” to in order for number 3 to happen?
  5. What misbehavior or non-performance by others must be stopped for my priorities to be reached?

#### Into the Wilderness: Lessons in the Wilderness – Setting Boundaries.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ → Don’t go it alone. Chances are if you’re overwhelmed in some of these areas, you will need support and accountability in order to make the necessary changes.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ → Face your fears that are keeping you from doing what you need to do. Is it fear of someone being mad at you? Rejecting or disapproving of you? Fear of letting go of something, or even someone, that is standing in the way of where you need to go and what you need to do? Fear of being “both feet in” and making a full commitment?
3. \_\_\_\_\_ → Life, other people, and many forces will always be vying for your time and energy, so you have to stand strong as the guardian of your purposes, goals, values and life. Take charge!
4. \_\_\_\_\_ → You have to take ownership of all aspects of life, otherwise life will “happen to us,” instead of be “lived by us.” Forward progress won’t happen by accident. It takes ownership and the courage to create the life you desire, and not allow the one you don’t.

#### ACTION: Journal this!

1. What is troubling you, where is the suffering in your life?
2. How hard is setting boundaries for you? How strong is your “no” muscle?
3. Who do you know that is in the Wilderness?

## 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.

**Mark 9:14-32 - 14** When they came back down the mountain to the other disciples, they saw a huge crowd around them, and the religion scholars cross-examining them. **15** As soon as the people in the crowd saw Jesus, admiring excitement stirred them. They ran and greeted him. **16** He asked, "What's going on? What's all the commotion?" **17** A man out of the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought my mute son, made speechless by a demon, to you. **18** Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and goes stiff as a board. I told your disciples, hoping they could deliver him, but they couldn't." **19** Jesus said, "What a generation! No sense of God! How many times do I have to go over these things? How much longer do I have to put up with this? Bring the boy here." **20** They brought him. When the demon saw Jesus, it threw the boy into a seizure, causing him to writhe on the ground and foam at the mouth. **21** He asked the boy's father, "How long has this been going on?" **22** Many times it pitches him into fire or the river to do away with him. If you can do anything, do it. Have a heart and help us!" **23** Jesus said, "If? There are no 'ifs' among believers. Anything can happen." **24** No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the father cried, "Then I believe. Help me with my doubts!" **25** Seeing that the crowd was forming fast, Jesus gave the vile spirit its

marching orders: "Dumb and deaf spirit, I command you - Out of him, and stay out!" **26** Screaming, and with much thrashing about, it left. The boy was pale as a corpse, so people started saying, "He's dead." **27** But Jesus, taking his hand, raised him. The boy stood up. **28** After arriving back home, his disciples cornered Jesus and asked, "Why couldn't we throw the demon out?" **29** He answered, "There is no way to get rid of this kind of demon except by prayer." **30** Leaving there, they went through Galilee. He didn't want anyone to know their whereabouts, **31** for he wanted to teach his disciples. He told them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed to some people who want nothing to do with God. They will murder him. Three days after his murder, he will rise, alive." **32** They didn't know what he was talking about, but were afraid to ask him about it.

**John 15:5-8 - 5** "I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing. **6** Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. **7** But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. **8** This is how my Father shows who he is - when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

### “Lord, I Hope This Day Is Good” by Don Williams

<p>Lord, I hope this day is good I'm feelin' empty and misunderstood I should be thankful, Lord, I know I should But Lord I hope this day is good</p> <p>Lord, have you forgotten me I've been prayin' to you faithfully I'm not sayin' I'm a righteous man But Lord I hope you understand</p>	<p>I don't need fortune and I don't need fame Send down the thunder, Lord, send down the rain But when you're plannin' just how it will be Plan a good day for me</p> <p>Lord, I hope this day is good I'm feelin' empty and misunderstood I should be thankful, Lord, I know I should But Lord I hope this day is good</p>	<p>You've been the King since the dawn of time All that I'm askin' is a little less cryin' It might be hard for the devil to do But it would be easy for you</p> <p>Lord, I hope this day is good I'm feelin' empty and misunderstood I should be thankful, Lord, I know I should But Lord I hope this day is good</p>
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