

# The Cure For Spiritual Drought

by Shane Idleman

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*This sermon focuses on the importance of seeking God even in the midst of spiritual drought and wilderness experiences. It emphasizes the need to prioritize pursuing God, meditating on His word, and finding refuge under His wings. The message highlights the consequences of giving in to addictions and the importance of seeking God's help and protection in challenging times.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 63:1, Psalm 63:6, Psalm 63:11, Psalm 51:10, James 4:8, Psalm 34:17, Psalm 42:1, Psalm 23:4, Psalm 119:105, 1 Corinthians 10:13

**Topics:** "Seeking God in Difficult Times", "Finding Refuge in God's Word"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So we are in Psalm 63, and I think I'll be, again on Wednesday, I'll be preaching on Wednesday, February 7th, put that date down for sure. We've got special worship that night. Yvette set that up with a group that was also GraceFest, and they'll be here, and I think the choir is graduates of Teen Challenge.

So it's gonna be, and I'm gonna speak briefly on addiction, giving people hope, because it is, it's ravaging homes. One of the things I talked about in the video is Morgan actually had to just leave, spur of the moment, to Arizona to deal with a crisis and intervention. And I've got the same thing going on in my side of the family immediate outside of the state.

It's like, it's just amazing the damage that this is causing when we give in to addictions and different things. So that's Wednesday the 7th. Ignite, love to have you guys in here too as well.

So it's a Psalm of David, Psalm 63. It's a Psalm of David. He's in the wilderness of Judah.

Now, when you understand David's story, it gives you a little bit more perspective. Do you know why he's in the wilderness? Many theologians think it's because he is actually running from his own son. Could you imagine that? And the Old Testament was brutal.

They would kill you. Absalom is trying to take the throne and David is on the run with a lot of his people, his army. It's part of the judgment of God, I believe, on what he did with Bathsheba and different things.

But his own son has an army that's trying to take over and kill David, his father. And so he's in the wilderness. Can you imagine that? I mean, you think you're having a hard week.

I don't know. Yeah, that's just amazing. But I like what Charles Spurgeon said, David carefully made his worship suitable to his circumstances and presented to his God a wilderness hymn when he was in the wilderness.

There was no desert in his heart, though there was a desert around him. The wilderness will teach you. That wilderness heart.

If you ever want to read anyone, read Spurgeon. I believe it's called The Treasuries or The Treasures of David. The Treasuries of David, something like that.

He gives a commentary. And these guys went deep because they didn't have phone and the internet. They could spend, I get jealous sometimes.

Like, I spent 12 hours in study reading their, I'm like, whoa, that must be nice. Candle lit, right? The candlelight with the oil and the kids were probably outside playing, but it's just, these guys can write and we can get so much from them. There was no desert in his heart, though there was a desert around him.

So here's David, Psalm 63. Oh God, oh God, and you can hear his cry. Oh God, you are my God.

Early will I seek you. My soul thirsts for you. My flesh longs for you.

In a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So a couple things. His relationship with God motivated his pursuit.

Oh God, you are my God. Young adult, or if you're 88 years old, it doesn't matter. That relationship motivates pursuit.

And that's how sometimes I had to do it recently. Strengthen yourself in the Lord. Even when you don't feel like it.

Can I be honest tonight? When I got up this morning, I'm like, oh, I'm preaching tonight. I committed, I committed, I committed. But then you get in the Word, you start to worship.

Ah, I'm excited now, I'm ready. And you strengthen yourself in the Lord. And that my God, I'm dry, Lord.

Early will I seek you in that relationship with God. Your God motivates pursuit. So we say, I don't know how to pursue God.

Ask Him to help you. Focus on that relationship. And then also the power of priorities.

You are my God. Early will I seek you. He chose not to sleep in.

Nothing wrong with that from time to time, but there's a pressing priority. Right, if you've gotta get up early and go to the doctor, it's a priority. If you've gotta get up early and get your kids somewhere, it's a priority.

LAX, you gotta get, you set that alarm. I set two alarms sometimes. I usually use the alarm maybe three times in 20 years.

But for those times where I've gotta be out early, early, it's a priority for you and for me. And the power of having God as the priority will change your life. Also, he prioritized the pursuit.

