

OUCH! WE ARE IN THE WILDERNESS!

10 years is a long time to give yourself to a cause or calling .You don't mind the duration but you would like to see corresponding results. I don't need others to tell me that I get it

SLIDE 1: Vision statement

Regression

Then you hear the whimper in the deepest of your soul . Ouch! We are in the wilderness

I was hearing **John Bevere** talk on podcast.....

No doubt as a church We are in the wilderness

And then the introspection starts

Have I been wrong?

Is what we going through some sort of punishment from the Lord?

Then you think about the one person who matters a lot in my life

Jesus

He starts ministry

He gets baptized

He gets affirmation and approval from The Fathers and then it happens:

He gets led into the wilderness

He wasn't being punished and he certainly hadn't committed sin

We don't hear the cry then but we imagine what could have happened because we hear it later: **my god why have you forsaken me?**

Isn't that how you feel when you in the wilderness

God where are you?

Job felt that in 23.8-9 NKJV **SLIDE 2**

Look , I go forward , but he is not there , and backward I cannot perceive him ;when he works on the left hand , I cannot behold him , when he turns to the right hand I cannot see him

He appears to be far away

He promises seem empty

Your prayers feel like they are empty drummy noise at best and seem to be falling on deaf ears

You appear to be going in the opposite direction of your dreams and the promises you once were certain he made to you

You sense no growth and development but stagnation and regression

You try to make sense of the promise in **Heb 13:5: I will never leave you nor forsake you SLIDE 3**

His presence seems to diminish rather than grow

You feel unloved and ignored and may even feel people are out to get you

JOKE: One pastor said when he was a young Man he announced to his dad who that he wanted to be a pastor: his dad was also a pastor said son you know that they put you in the front because they can have a better shot at you

You feel alone

It is difficult to see God moving when you in the wilderness

Sometimes I shudder when people ask me how church is going?

But here are some of the facts of the wilderness:

It is a common destination for many sincere followers of Jesus

In fact the wilderness is a necessary destination for every child of God

In fact you may have several journeys in the wilderness

If you never been in the **bitter wilderness** you will never truly appreciate the sweetness of the Promised Land

Abraham , Joseph , Moses , David , Sampson , Gideon , Elijah , Job , Daniel , Jeremiah , John the Baptist , Paul , John the Apostle to name a few

The **good news is that our wilderness doesn't have to be a negative time** if we are obedient to God

Now isn't the time to panic and act unwisely

Now isn't the time to search for and do the wrong things

Now isn't the time for plan B:

A change of career,

Change of church,

Change in relationship

On the contrary by making big changes without understanding why God has you in a dry situation might actually prolong your wilderness

It may cause more frustration and defeat

The **children of Israel** had an 11 day journey to come to the Promised Land but it took them 40 years in the wilderness

They considered their wilderness a punishment and therefore they murmured continuously

But what's worse because they didn't understand the wilderness an entire generation was unfit to enter the Promised Land

If we can learn that we have entered a wilderness experience and are grateful instead of complaining and murmuring .Beyond is a place of maturity, blessing and opportunity

We must understand that our wilderness is not **a place of God's rejection but preparation**

He didn't bring us to the wilderness to abandon you to Satan's devices or forget you

We have to recognize He doesn't stop working in our lives just because we are in the wilderness .They had water, bread and meat and clothing

It is not a place of defeat, disapproval or punishment

Nor is it a place we lie down and accept defeat

It is not a time for running after signs, blessings but a time to seek the heart if God and this in turn will bring character and strength in you

I got up early Friday morning .After being encouraged by what I read. I realized as far as my tenure a pastor of Living Well Church is going, it's like I am in the wilderness and it's a painful place

I prayed Lord (all starting with D)
Increase my dreams again
Increase my desire again
Increase my dedication again
Increase my discipline again
Increase my discipline again
Increase my depression again - just joking
Increase my delight again
Increase my declaration again

Challenge: I am sure if you had the opportunity to speak you would tell me about your wilderness journey too .Let me encourage you from Gods Word!

SLIDES 4, 5, 6

Prov 3:5-6

Psalms 16:7

Psalms 23

Even though I may be in the wilderness I still see
I am more than a conqueror in Jesus name
I am living a life of victory
I am healed
My life is a blessed life
My family is blessed
My finances are blessed
My relationships are blessed

And for our church I declare in faith:

Souls will be saved in Pottsville

Families will come back to God and to Church

Human and Financial resources will flow into Gods House

His people will ne passionate about God and the things of God and will have a mind to work in his house

Dedicated leaders to pastor, preach, worship, youth and children’s church will come

There will be a great increase in vision, passion, compassion in me as leader and all our leaders

Miracles and healings will take place wherever we go

PRAYER

SALVATION PRAYER

Jesus came to give you a life of abundance

He came to forgive all your sins so you don't have to live with guilt and shame. He wants to now fill your life with love, joy, peace & goodness and much more .He wants to give you the opportunity to live forever. That’s possible if you repent of your sins

All of us have sinned and fallen short of Gods expectation and there is only one person who can save us and make us right again. His name is Jesus and you can ask him right now to come in and be the Lord in your life

If you invite him into your life everything in your life turns from death to life, sin to salvation, hopelessness into everlasting joy

I can guarantee that if you do, your life will be so more meaningful and filled with purpose and a sense of destiny! Would you like to ask him into your life right now?

PRAYER

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