

into the woods

PART 1

REAL PEOPLE
REAL STORIES
A REAL GOD

FOR A
BETTER STORY.

Less hurry.
More Jesus.

INTO A
BETTER
STORY

THE BIG IDEA

Getting into the woods is not about escaping life.

It's about creating space to be with God so that we can reenter life differently.

THE WHITE NOISE OF LIFE

We live with a constant hum. It might sound like busyness, a full calendar, notifications, social media, the demands of others, and a hundred other things.

- Business
- Full calendar
- Always somewhere to go
- Always something to do
- Productivity
- Deadlines
- Pressure to produce
- Text messages
- Client calls
- Emails after 5:00
- Social media
- Podcasts
- Video games
- Netflix
- News cycles
- Group texts
- Other people's needs

Just like a sound machine masks other noises when we sleep, the white noise of life can keep us from being aware of what's happening emotionally, from connecting with the people we love most, and from hearing from God.

INTO THE WOODS

That's why Jesus, throughout the Gospels, made it a habit to get away from the white noise of life. He withdrew and retreated—from the demands, the pressure, the crowds, and the constant needs.

The Greek word *erēmos* can refer to a wilderness, desert, or solitary place.

For Jesus, it was the woods—to be alone with His Father.



A QUICK REVIEW

Last week we saw that getting into the woods was:

- **Rhythmic**, not random.
- **Consistent**, not just in crisis.

It's where we experience:

- **Communion** with God
- **Renewal** of our souls
- **Clarity** for faithful living

TODAY'S QUESTION

How do we get into the woods?

What does it practically look like to be alone with God? No matter where you are on your faith journey—new, exploring, or seasoned—what does it actually look like?

COMMON OBJECTIONS

- "This sounds appealing."
- "I don't know how."
- "I've tried this before and it didn't really work."
- "I don't have time."
- "My time with God isn't what it used to be."

The three practices we'll unpack today can reshape your heart, soul, mind, and faith—no matter where you are.

BACK TO THE BASICS

These aren't earth-shattering, but I can always grow. We're really good at overcomplicating things. Sometimes the thing we need most is getting back to the basics.



MEDITATE ON THIS WEEK

MARK 1:29-39

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed... So he went throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

LUKE 5:15-16

Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

MATTHEW 14:13, 23

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place... After he had dismissed the crowd, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.

PSALM 46:1-11

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way... Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.

PSALM 62:1-8

Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken... Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.



FOUR QUESTIONS TO BUILD A PLAN

- 1 **WHEN?** (What time?)
- 2 **WHERE?** (Where will you go?)
- 3 **WHAT?** (What will you do?)
- 4 **HOW LONG?** (What's realistic?)



CONSISTENCY TRUMPS INTENSITY

It's not about how long you're there. It's about how often you come back. Transformation is cumulative.



GET INTO THE WOODS

Meet with God. Hear His voice. Respond honestly. Experience communion, renewal, and clarity.

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PART 1

WHY DO WE NEED TO GET INTO THE WOODS?

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SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY

REAL CONVERSATIONS.
REAL CHANGE.



*"Come with me
by yourselves to
a quiet place and
get some rest."*

MARK 6:31

GROUP GUIDELINES

- Be honest
- Be respectful
- Be a good listener
- Keep it confidential
- Encourage one another
- Point each other to Jesus

Better
Together



GETTING STARTED

1. What's your favorite place to get away and be alone? Why?
2. What's one thing that usually keeps you from slowing down?



READ TOGETHER

Read each passage aloud as a group. Take your time and let it sink in.

Mark 6:31

Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.

Psalms 23:1-3

The Lord is my shepherd,
I lack nothing.

Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Luke 5:15-16

Jesus often went to lonely places to pray.



DISCUSS TOGETHER

1. Why do we need to get into the woods?
2. What does this week's message teach us about the importance of slowing down and being with Jesus?
3. What can we learn from Jesus' example of going to quiet places?
4. How does rest and time with God change the way you see people, situations, and yourself?
5. What are some of the distractions that keep you from getting into the woods during your regular week?
6. How might getting into the woods help you become more like Jesus?
7. What is one practical step you can take this week to spend more time with God?
8. How can our group encourage and support each other in this?



PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

- Choose one specific time and place to get into the woods this week (silence and solitude, meditating on Scripture, or prayer).
- Remove one distraction that usually keeps you from being with God.
- Share your plan with the group and ask someone to check in with you next week.



PRAY TOGETHER

- Thank God for the invitation to be with Him.
- Ask for help to slow down and spend intentional time with Jesus.
- Pray for courage to remove distractions.
- Pray that as we get into the woods, we will become more like Jesus and live with a clearer focus.