

Tested in the Wilderness I

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and balance in the Christian life, highlighting the need to combine the inner working of the Spirit with the renewing of the mind through the Word of God.

Duration: 48:06

Scripture: Psalm 139:23

Topics: "Wilderness", "Wilderness Testing", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the significance of understanding God's work in our lives, particularly during times of testing in the wilderness. He explains that these tests serve to prove, try, and ultimately transform us, revealing the true state of our hearts and our reliance on God. The sermon highlights the importance of balancing spiritual experiences with intellectual understanding of God's Word, as both are essential for spiritual growth. Beach encourages believers to embrace the challenges they face, recognizing them as opportunities for growth and deeper faith in Christ. He concludes by urging the congregation to seek God's grace in overcoming self and to remain steadfast in their journey of faith.

Transcript

At this time, I would like to be able to minister from the Scriptures this morning, and by the Word of God, and through the Word of God, the help of the Holy Spirit, we're going to be able to gain further insight into what it is that God is doing in our life. I want to encourage everyone to be very mindful of this short but powerful teaching from the Word of God this morning, because it will indeed serve as a source of continual encouragement and strength to you as a Christian during your earthly pilgrimage serving the Lord. Just as we ministered on Wednesday night on observations during a storm, observations during a storm, we learned some unchanging facts about storms that Christians go through, that if we would remember these by constantly going to the Word of God, they would prove to be a source of incredible encouragement and strength for us during the times when we are, in fact, in the middle of a tempest, stormy sea.

And I believe that this morning we have another message from the Lord that will once again give to us understanding. You know, the word understanding is a very wonderful word. It was a burden in the heart of Paul.

It was a burden in the heart of Peter. It was simply reflecting the burden that is in God's heart ultimately for all of those that are truly His. And that is that we would understand, that we would comprehend, that we would be aware of.

Well, there's various different things that God's Word teaches us that God wants us to be aware of. First of all, there's that we would comprehend the love of God, and know the love of God, and experience the love of God, and know it not just theoretically, but know it in an experiential way, a way that it actually affects what we do and how we act towards other people. That is something that the Lord wants.

Another aspect that the Word of God teaches regarding God's will for us to understand is the hope of our calling. What our calling is. The riches that are ours in Christ.

That's another aspect of our salvation that God wants us to understand. So, we find that as God deals with His church through the Word of God and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, there's two things constantly occurring. There is the work that God is doing in the inner man in the depths of the Spirit.

The work that God is doing in the inner man in the depths of the Spirit, the transforming, the changing, the effects of grace, the effects of the Word of God, the effects of the Spirit of God in our inner man changing us, developing us, causing us to become more and more inwardly in accord to the truth of God's Word. But not only is God working in an inner way, but God is also wanting to work in us and cause our understanding and our mind to be renewed and fruitful. See, at times, the Spirit of God will do something in us that is not necessarily understood by our understanding.

It doesn't disannoy what God is doing. It doesn't make what God is doing any less. But it is not God's will for us to be under the influence of a mystical thing that's occurring in our life without our understanding to be fruitful.

This was the problem of the Corinthian church. They were excelling in spiritual gifts and spiritual manifestations, but their fruitful understanding was not being enlightened. So they got more involved in mystical things that God was doing, and their minds were not working along with the Spirit, being renewed so that they could intelligently understand what God is doing.

So it's the burden of God that His church, those who have been purchased among men by the blood of the Lamb, the elect of God, it's what it says, the elect of God, those whom God has chosen to save. It is important that we would experience both aspects. There are those who are incredibly enlightened intellectually, their minds are what you would consider to be renewed to a degree in that they understand the theology of God and the Bible, but the inner mystical working of the Holy Spirit greatly lacks.

So there is a mental consent, but there is a great lack within. Then on the other side of the pendulum, there are those who excel in spiritual things, they excel in spiritual experiences, they excel in the moving of the Holy Spirit, the filling of the Holy Spirit, being carried by the Holy Spirit, led by the Holy Spirit, sensing divine leadings in their life, involved in praying in the Spirit, where their minds are not necessarily understanding, and there's a place for that. But they neglect the renewing of the mind, they neglect the intelligent Word of God that interprets what the Spirit is doing.