He prioritized his pursuit of God. And what it did, this is interesting, it caused his thirst for God. So the way it works is even when I don't feel like it, right, back to feelings, even when I don't feel like it, Lord, I'm thirsty, I'm dry.

Have you ever been there dry spiritually? Spiritually dry? Just your prayer, you don't even wanna pray. You don't wanna open the word of God. There's a deadness that's set in.

There's a dryness. But you say, but Lord, I'm gonna strengthen myself in you and I'm gonna press in. And even though I'm thirsty in this dry and barren land, you will give me water to drink.

You will give me that living waters that Christ spoke of. And the wilderness ultimately depletes you to renew you. And I started to think about it this week.

There's a lot of people who have wilderness experiences. Somebody by the name of Jesus, and I don't think it's, why did Jesus go in the wilderness for 40 days to fast if it's no big deal? It prepared Him for ministry, obviously. What about Moses? Wilderness.

Paul actually at his conversion, did you know that the Bible records that after his conversion, it says, King James I think says, he did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, but he went to the desert. Think of the desert of Arabia. David spent time in the wilderness.

Joshua, when they're out in the wilderness, I love that verse where it says that, but Joshua stayed behind in the tabernacle of the Lord to seek His face. He loved to linger in the presence of God. And as much as we don't like the wilderness experience, it depletes you to renew you.

Because there are certain things you can't learn in life when things are going well. All these wonderful chapters and verses in the Bible were written at difficult times. Take a look at the majority of Scripture.

Most of the Psalms of David were when he was going through difficult times. Create in me a clean heart. Renew a right spirit in me.

The bones that you have broken may rejoice. Or the prophets who would cry out, oh, children of Israel, turn back to God. Jeremiah would say, my eyes are like a river running down.

Have you heard of a book of lamentations? Doesn't sound too appealing. He's lamenting that wilderness experience. And many times we discard the wilderness experience, or we want to hurry up and get out of it.

Or if you're like many people, I had to be very careful too, and I say this a lot, it's a little catchy, but it's true. You either become bitter or you become better. There's not a middle ground.

Bitter in the wilderness, that could be a good sermon title. And isn't that where most of us get upset and frustrated, in that wilderness time? Things are not moving quick enough. Spurgeon also said, when the bed is in the softest area, we are the most tempted to rise at lazy hours.

This guy, I should just quote him all night. Isn't that true? I remember we would go camping with my dad, and not too often, I like, now if I go camping, I want it to be a nice cabin with a five-star Airbnb rating, right? But when you're younger, you can sleep in the tent when there's nothing on the ground but dirt, and a sleeping bag. And you get up, it's still early in the morning, dark out, and you want to get up because you weren't sleeping well.

Those are back in the time, you ever see Kennedy Meadows off the 14 Freeway? We'd go hunting up there, and we would ride in the back of the truck. You could do that back then. No seatbelt, nothing, just laying down in the back of the truck for hours.

Wasn't comfortable either. But the soft bed is hard to get out of. But when the comfort is gone and the couch is hard, if we rise early to seek the Lord, we have much for which to thank the wilderness.

Thank the wilderness. Thank the wilderness if it draws you closer to God. And I love this quote from Ian Bounds, you've heard this before many times, I'm sure, in my articles and different things.

He said, the men, and I put in there parentheses, and women, obviously, who do the most for God have been early on their knees. He who fritters away the early morning in other pursuits will make poor headway seeking God the rest of the day. And we know what it's hard, and all of us have different schedules.

Some of you are late-nighters, and it worked good for you. And I think if it works good, you have to do what works good for you. But there is something about the freshness of the morning.

And I don't like waking up feeling behind the eight ball. It's like, oh, it's already what time, and I'm so far behind. Getting up the freshness.

I think God should get our best strength, personally. I don't think He, whether you're late-nighter, I can't even do mid-afternoon, because by then the day's going crazy. But it's that, I just love 4 a.m., it's dark out, and it was raining, right? And it's just pressing into God, and God filling our hearts, and now the foundation's built for the rest of the day.

Some of you, if you can stay up late, and you seek God, and you wake up refreshed, that works for you. You have to do what works for you. But there is something about giving God, whatever time that is, where your energy is at its height, that's the time to give God.

