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## The Wilderness Journey (Part 1): **LESS DISTRACTION**

**Matthew 4:1** "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil."

Is the wilderness necessary for everyone?

One major advantage of the wilderness is the absence of distraction! Distraction is probably the single most effective weapon the enemy uses to keep us from reaching our calling for the kingdom.

- **The question is, distraction from what?**

**Matthew 22:34-38** "But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. **35** And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. **36** "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" **37** And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. **38** This is the great and first commandment."

We as fallen creatures need to routinely examine ourselves to make sure that we are not being consumed by the lesser things.

**Luke 10:40-42** "But Martha was distracted by all the preparations to be made. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord replied, "you are worried and upset about many things. But only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the

good portion, and it will not be taken away from her.”

We live in an unprecedented time in history where life is filled to overflowing with stuff. It could be work, or leisure but to be sure it gets filled.

A new form of anxiety has overtaken us by storm: FOMO

- **What is FOMO?**

It's the fear of missing out, a form of social anxiety. It involves a pervasive apprehension that others might be engaging in rewarding activities that you could miss out on.

Putting it into perspective: God is not something you add to your life for a little more excitement, a sense of meaning, or an emotional boost. He is not something meant to fill in the “empty” space in our lives. People often speak about God as if He exist for us but in reality, we exist for Him.

Jesus is not content to be an accessory to your life. His love consumed Him to the point of self sacrifice, and He is going to form a people similarly consumed by their love for Him. The fact that He tolerates so much of our deep self-centeredness is a profound demonstration of His humility, patience, love and long suffering.

1. He needs to be number one in everything we do. This means “going against the tide” in todays modern culture.
2. Its time to change FOMO into JOMO, The Joy of Missing Out!

Let's look at marriage. When a young man or woman falls in love there are certain things that change in life:

- Friends
- Lifestyles
- Pastimes

You lose some freedom but it's done willingly because you've discovered an altogether superior pleasure. The value we place on someone or something is expressed by what your willing to give up to obtain it.

**Matthew 13:44-46** "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. **45** "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, **46** who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it."

**Matthew 10:34-39** "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. **35** For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. **36** And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. **37** Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. **38** And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. **39** Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

- **Bringing it home to salvation**

When you are reluctant to lose something in order to obtain the knowledge of God, you demonstrate your perception of the value of the knowledge of God. We are quick to receive the free gift of

salvation yet reluctant to pay much in return. This may indicate we do not value salvation as much as we think we do!

When we value our salvation it will show in the transformation of our life. We will talk differently, our choices for entertainment will change, relationships will change, and overall your life will not be the same! This does not mean abandoning your familial responsibilities of no longer working or any other biblical responsibilities.

Choosing the wilderness means you have to be intentional. It means making choices and for the most part drastic choices. It means choosing Him above all else. It means considering Him the treasures of all treasures.

**Proverbs 2** My son, if you receive my words  
 and treasure up my commandments with you,  
**2** making your ear attentive to wisdom  
 and inclining your heart to understanding;  
**3** yes, if you call out for insight  
 and raise your voice for understanding,  
**4** if you seek it like silver  
 and search for it as for hidden treasures,  
**5** then you will understand the fear of the LORD  
 and find the knowledge of God.  
**6** For the LORD gives wisdom;  
 from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;  
**7** he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;  
 he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,  
**8** guarding the paths of justice  
 and watching over the way of his saints.  
**9** Then you will understand righteousness and justice  
 and equity, every good path; will be rooted out of it.  
**10** for wisdom will come into your heart,  
 and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;  
**11** discretion will watch over you,

- understanding will guard you,  
**12** delivering you from the way of evil,  
from men of perverted speech,  
**13** who forsake the paths of uprightness  
to walk in the ways of darkness,  
**14** who rejoice in doing evil  
and delight in the perverseness of evil,  
**15** men whose paths are crooked,  
and who are devious in their ways.  
**16** So you will be delivered from the forbidden woman,  
from the adulteress with her smooth words,  
**17** who forsakes the companion of her youth  
and forgets the covenant of her God;  
**18** for her house sinks down to death,  
and her paths to the departed;  
**19** none who go to her come back,  
nor do they regain the paths of life.  
**20** So you will walk in the way of the good  
and keep to the paths of the righteous.  
**21** For the upright will inhabit the land,  
and those with integrity will remain in it,  
**22** but the wicked will be cut off from the land,  
and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.