So they have a tendency to drift off into no-man's land, where everything is just sort of, well, there's no real absolutes, just how the Spirit leads you, and so on and so forth, and that's a dangerous place, because God never saved us in order that we would commit intellectual suicide, so that everything that we do has no bearing as far as our mind is concerned, but it's all coming from the Spirit. No, no, no, no. The mind and the Spirit need to work together.

You see, God is a Spirit, and He is life, but He's given us the Word, and the Word renews the mind, so that the mind can understand what the inner working of the Spirit is doing. So a healthy church, a healthy people, a healthy, balanced local church is one that is yielded and open to anything that the Spirit wants to do, and at the same moment, is being taught and enlightened in their mind so that they understand what God is doing, so that we combine the two, the two spiritual dynamics, and that's what makes us healthy, whole, spiritual men and women who are able to minister by the Spirit, in the Spirit, meet the inner needs of people, meet the very depths of a person's problem by the Spirit, but then on the other hand, be able to sit down and intelligently explain, well, this is what God is doing. See? And when you combine those two, you've got a healthy, healthy church, and this is what the Lord wants in the Word.

You'll notice that many times in the book of Revelation, when Jesus is talking to His churches, you'll notice that He oftentimes commends them for their service, for their perseverance, for their hatred toward what is evil, but then He will correct them and condemn them because they have neglected the intelligent, systematic teaching of the Word of God, which oftentimes results in false teaching and false things that get in. So there's that balance there that the Lord wants to produce in us, and you'll find, as a Christian, the dealing in your God, the dealing in your life will go from one to the other. God will begin to do something in the depths of your spirit, man, and then when it's time, He'll begin to enlighten your mind in the Word as to what He's doing in your spirit.

Or sometimes He will minister to you and give you an understanding of something that He wants to do in you, and then He'll do it. It's almost like, if I could use this illustration real quick, I don't even know how to draw it, but I guess we'll just do it like that. Believe it or not, that's a bird.

Now that takes a real step of faith, doesn't it? That's a bird, okay? We'll put a tail on there and a little beak or something. Now this aspect here can be understood as a bird. Now this bird flies when both wings work properly, but if you cut this wing off and put it down here, the bird's just going to fly in a circle like this.

It's not going to really take off, and vice versa, if you cut this wing off and put it down there, then the bird's going to fly in the opposite direction, but it's going to go in a circle. It's not going to go anywhere. It's not going to have direction.

It's not going to be fruitful, the bird. And that's the way it is in this little exhortation even before we get into our teaching. We can't neglect either of these two aspects of the work of God in the church.

Here is the work of God, and it's the Spirit, which delves into the heart and being led by the Spirit of God and the life and the water and the spiritual realities of only the Holy Spirit can do it. And this is all true. We never neglect this.

But then on the other hand, we can't neglect the Word of God, which quickens the mind and causes the mind to intelligently understand the mystical workings of the Holy Spirit. If you cut one off, you've got leaven for error. You've got leaven for error.

And the blessing of the Lord will eventually, not immediately, but eventually will lift. And when the blessing of God lifts, then you've got all manner of things that come in. So we have to do justice to both.

God, in His dealing, never neglects either of these two. You can trace church history. If you're a student of church history and you'll find that the problems in church history, in Christendom in general, always occurred when one of these two wings were neglected, even to the point of cutting them off.

We have right before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the early 1900s, we have incredible ecclesiastical understanding. We have incredible theology. We have incredible orthodox.

We have faithfulness to the letter of the law. But we neglect the Spirit. So God comes and pours out His Spirit and begins to bring the water back into the church, the presence, the quickening power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then what we have is we have the group that has a tendency to throw out the word, to throw out the systematic study of the Word of God and just go off into the spirit realm at the neglect of the Word of God. Which means our spirit is ministered to, but our mind remains unfaithful and unrenewed. And this results in all manner of trouble too.

So God seeks to establish a balance. Jesus always had the balance. Jesus, He was the Son of God.

He was the water of God in person. What did He do? He ministered life to people and He intelligently taught them at the same time. Jesus just didn't go around, you'll be healed.

Some people get the idea that being led by God is like that. You know, this mystical thing where life just flows but there's no communication, there's no talking, there's no understanding being imparted. Not so.

Jesus ministered life and He intelligently taught and communicated at the same time. Which means He was faithful, perfectly faithful to both aspects of God's working in our life. Okay, I want to, if I may, for a short time, just bring your attention to... Well, there's several scriptures that I'd like to look at.