And if you take a survey, most men, and I see it a lot, guess what they do when they have the most amount of energy? Either work or work out. Nothing wrong with either. But that's why we get home, we're too tired for God.

Do you ever try to read the Bible when you're tired, or you've had a long day? It's like, man, Lord, I'm sorry. That freshness, that's what He's doing here, the early morning hours. And then David said, so, I've looked for you in the sanctuary, verse two.

It's so important where you look, guys. I look for you in the sanctuary. In other words, He pursued God.

He wanted to see His power, and He wanted to see God's glory. If you want to experience God, you've got to seek Him. You've got to look for Him.

I've noticed this in my own life. I mean, obviously, it's possible. But when I'm kind of busy doing things, I don't profoundly experience God.

I'm experiencing the things I'm doing. But when you set those things aside, and begin to seek God, and wait on Him, and worship, that pressing in builds the excitement and the hunger. When Jesus said, come and drink of this water, and you will never thirst again, there's an element of action on our part.

And again, I hate to say this, but I want to remind you as often as I can, do not let feelings dictate your pursuit of God, or you will rarely do it. The feelings in the Christian faith follow obedience. Because it's not obedience if I feel like doing it.

You'll get that on the way home. Think about that. Obey, well, if I feel like obeying, that's not obedience, that's easy.

Discipline, Paul disciplined his body when he didn't feel like it. And I think we've been, all the books out there, if I went to Barnes & Noble and looked in the Christian book section, I'm like, a lot of these don't help. Because they trust your feelings, your inner self, follow your heart.

Jeremiah said, the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it? But I, the Lord, I judge man according to his works, according to his deeds. Be careful about feelings. I love feelings when they come.

God-given feelings, as you're pursuing God, those feelings do follow. Because your loving kindness, God's loving kindness is better than life. And I get excited about that, better than life itself.

Is it not? Ponder this for a minute. God's loving kindness, His grace, your relationship with Him is better than life. I would take that over life.

Was it David said, I'd rather be a doorkeeper. I'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the largest cities with the wicked. There's something about pursuing God and His loving kindness.

My lips shall praise you all the days long. His son's about to kill him. Boy, that gets rid of all excuses, doesn't it? I had to look for you and you have to get to that point.

God, I've got to look for you. I don't feel like it. I'm broken, I'm desperate, I'm hurting.

My enemies are coming after me. I don't understand what's going on. I don't understand the school districts, the government.

I don't understand, oh God, but I look to you alone and I will seek you in your sanctuary. There's something special about coming to church and seeking God in the sanctuary. That's why the night John's leading, we're gonna call a sacred assembly.

Just come together, let's worship and see what God wants to do. He might heal. Does He still do that? He might set you free.

He might give you, see, the more you seek Him, the more you find Him, and the more you find Him, the more you love Him, and the more you love Him, the more you want to keep seeking Him. He's an ever-present help in time of need. And you begin to understand the character and nature of God.

That's the only way we're gonna get through these difficult times. The only way. The closer, you've got to draw close to Christ during these times of uncertainty.

Because a double-minded man, did you guys read last week, Disease X? What is Disease X? These guys are driving me crazy. The World Health Organization comes out. We've got to prepare for Disease X. We don't know what it is yet.

You guys. This is, it's, you remember the Twilight Zone? How many can relate? Da, da, da, da, da, da, da, da. Was that in the 1960s or 50s? Can you, I can picture him doing a program in the year 2024.

A man will actually have a baby. We are living in the Twilight Zone. You cannot have a baby.

You cannot become a girl. Here's my personal pronouns. I'm gonna call you what you're supposed to be called.

My goodness, folks. Wake up. You guys are okay, but I'm talking to everyone else.

And young adults, this is for you. Persistent programming. Where you look is what you find.

Man, I don't know how transparent. Pastor Abram, can I be a little transparent? It's okay. Well, you know, because people use stuff against you.

I finally met Morgan when I stopped going to schooners. I think Perry, who used to be one of our ushers is a bouncer there. He might kick me out a few times.

But guys, clear as day. You want Mrs. Right? You need to become Mr. Right. Where you look is what you find.

