

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

A weekly study to strengthen families

This Is Not a Prison: It's a Cocoon

BY PASTOR BRIAN JONES

Luke 4:1-4, 14-15 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God... And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Before Jesus began His public ministry, the Spirit led Him into the wilderness where He was tempted by the devil for forty days. The Scripture then states that Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit. The Greek word used for wilderness in verse one means "aloneness or loneliness, barren, solitude." Throughout the Scriptures, we find that at transitional moments God's people were led into the wilderness where they experienced loneliness, solitude, testing, and development prior to moving forward with the plan of God for their lives (Deuteronomy 8:2-3, Matthew 3:1, Isaiah 40:3-5, Galatians 1:17). If embraced, these experiences, though difficult, were transformative. Unfortunately, some of God's people did not embrace the wilderness experience and fell (1 Corinthians 10:7-11). Many of those that fell did not understand the purpose and potential of the wilderness experience.



Application

The COVID-19 crisis has driven us into a type of wilderness. All of us are experiencing some degree of loneliness and solitude. Sometimes we even feel trapped, like we are in a prison. The apostle Paul tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2). The English equivalent of the Greek word for transformed is metamorphose. It means a complete change of nature, similar to that of a caterpillar metamorphosing into a butterfly while in its cocoon. Wilderness experiences, when viewed appropriately and understood, can become the cocoons that the Lord uses to transform us for His purposes. How we see the wilderness experience will determine how we leave it. Either, like Jesus, we will return in the POWER of the Spirit, or we will leave unchanged, perhaps even in worse condition (1 Corinthians 10:7-11).

Discussion

1. What is the Lord teaching us in this wilderness experience?
2. What can we learn from Jesus' wilderness experience?
3. Why is this wilderness experience a transitional moment for the church?
4. Is it too late to change how we see our wilderness experience?
5. How do we embrace this wilderness experience to ensure we are transformed?

Prayer Focus

1. Pray the blindness off the eyes of God's people so that they see this crisis as a cocoon instead of as a prison.
2. Pray that the Lord would bless His people with a hunger to seek Him and take advantage of this current wilderness experience.
3. Pray that the current crisis would be transformative for the body of Christ and prepare them to be conduits for His glory.