First of all, let's go to Psalm 139. Psalm 139. After we read these scriptures, we're going to draw an illustration on this board here in order for us to understand possibly more fully a particular aspect of these scriptures.

Psalm 139. Now, while you're turning to Psalm 139, I'm going to make a few statements. And these statements basically are the substance of the little lesson this morning.

This is very, very important that we understand this. Psalm 139. And we're going to be looking specifically at verses 23 and 24.

Now, listen to these statements. Okay? A man is not proven faithful until he's given an opportunity to be unfaithful. Now, I say a man, I'm referring to both men and women.

A man is not proven to be one who is thankful until he is given an opportunity to be unthankful. A man is not proven to be content until he is given an opportunity to be discontent. So, consequently, the faithful and the content and the thankful are those who not by mere profession, I am faithful, I am thankful, are, but become the faithful and the thankful and the content by God's dealing in their life, arranging circumstances where they are able to be the opposite, but through grace and through the working of the Holy Spirit and through the power of God working in them, they choose, they yield to God's way rather than their own corrupt way.

Alright. What is God doing? I want to write it down here. The wilderness... I always get mixed up writing on the board here.

The wilderness... Here we go. Test. We're going for a short time this morning give you some meat to hold on to that will help you see what God is doing in your life right now.

The wilderness test. Number one, to prove you. To prove you.

Number two, to try you. And number three, to ultimately transform you. The wilderness test is so that God may prove you and try you and transform you.

Now, He does this by liberating, liberating our will. He liberates our will. Listen.

From self love to Christ love. Now, Psalm 139, verse 23 and 24. Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Try me and know my thoughts. And here the psalmist is pleading with God. Now, if we would go to Psalm 139, or not Psalm 139, I'm sorry.

We're looking at Jeremiah chapter 17. You don't necessarily have to turn to it. I'm not going to stay there.

We've preached from this before. But the reason why the psalmist is begging God to search his heart is because he realizes, as Jeremiah realized in Jeremiah chapter 17, verse 9, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? So, the reason why the psalmist here is pleading with God and begging God to search his heart is because he realizes that apart from divine revelation, listen, apart from divine revelation and scrutiny, it is impossible for a man to know his heart.

Who can know the heart? Ah, but then we read in Jeremiah, I, the Lord, know the heart, and I search the heart. Okay? Now, search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts.

And see if there be any wicked way in me. Now, if you remember in 1 Corinthians chapter 4, 1 Corinthians chapter 4, Paul says, Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.

Now, as far as Paul being found faithful, in verse 3 he says, But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment. Yea, I judge not mine own self. See? Paul was living by the same principle that the psalmist was living by in Psalm 139, which also Jeremiah was living by in Jeremiah chapter 17.

And the principle was, verse number 4, 1 Corinthians chapter 4, For I know nothing by myself. In other words, Paul is saying, There is nothing that I am consciously aware of that is not right with me. That is wrong in my heart that is not right as far as my relationship with God.

Paul is saying, I don't know of anything against myself. But notice what he says here. Yet am I not hereby justified, but he that judges me is the Lord.

Here's what he's saying. God alone knows my heart. Number 1. Number 2. I don't consciously have any awareness that there's an area in my life that's not pleasing to the Lord that I am neglecting to take care of.

In other words, Paul is saying, I'm up to date in my walk with God. 10 minutes before I wrote this epistle, now I'm just reading into it to give us, 10 minutes before I wrote this epistle, I came before the Lord, I was washed in the blood, my heart was right, nothing was troubling me. To the best of my awareness, I have yielded my life fully to my Savior.

And praise God, I don't know of anything that is standing between me and the Lord. But then he says, however, that doesn't mean, that doesn't mean that there's nothing lurking within me that isn't right. In

other words, Paul says, I'm not justified because I don't know of anything, because it's the Lord who ultimately searches my heart and is committed to revealing to me on a daily basis things that aren't right.

So here's the principle in three places. Psalms, Jeremiah, and here Paul. Now remember, as a believer, we are free to be able to come to the Lord and let Him reveal the things that lurk within us because we don't fear condemnation.

We don't fear condemnation. These things don't come about in order to condemn us. They come about so that we can share more in the depth to self and become more like Jesus, like the song we sang.