I mean, I can't go too deep. Whiskey, a go-go, Hollywood Boulevard, Vegas, Laughlin. I'm going to find them there.

Give me a break. Because when you're looking, you follow Christ and see who keeps up. Where you look is what you find.

I'm not in church looking, but God might bring the right person. I'm just worshiping, shopping, then God might bring the right person. This is so important for young adults.

Because now they just call it eye candy. Well, that's what Eve called the fruit. The eyes are deceptive.

The lust of the flesh is very deceptive. Many people when they say, oh, I'm in love, they're not in love, they're in lust. Persistent programming.

Where you look is what you find. He said, thus, I will bless you while I live. I will lift up my hands in your name.

And I picture, can you picture David? I can. I don't think he's like, mm-hmm. I mean, he's just, that's what, it's like, God, I give you everything.

It's expression. It's expression. This is David who used to kill people.

He took a rag and a rock and swung it around and killed Goliath. He took out Philistines. This man of war.

And he got so excited when the ark came back in that he leaped for joy. And his wife said, oh, David, why are you embarrassing yourself? I will bless you while I live. I will lift up my hands in your name.

My soul shall be, and for me, when I do it, it's not, and the reason I didn't do it for many years is I don't wanna be showy, I don't wanna be super spiritual. Actually, if you knew my heart, it's the opposite. I would just lay on that floor during worship and just, God, because there's just something when you feel the magnitude of God and the expression, what else is higher than this? Watch the Super Bowl, you'll be seeing a lot of this.

Shirts off, faces painted, drunk as a skunk. Oh, they're excited, they're expressing, but they get to church, they're handcuffed. They're worshiping the wrong things.

See, we all express something. David said, I lift up holy, Paul said, I lift up holy hands, I believe. All these verses come to me, somebody said it.

I will lift up my hands in your name. My soul shall be satisfied with morrow and with fatness. That just means morrows of the bones and fatness.

It means when, we can't relate now, but back then, not a lot of people were plump. It was, you know, my dad used to call me Leadbritches. Oaky, right, corn-fed, growing up chubby.

It's a battle. It doesn't get easier as you get older. Somebody told Pastor Abraham the other day, it looks like he's lifting weights, and it's down here, it's not up here.

You gotta work hard. But morrow and fatness, so like his soul is satisfied, just like the body would be satisfied with food. And my mouth shall praise you with joyful lips.

Remember this, worship is a lifestyle of blessing God. We are called to bless God. Wait a minute, that doesn't, God blesses us.

I thought, no, we are, in the Bible, there's lots of verses where we bless God. Just look up what the word bless means. It means expressions of gratitude.

Oh, my soul blesses you, my heart looks to you. Oh God, I bless you, I express my gratitude towards you. Lifting hands, I did this for the young adults.

It's not dope, lit, or sick. Oh wait, or it is. Oh yeah, it's not dope, lit, or sick to a dying world, yet they'll worship Satan.

When I have three teenagers at home, I know what these words mean now. Isn't it funny how language changes? Dope, lit, sick, bling bling. What is this stuff? Talk normal.

But the Old Testament blessing was about things. God would prosper. But in the New Testament, we get God.

God is the blessing. We get God. I don't know why, but every time I read, I just smile.

When they went into the Promised Land, do you know there's a tribe that didn't get any land? They didn't get anything. Nope, sorry. Sorry, Levites.

But then this verse, God said, I'm your inheritance. Man, I just get chill sometimes reading that. Pause, highlight, highlight again, put the date I read that.

I'm your inheritance. And I can just picture some of the Levites, oh darn it. I wanted that house by the river.

No sign language tonight? You won't be able to keep up. I do think of that, so I gotta keep slow. But young adults, remember that.

The world is dying. What is influencing you? What is influencing you? I prayed about putting these up and I'm okay with it. I don't know if not everyone might be, but let me show you our first picture.

This is what young adults are exposed to. Sam Smith at the Grammys, yay. Yay, isn't that great? Yay, hands raised to Satan, not God.

It's on display now. What's the next one? Katy Perry, pastor's daughter, American Idol. I actually couldn't put the other, they had way more Satanic, her cross on her midriff showing.

