

Running for Dear Life
Growth Group Discussion Guide
1 Samuel 23:13-29, Psalm 57

Intro questions

- When you think of the wilderness (literally—off-the grid, “great-outdoors” wilderness), what sentiment do you have? Is it a place you want to be? Why or why not?
- Take a moment to pray, asking for God’s Spirit to lead your discussion.
- Besides the instance in today’s sermon, try to think of all the stories you can recall in Scripture, when people spend a long time in “the wilderness” (literally or figuratively). What role does that season play in their life or the lives of their people? (Pastor Josh described “the wilderness” as a season when someone is stuck between point A and point B, in a place they don’t want to be, or in a time of painful waiting.)

- 1. Invite anyone who feels comfortable to share about a *past* season when they were in “the wilderness,” figuratively.** How did they survive or thrive during that season? What effect did it have on the trajectory of their life? *(Feel free to spend a good deal of time on this portion of the discussion, if your group members are interested. Knowing this history about each other will bring great relational value).*
- 2. Do any of you feel that you are in a season of wilderness presently?** If so, please share. How are you experiencing this season? How can we support you as you walk through it?

We’ll spend the rest of our time looking at David’s prayer in the wilderness, in Psalm 57. *If you prefer to spend time reviewing the narrative passage in 1 Samuel 23:13-29, feel free to do so. You might discuss it using the “Swedish Method,” provided in this week’s email.*

3. Read Psalm 57, then discuss the following.

- For anyone who missed the sermon, describe the season of life that David was experiencing. What were his present circumstances?
- What parts of David’s prayer are most striking to you?
- What honest emotions does David express to God here?
- What is the difference between taking refuge in some entity such as a cave (in David’s case), versus taking refuge in God himself?
 - What other kinds of things tend to be refuges for you?
 - What does it look like to find refuge in God himself?
- Do your prayers contain this kind of raw, honest emotions? Why or why not?
- In v. 3, David describes how God sends his love and faithfulness.
 - Have you ever had an experience when you felt God sending his love and faithfulness especially for you, in your difficult circumstances? How did that experience come about?

- What seems to be David's chief desire here, based on the repeated refrain of vv. 5 and 11?
 - What would this desire look like practically, if it came to fruition?
 - How do you think David arrives at this place, when he is so concerned over the immediate threat?
- Where does the mood of the prayer seem to turn, in your estimation? Why?
- On Sunday, Pastor Josh said, "**If you want to experience God's love and faithfulness with you in the wilderness, you need to see him going there for you.**"
 - How does this work out practically? How can your understanding of the gospel impact the way you experience God in the wilderness?

4. Prayer

- Praise God for the gospel, and ask him to make it real to your hearts.
- Pray for one another about the present challenges that have been mentioned.