So, in Psalm 139, it says, search me, O God, know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Now, I want to invite you to go to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 8. Deuteronomy chapter 8. Deuteronomy chapter 8. I'm going to read verses 1 through 3. Now, we're developing, we're developing. What are we doing? We are developing scriptural understanding.

This is going to make our mind fruitful so that we understand what God is doing with us spiritually. Deuteronomy chapter 8. All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live and multiply and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee forty years in the wilderness.

Listen to this. To humble thee and to prove thee to know what was in thine heart. Listen.

Whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no. Verse 3. And He humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger and fed thee with manna which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that He might make thee to know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Ah, beloved.

Incredible, incredible insight in the Word of God this morning. Now, here's the little illustration and we'll try and close on this. I qualified it by saying try, so I'm not held accountable.

Okay, now here's the illustration. We have right here the human heart and we have here Jesus is Lord of this person, okay? God the Father is the Father, is the true Father of this person here. But in this human heart, okay, self.

Self-love. And these things are inbred deep within the human heart. Now, in accordance to the Scriptures that we read, when this human heart is regenerated and God's Spirit is dwelling in this human heart, a cry, a cry begins to arise to the Father.

A cry begins to come out. It's a prayer. And it's the same prayer that we read in Psalm 139.

Search me, O God, know my heart today. Try me, O Savior, see if there be any wicked way in me. The result of being genuinely saved that begins immediately and begins to grow in the life of a child of God and never stops, never stops until the Lord releases us from this body of death or the rapture occurs.

But what happens is there's an incredible cry that begins to rise up. And what it is, it's the child. It's Ah, the Father.

Lord, You are my Father. I want to be like You. I don't want anything.

I don't want to be committed to anything or be in allegiance to anything. I don't want any idols. I don't want any secret lovers in my life.

I want to be holy, Thine body, soul, and spirit. Now, people have that desire to different degrees in relation to where they're at in the Lord. And just because a child or a Christian doesn't have that desire consuming them doesn't mean that they're not one of the Lords.

And you shouldn't judge them and be critical. God is committed to cause that desire to rise up. He works with us all differently.

But ultimately, this is what's happening. Oh, God, make me like You, Jesus. Oh, Lord, show me how ugly sin is.

Lord, I want to love righteousness and hate iniquity. See? Okay. This is the prayer that's rising up to the Lord.

And the Father, in turn, responds. He responds. He responds.

And here's how He responds. Wilderness. Wilderness.

And wilderness here. What He does is He subjects our life into a wilderness. And in subjecting our life into a wilderness, here's what happens.

Our prayer. Oh, Lord, show me what I am. Show me if there's any evil that lurks within.

Suddenly, our prayer starts getting answered. And from the depths of our heart begins to surface. See? The wilderness presses up against us.

Now, presses up against us. That results in the surfacing. Let's just call this dross.

Hay. Wood. Stubble.

Okay? We could specify it. I have a whole list here. 30 things.

The deep inner things that come out. I don't know if I'm going to get into them or not. But let's just try and stay general now and get the frame painted here.

We've got the wilderness. God subjects His children into the wilderness. Now, remember Deuteronomy chapter 8. Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee 40 years in the wilderness.

Now, 40 years. The word 40 in the Scripture is a number that suggests the time of testing. See, every Christian believer is brought into the 40-year testing.

That's a perfect number. That signifies God's faithfulness in subjecting His people into the wilderness in order to what? In order to surface in them all the chaff, all the hay, all the dross, all the stubble, all of the deep, deep things that are in South life in order to give them an opportunity to what? Forsake these things and grow in their love and commitment for God. So, this is what's happening right now.

We're in a wilderness and as the pressures begin to press us. Now, we could begin to describe certain things like what could one wilderness be? No job. How many in the past five years have had either their job taken from them or there was changes in the job that really brought pressure to your life? Sure, we

have a lot of hands going up.

So, here we have job. Now, along with job comes finances. How many have found that there's been trying times financially in your life? Okay.

Now, we can have another thing. What else? What else? Poor health. Okay, poor health.

Job. Brother Job experienced that wilderness, didn't he? Huh? Okay, the list can go on and on. Now, these are external forces that are pressing up against us.

But now let me ask a question. If God is Lord and you are a Christian, then you didn't lose your job in happenstance. This didn't happen, but God was allowing.