Another one, Lil Nas X, so popular, the kids love it. Oh man, I love it. Be careful, you're allowing Satanic things to come into your mind.

That's why you struggle with depression, fear, and anxiety. That's why you can't overcome addiction. That's why you're having suicidal thoughts is you're giving the devil free reign in your heart and in your mind.

I won't date myself, but when I was young, he wasn't coming out like this. They had to do something called backward masking. Remember? Let's play around, around, the Beatles back.

Around, around, Satan, Satan, Ozzy Osbourne back. But now it's just coming out. And they scream and worship it.

I think we have one more. This one's chilling. Who's that? If you know, shame on you.

Just kidding, go ahead and say it. Taylor Swift. Recently, I will blow your mind.

A pastor, friend of ours, wife, posted on Facebook, she's excited to take her daughters to the Taylor Swift conference like six months ago. I'm like, Lord, help me. I don't want to be a legalistic, judgmental, but how is that okay? See, the further you are from God, the closer you are to this.

That's what happens. That's what happens, correct? We're not filled with the Spirit of God. We gravitate towards that.

We've quenched and grieved the Spirit. And I don't know who's doing it, George Soros, somebody, but they're elevating her like there's no tomorrow. Don't be surprised if she starts telling kids who to vote for in a couple months.

Millions. That's what's influencing. The more filled you are with the Spirit, the less you'll gravitate towards these things.

And of course, how many of you guys saw the recent podcast with the guy who stars in Reacher? He's a Christian. Do you guys know that? He's a Christian. And he's got some good points, but he's like, I can be in movies like this.

Why are you guys so judgmental? I'm like, I don't know. Millions of girls lust at you. Millions of guys want to be you.

You're Instagram posed. You're half-nude. There's partial nudity in Reacher.

There's tons of cussing. I don't think a Spirit-filled believer spending a couple hours with God on fire for God is going to go and do those parts. Are you sure 100,000 episodes aren't playing a little bit of a role? So again, not doubting the faith, but doubting the fullness of the Spirit in his heart.

Because when you surrender to Christ, you're bought by the blood of the Lamb. You're filled with the Spirit of God. You can't do those things.

Denzel Washington, hello. My goodness. So again, I don't say, no, no, no.

Yeah, Christians can do those things. When I was his age, I would've did that, and I was a Christian. I would've, yeah, I'm a Christian.

Leave me alone, you judgmental Jerrys. Christians can be in non-Christian movies. Yeah, some of this is true.

But you're not going to represent those types of things. And then he said, when I remember you on my bed, I meditate. I meditate, God, on you in the night watches.

Whoa. So you have the morning watch and the night meditation. Let me tell you, I'm going to help a lot of you if you follow this advice.

Turn off the media at night. Get a good book, Ian Bounds on Prayer, Spurgeon, the Bible, and read it. An hour or so before you go to bed.

Just meditate on it, pray, read it. Your dreams will be different than when you get up, what you're hungry for, the things of God. But it's hard, isn't it? Because our flesh, sometimes I go on YouTube and they suggest a video, you know, Eight Traits of a Serial Killer.

Oh my, it's kind of interesting. I want to. I want to.

Right? I want to. And before I got too judgmental on that Reacher topic, a guy you might see on YouTube, Ruslan, we email sometimes, he goes, well, just watch it first before, I'm like, you can get hooked on that. You know, that's pretty cool, he's being a bad guy.

And you're like, what am I doing? Right, because the pull of the flesh, it keeps pulling and you've got to fight against that. You want better dreams. You don't want to wake up with fear and anxiety, struggle with depression.

Be careful with what you're feeding your mind at night. It's basically who you go to sleep with. That's who you wake up with.

That's just the way we were designed. I think it just happened recently. I told my wife, I was watching something that popped up on YouTube, right? I've got to follow my own advice, actually.

Right? Don't turn the TV on. It was like bear attacks. Like grizzly bear attacks.

Like, right next to shark attacks. That's what I don't like. And then I dreamt my daughter, there was a big bear coming to get Kylie.

I'm like, you see how that works? Oh, your subconscious is not asleep, it's active. Whatever you meditate on, the thoughts you put in your mind at night, who you sleep with is who you wake up with in the morning. You wake up, if you're reading, let's say, E.M. Bounds on prayer, some of these quotes I just said.

