

Couples In Bloom – Why a Wilderness?

July 2010

The purpose of a wilderness experience is different than the way it makes us feel. God's nature is good, so we need to find His redeeming purposes in our wilderness times. Our enemy *does* look for opportunities to attack us ⇒ 1 Peter 5:8; Luke 4:13... two things *specifically* in our wilderness: *to break our: 1. faith in God*, and *2. holy regard for God* ⇒ Deuteronomy 32:51. He wants us to demand proofs from God and to be contentious, as these will cut off God's blessing from us, as it did for Moses ⇒ Deuteronomy 32:52.

Knowing the truth makes all the difference when we go through our wilderness!

The basics:

1. God prepared the wilderness *for us, not against us* ⇒ Mark 1:12; Revelation 12:6.
2. The wilderness is where we receive *manna* ((spiritual) food from God) ⇒ John 6:31.
3. The wilderness grows and *strengthens us* so we can minister afterwards ⇒ Luke 1:80.

Some specifics:

- ✓ The wilderness can *destroy* people who miss the point (so don't) ⇒ Numbers 32:13.
- ✓ The wilderness humbles, tests, and *helps* us (we see it later) ⇒ Deuteronomy 8:16.
- ✓ God is *preserving* us in the wilderness for however long it lasts ⇒ Deuteronomy 29:5.
- ✓ God is *not forsaking* us in the wilderness (it will seem like He is) ⇒ Nehemiah 9:19.
- ✓ Do *not complain* against God in the wilderness (we will feel like it) ⇒ Psalm 78:19.
- ✓ God is actually *shepherding* us (not harming us) in the wilderness ⇒ Psalm 78:52.
- ✓ A contentious woman can be *worse* than any wilderness experience ⇒ Proverbs 21:19.
(our enemy will try to leverage our wilderness against our marriage; do not let him).
- ✓ We will *not bear* fruit in the wilderness (God is preparing new fruit) ⇒ Isaiah 32:15.
- ✓ The wilderness is a *dry time* in our life (God knows it is necessary) ⇒ Isaiah 50:2.
- ✓ We will be *tempted* in the wilderness (we must depend on God for help) ⇒ Mark 1:13.

It is a spiritual compliment and a holy privilege to have a wilderness experience as a Christian whose heart is toward the Lord. Sin can cause grief in our life which may *seem* like a wilderness, but is merely reaping what we sowed ⇒ Galatians 6:7-8. If *that* happens, we use the *same advice* above to stay close to God as He helps us through.

The Bible has a lot more to say about the wilderness. **The goal is not to shorten the wilderness time, but to get the blessing God has for us in it.** ♥ Loren & Kathy Falzone

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