He was behind it. Your health problems. The Bible says if the sparrow falls to the ground, the Father knows what's going on in your life.

He's your God. He's your Lord. Now, here's the question.

What happened to you when this wilderness of job trouble and health trouble came to you? What started surfacing? Now, see, before the job we say I am thankful to God and I am content. That's what we thought. Okay? Now, when we lose the job, what begins to surface in the heart? Grumbling.

Complaining. Bickering. So, what does God do? Deuteronomy chapter 8. Forty years in the wilderness to humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or not.

Now, see, the commandment of the Lord is be thankful in all things. Does that mean when I don't have a job and my finances are cut off and I don't know how I'm going to get my bills and I might have to sell my home and all my plans might be destroyed regarding retirement and everything? What do you mean, Lord? What happened? See what God's doing? See, He's answering your prayer. Remember your prayer as a Christian? Oh, Lord, show me what's in my heart.

Well, He just did. What do you think? Isn't it marvelous? You say, marvelous? It's terrible. No, it's not, beloved.

It's not terrible. I understand sin is terrible. And you should learn to hate that sin.

But thank God that this happened and this happened so you could see this. Because before that you were living in self-deception. You really thought you were thankful.

You didn't know the truth about yourself. But God did. Now, do you remember the opening statement that I made? A man is not found to be faithful until he's given the opportunity to what? Be unfaithful.

A man is not proven and found to be, listen, thankful until he's given the opportunity to be unthankful. The Bible says, let all things be done without grumbling and complaining. Well, that's easy to do if you've got nothing to grumble and complain about.

Simple. I mean, hey, what's so hard about not grumbling and not complaining? I mean, I live in my ivory palace. I've got everything I need.

I mean, I just do what I want. I'm thankful. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Lord. I mean, I don't grumble about anything. I've got a nice waterbed.

Forgive me, Joe. Joe's waterbed got a leak in it. And I'm telling you, that was a wilderness trial.

But, you know, he rejoiced. You say, well, how come Joe rejoiced? Is he holy? No. He's made of what? You.

But here's what happened. Watch this now. Look.

Look, the waterbed broke. All of a sudden he got wet and wondered what was going on. And how many gallons does that thing have, Joe? Quite a few gallons.

I mean, that's a king-sized waterbed. So here's what happened. God was entrusting Joe with an opportunity.

What kind of an opportunity? To choose. Now, see, listen. Christian maturity never occurs apart from our... Listen.

Christian maturity never occurs apart from our changing... Listen. It's a change where I choose to yield to the grace of God and to the provision in Christ rather than to what? The things that serve. Now, what could have surfaced in Joe's life that maybe was there, but he wasn't sure of, he didn't see it, when all the waterbed problems occurred? Well, he could have complained.

He could have got angry. He could have begun to... You know, like, this isn't fair. Okay? At that moment, Joe was in a wilderness.

And God was looking down. Seeing. You know, I'm just saying this.

God knew, but just to make it so we can... I wonder what Joe's going to do. I wonder if he's going to grow. Or if he's going to stay in the wilderness.

Now, see, the Israelites stayed in the wilderness and died. What does that mean? It doesn't mean that they lost their salvation if they really believed the Lord. It just means that they never, they never allowed God to grow them up.

They never allowed God to grow them up. See, because it takes responsibility to grow up. We have to, by grace, we say no to self and yes to God.

So, Joe, at that moment of crisis, the wilderness was pressing. Self was surfacing. Lord, Jesus, you love me.

Your word says all things work together for good. The trying of your faith worketh patience. Lord, I can see that a breath away, I'm a breath away from grumbling, but I'm also a breath away from saying thank you, Jesus, for entrusting me with this trial to build character in me.

Lord, you've provided all the power I need in Christ to say thank you. I'm not going to yield to this old self. The Bible says my old self is dead.

My old self shouldn't rise up and complain. That's useless fruit in God's eyes. That's chaff, that's stubble.

God's redeemed me from that. Lord, Jesus, I look to you. I look to you, Lord.

I don't want this sin to grab a hold of me. It's there, but it's reckoned. I'm not going to yield to it, Lord.

I'm going to look to you. Father, develop in me a thankful heart. Develop in me the character of Christ.

And lo and behold, what happens? God puts him in the test. What's in the heart is revealed. He is humbled and he appropriates by faith the provision of Christ and overcomes the grumbling, overcomes the complaining and finds the fragrance of Christ's life flowing through instead.