As faith ceases to pray, it ceases to live. And early morning hours and all these things, there's Spurgeon or The Word, and you're, oh man, you're feeling, and you actually go to sleep a lot easier, believe it or not, because there's not that stimuli of electronics. I can get into blue light and all this stuff, and it's true.

If I ever need to stay up till 11, I'll just put TV on. But without that, be careful with what you're feeding your mind with. So we have this night watch as well.

What we meditate on, what we fix our thoughts on is very, very important. Did you know that a lot of what you're struggling with, not everything, I'm not naive, but a lot of what you're struggling with is, listen, I've prayed with now thousands of people. I've been at events where I pray with 40, 50, 60 people in a line, in one hour.

So I hear all the same things often. All the same. There's not different prayer requests out there that are, well, I've never heard that one before.

Correct, aren't we? Don't we often have the same? Can you pray for me for my anxiety and my fear? My depression? And if you dig a little deep, I'll be conservative, 75% of them are watching and reading things they shouldn't. Or hanging around people that aren't friends, they're fake friends, they're pulling them down. They're negative Nellies, right? Or they're constantly scaring them.

And that's why I tell parents, be careful right now. Like what I tell you, I don't tell my kids at home, hey kids, sit down, let me tell you about the World Health Organization and Davos and George Soros and they're coming to get us. And I say, it could get tough, but we're ready.

Christ is our light, we're gonna fight, God's on our side, what can man do to us? So you can program fear, you can program fear into your kids. And it's hard for me, I deal with this, I know my brother does too, for my dad was very fearful of lawsuits and he was just a fearful guy. And I could see how it could be passed down because you live in these things.

And we did some crazy stuff, crazy. He was probably fearful of Kel-Osha. But I remember we'd drill like, even in Quartz Hill, storm drains, like 50 feet deep, and I'd just be looking over, the cable and the concrete thing wouldn't be sitting right, and so I'd just jump on that cable, down 50 feet, no hard, all right, okay, let me up.

Don't jump around, let me up. Out of there, and then you're fearful. And walking, and what, you know, just all kinds of things that can attack you and hurt you as you get older.

Parents wanna teach your kids, but we have to be very careful not to instill fear over faith. You teach them about fear, and you say, here's how you handle it. But we have to be so careful in this area.

And then he goes on to say, because, Lord, you have been my help, therefore, in the shadow of your wings, I will rejoice. What does that mean? Well, often, the writers of the Bible, you know, they used words

like we do, they would explain like an eagle's wings. Or Jesus said, I wish I could gather you as a mother hen gathers her chicks, and puts them underneath her wings.

The wings are always a sign of God's safety, and shelter, and protection. That's why you pray those prayers of, her people put a hedge around me. Right, or the hedge of your protection.

That's what it is. Put your wings around me, and I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind you.

Your right hand upholds me. I love that one. Though the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, though he falls, he will not be utterly cast down because the Lord pulls him up with his right hand, and puts him back on solid ground.

See, some of you need to stop beating yourself up to keep falling. I'm not giving you excuses of sin, please don't. But the enemy wants to keep you in shame and guilt, and never get back up and fight again.

Where God says, I'll pick you back up, and put you back on the right ground, and then walk straight, and do not keep falling. Those who seek my life to destroy it, they shall go down in the lower parts of the earth. So I don't know what's gonna happen with our nation, either do you, but I do know this, I already know who wins.

The battle's fixed, it's over, it's done. We just have to hold the ground. That might mean losing our lives.

That might mean going through some difficult and challenging things. But what is that in the span of eternity? Those enemies of God will fall by the sword. They shall be a portion for the jackals.

But the king shall rejoice in God. Everyone who swears by God will glory. By the mouth of those who speak lies, they will be stopped.

See, I don't know about you, but I look at that as the word of God. Holy men of God were spoke as they were moved by the power of the Holy Spirit, New Testament talks about. This is the word of God given to us to edify and encourage us as well.

And although we might not see it right now, although my enemy might be prevailing and yours, and it might be months or years, I do know there will be justice and judgment at the end. So as a closing point, the wilderness prepares you for life. Don't discard the wilderness experience.

