

God Where Are You?
Embrace the Process
April 27/28, 2019

Proverbs 17:3 Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the Lord tests the heart.

Job 23:8-12 (NKJV or NLT) But if I go to the east, he is not there; if I go to the west, I do not find him. When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him. But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, **I will come forth as gold**. My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.

3 Steps to God's Plan:

- ✓ Promise. (Glimpse of our future)
- ✓ Process. (Wilderness)
- ✓ Promotion. (Promise fulfilled)

1 Peter 1:6-7 In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

The Wilderness is NOT:

- ✓ Disapproval.

Deuteronomy 8:2 Remember how the Lord your God led you through the wilderness for these forty years, humbling you and testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would obey his commands.

- ✓ Punishment.

John 15:1-2 I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

- ✓ God abandoning us.

Hebrews 13: 5 I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.

Psalm 63:1-2 O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

- ✓ A time to accept defeat.

James 1:2-8 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

1. Recognize what is really going on.

1 Peter 4:12 “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.”

2. Cooperate with God's growth process.

Hebrews 5:7-8 While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him...Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.

3. Ask for God's help.

2 Corinthians 1:8-9 “We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God.”

4. Keep a good attitude.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (MSG) So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.

Walk Away: The wilderness is not the place where we are to lay down, but it is the place to be courageous and do the will of the Lord.