And Christ's life will say, thank you, Father, for this bed. Thank you, Lord, even though it's an inconvenience, I'm growing. Thank you, Lord.

And there we find victory over self-life and more Jesus life flowing through us. That's what it means to cling to the cross and appropriate the life that's in Christ. Now, that's just one illustration here.

You can take this illustration and you can make it right in conformity to your world that you're going through right now. And I want to encourage you. I want to encourage you.

There's many more Scriptures. Romans 8, verse 28. All things work together for good.

That is, when you're a child of God and you are saying, Lord, make me like you, and God puts you in a wilderness and these things start surfacing, it is for your good. What's the good? To make you more like Jesus. But you can't be made more like Jesus until you're given an opportunity to say, no, I want to stay just the way I am.

And at that moment, then, you cling to the cross, you call upon grace, Lord, have mercy, and then God appropriates in you the provision of grace. That's how you grow. A.W. Tozer said that there's no growth of grace apart from some area in our life being liberated, what we are being liberated, our human world being liberated from the allegiance to self.

A lot of times people want to be Christian, they want to be spiritual but not change. They associate being spiritual with revelation, ability to communicate truth. Not so.

A man is spiritual when he is being liberated, when his will is being liberated to self-love or commitment to self and the selfish desires within the flesh. Being liberated from this right here and being in union with the Holy Spirit and Christ in me. See, remember, Christ is in me too.

Not only is the self, but Christ is in me and I can choose to yield to Him. And when I make that decision and yield to Him, then the life flows through me. That's the life then.

And then He fills me with His life and the growth of grace continues to occur. And there's one more Scripture that we want to mention here and that's Psalm 18. Psalm 18.

This principle here. This is a very powerful Scripture. Psalm 18, verse 21.

Now we're going to close out for you. For I have kept the wilderness from mine iniquity. What is the psalmist saying here? How does this relate to the Christian? Oh, beloved, can't you see it? When Israel went through the wilderness, God was surfacing the corruptness of their human heart.

And rather than humbling themselves and yielding to God, they indulged in the sin of the flesh. When the psalmist says in verse 23, I was upright, I kept myself from mine iniquity, here's what it means. When I am

in the wilderness and all these works of the flesh are being surfaced, I, me, the sea of my affection, the real me, the one who decides, am I going to sin against God or am I going to trust God? That one, the real you.

Rather than allowing this sin to express itself through you and therefore you take on the disposition of that sin and it starts affecting your actions, instead of that, you look to the Lord Jesus Christ and you cry to Him and you find in Him the grace to overcome this self-life, what this wilderness is exposing. And that is how the Christian keeps himself from the iniquity within, by completely and entirely relying upon the person and presence of Jesus Christ in me at that moment of crisis, because that's when it counts. What happens when we fail the test? We have to go through it again.

What happens when we fail it again? We go through it again. Does God give up on us? No. Do we get to bypass the test? No.

You ever wonder why some people are always, always wandering around a certain area in their life and they never seem to grow out of it? It's because they won't learn their lesson. There's something that God is trying to surface that He wants them to break their allegiance to and they won't do it. They're gonna wander and wander and wander until God will win them and they will give that area over and find growth in that area of their life.

So here's what happens. God does not give up on us, but we don't graduate until we've learned the lesson that God wants us to learn. So be encouraged.

Stay humble. Stay close to Jesus and realize that God is working the pleasure of His will in your life through conforming you into Christ. Father, thank You for the Word of God, the working of the Holy Spirit.

I'm asking, Lord, that You will just encourage us, help us to have proper perspective. Help us to see everything happening in our life is a test. We're learning about ourself and we're learning about our need to depend upon You for everything.

Help us not be discouraged, but to find in You the grace and the power to say no to sin and self and say yes to the glorious grace of Jesus Christ. Some of you might be wandering in a wilderness and you might have been... You might be struggling with something that you've been struggling with for years and you don't know why. Maybe there's a lesson that you haven't learned and this circumstance is tormenting.

You might be financial problems. I don't know. But maybe God's trying to teach you something about yourself and bring a change.

And then once that change occurs, it all might go away. I don't know. Let Him do it.

Let's sing this song. Let's let Him minister to us.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30324.mp3>

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