Don't discard the wilderness experience. And when we talk about the title of the message, The Cure for Spiritual Drought, the cure for spiritual drought is what I said at the beginning. Seek God even when you don't feel like it.

Listen, can I just give you some more transparency here? I can't think, and I tried, of any time, have you ever been spiritually dry? Let's try this again. Balcony? Yes. Many times.

It's part of our fallen nature. Because as much as we want to pursue God, the Holy Spirit in us, there's also the Adamic nature, the nature of Adam, that although it's been crucified and done away with, it still lives and breathes and pulls us back. And so there are seasons of dry spells.

And I can't think of one time, one time over the last 24 years where I've sought God in the barren wildernesses of my life and He did not come through. Never. Did it happen the next day? No.

Sometimes there were weeks that went by. Some of you can attest to months that have went by. That wilderness is barren.

But I've also known the longer the journey into the wilderness, the deeper the relationship with God. Isn't that true? When you start out, when you start out and you're not very thirsty, you ever walk through the desert and get thirsty? Oh God, this is gonna be a long ride back. And I got back and I just dropped my bike, I opened my truck door and I took that water, it was warm, it was sitting in my truck and I drank like a half gallon of water.

But see, that's sometimes that desperation leads us to drink deeper. The deeper the pain, often the higher the relationship with God. Those who have been forgiven much, love much.

It's a biblical principle, the more you seek Him, the more you find Him, and the more you find Him, the more you love Him. And that's what this church is about. If you could sum up this church, it's a church that's hell-bent on seeking God.

We want to seek God. And you don't know how many people I've had, usually it's the old timers, who come and visit, you guys do too much worship, right? Well, it's by design, hello. Oh, thanks for telling us, we'll change that immediately.

It's by design. We've also seen tremendous breakthroughs, people begin healing and restored and lives, but it's also painful. A living church is a hospital.

And I think Jaira, you read his article too, it's also a battle station. As well. But just remember, the wilderness prepares you for life.

And sometimes there's often bad news in the midst of good news. I think this wilderness experience, personally speaking, was building David's relationship with the Lord. Because remember, Absalom was pursuing Him, and David talked to his commander, Joab, I believe it was, and he told the men, when Absalom comes, please deal softly with the man.

Please, Joab, that's all I ask. Deal with my son, softly. I want to hold him again, I want to forgive him.

I want to love my son. And the battle got heated. They called a runner, he's coming.

They didn't have internet back then. So he brings the news, and what's Absalom and David's like? And the man said, I don't know, ask the other guy, and here comes another runner. How's Absalom? He said, oh, it would be to God that every enemy of the king is like that young man.

Joab took three spears, and his hair got caught in the thicket of the trees, and they just speared him to death. David's son hung, I think, from the Terebith tree. And you can feel the pain when you read it out.

David just, oh, Absalom, Absalom. My son, my son, oh, Absalom. Absalom, my son.

If it were just me and not you. Guys, life can be painful. It's challenging.

And there's also consequences to our actions. David brought a lot of this on himself. So it might be a good opportunity.

We're just going to do a few songs of closing worship if you want to come to the altar. We call it sometimes a call to fall. And even after that, there's some more psalms I could get into when he learned his son's death.

All he could do was write and praise God even in the midst of his pain. You have to look to God in the midst of your pain. So the altar's going to be open.

Maybe some of you are walking that edge. Walking that edge. You know and God knows.

Nobody else knows. But let me also tell you that what we reap we sow. People can only hide things for so long.

And I don't say that to scare anybody. It's actually a beautiful thing when repentance takes place. It's a beautiful thing.

When the sin is exposed and freedom follows and joy follows. Lord, I'm tired of looking at that. Everything from pornography to you name it.

I'm tired of using that. I'm tired of this anger and this frustration and this failure in my life. I'm tired of not having any hope or destiny or purpose in my life.

I'm tired of this dry and barren wilderness. Lord, it's causing me to drift from you. I feel more, I'm gravitating more towards Little Nas X. And Taylor Swift, I'm gravitating towards that.

You need to come back. You need to come back.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/Dp3hZXpodXo.mp4>

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