

Knowing God's Ways - Part 7

by Walter Beuttler

The wilderness experience is a time of testing and transformation that brings us closer to God and prepares us for spiritual growth and maturity.

Duration: 30:42

Scripture: Psalm 32:8, Isaiah 35:1, Isaiah 40:3, Isaiah 43:2, Isaiah 43:19, Hosea 2:14, 2 Corinthians 2:14

Topics: "Knowing God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the cost of having a real ministry and the price one must pay for it. He mentions that true ministries are not found in God's bargain basement and that one must be willing to endure hardships and challenges. The speaker also discusses how God allures us into the wilderness, referring to a hunger for more of God and a willingness to surrender all. He quotes Isaiah 43:19, which speaks about God doing a new thing and making a way in the wilderness. The sermon concludes with a story about a pastor who experienced the joy of the Lord even in the midst of tragedy.

Transcript

When it looked as though I had my last trip around the world, that that is the end, and yet the Lord came along, seven years ago now, raised me up, and ever since then, I have traveled around the world once a year, still in orbit, when I think back, it sustains me in the present, and you too. So let's not forget what God has done. That helps to sustain us in the situation we are in perhaps today, to humbly and to prove thee, to know what is in thine heart, whether thou would escape his commandments or no.

It's in the wilderness experience, when we are under pressure, when we are in God's crucible, as it were, with a fire burning underneath, in a situation calculated to bring out of our carnal nature all the little devils that are in it. I do not mean that now literally. All the meanness, all the timbre, all the discouragement, God puts us into situations and listens to our sputter.

He hears what we say now. That's what he wants to find out, so he knows what to do. In Deuteronomy 32.10, I'm going to bring you out very presently.

Well, we have time, we don't need to hurry. 32.10, now what could that be? Yeah. Now notice.

He found him. The him here is Israel, the nation. And the he is God.

He found him in a desert land and in the vast howling wilderness. What's howling? Oh, fears, doubts, frustrations, anxieties, temptations, howling. He led him about.

He instructed him. He kept him as the apple of his eye. Now again.

He instructed him. The wilderness as other people who are going through life situations, and as Paul put it, we are comforting them by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of good. You know, sometimes I wish we had more time to be a Christian, to help people in their distresses, to sit where they sit and minister to them how people need comfort.

We have a girl in school. She said, Brother Buechner, do you know what I'm praying for? Well, how would I know? She said, I am praying for the ministry of comfort. Oh? I want God to give me a ministry to people who are in despair and in need of help and comfort.

What do you think about my prayer? Well, I told her. I said, that's a great prayer, but I wonder what its fulfillment is going to cost you. Cost me? Innocent thing? Cost me? I said, yes, cost you.

Well, she said, doesn't God answer prayer? Yes, He answers prayer. But I said, do you think He's going to hand you a little pretty box with a pink ribbon around it and your name on it? Here is the answer to the prayer of my beloved Rosemary or whatever. I said, Lucas Susie or whatever her name was.

First of all, God is not going to answer your prayer right away. Oh? No. Why not? Because God is going to take His time before He even gets started.

Oh, God. God will wait and see whether your prayer arises from a pleading emotion or some kind of a euphoria. You might have picked up somewhere or whether you really mean it.

And then God, if He decides to answer, you will get to work and things are going to happen to you. If you want a ministry of comfort, God is going to take you through deep distress in all probability where you find no one to give you comfort and you've got to learn and find your own comfort from your own good. And if you want a ministry to despair, God is going to take you through despair and teach you in despair and give you a ministry in your own despair if you can stand it.

Oh, yeah? You really think so? No. I know so. Oh.

Oh. Nice talking to you, Brother Beard. That was the end as far as... Where do you think I learned the way of the Lord? In the wilderness? In a fairy tale book? The Encyclopedia Britannica? Higher mathematics? In the wilderness.

When I walked in search and had no one to give me direction, but my God and His book. The greater your ministry, the bigger the price. Real ministries that amount to something are not found in God's bargain basement.

You pay, and you pay a stiff price. It's God. He knows.

In 2-7. He knoweth. That's for your comfort, thy walking through this wilderness.

I've already read Deuteronomy 32 about His preservation. Now what is God going to do? Well, that brings us to the end of the tunnel. I think Isaiah 43-19 summarizes about everything.

So I'll give you other things. Isaiah 43-19. I'll start with 18.

Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing. Skip.

I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. What is God doing in the wilderness? Look here. To boil the whole thing down, the answer.

Without boiling it up, in the wilderness, God is adding or seeking to add a new dimension of whatever kind to our Christian experience. That's the principle. That's the essence.

A new dimension. He will broaden our experience. He will improve our relationship with God.

He will extend our knowledge of God. He will transform us another degree or two into the likeness of His Son. In summary, He will add a new dimension to our Christian experience.

Hosea 2.14, and we'll be done in ten minutes. Hosea 2.14, it says something, Therefore, behold, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness. Now, allure.

If we can imagine, if we can, in our thinking, eliminate from a word an evil connotation, we could say, I will entice her into the wilderness. Or, if we can eliminate the evil connotation of a word, I will seduce her, entice her, allure her into the wilderness. Now, I don't suppose this is necessary, but a man can drive alone, it has happened many times, stop next to a little girl walking, offer her a bit of candy, come in here, honey, I have some candy to give you, takes her off.

That would be alluring and enticing. You walk down the street in Bangkok, Thailand, especially in the western hotel areas, happens every year, all of a sudden you got a little lady to your next, next to you, and is she ever painted up? Whee! And makes those cuckoo eyes, and makes a proposition. You don't have to be allured, enticed, you understand.

I was in a Paris restaurant, eating there, and the door opened, and, you know, I just look around, saw a lady walk in, and when she walked in, I could tell at once she had spotted me, American, you know. American, that's the idea, you know. Sure enough, here she sat, and I went down about my eating.

How do you do, Mr. American? How do you like Paris? Been here before? Oh, yes. Would you like to come with me? She looked at you, could tell right away, put on some big, goofy glasses. Honey, you are so... Please sleep.

Five minutes later, she walked out with an American officer. I will allure her. Now, how does God allure us into the wilderness? Now, we have to think here without any evil connotations.

I hope you can. If you can't, well, what can I do? The Lord gives us a hunger. Oh, God, I want more of you.

Lord, my soul is so hungry for you. Lord, draw me in a new way. Do a new thing for me, Lord.

Oh, God, I have to have more of you. I have such a hunger, such a drawing in my heart. Lord, I'm ready for anything.

Thy will be done. Huh? Thy will be done. One of our Bible school students said, Lord, I would give all I've got for your best.

And the Lord answered him and said, It will cost you just that. Lord, I surrender all. Oh, really? Yes.

And things start to happen. Get up in church. Oh, pray for me.

I don't know what's wrong. The devil must be attacking me. This withdrawal, that withdrawal.

I don't know anymore where I am. Leave, leave, leave. Well, he's answering prayer.

He gives us a hunger, a desire, a yearning. We think of a bundle of blessing. He does too.

But the blessings lie beyond the wilderness. So he allured us, enticed us into the wilderness to take us through the wilderness. And while we're going through, to answer our prayers.

So, I will, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her. Obviously, there is distress. There is sorrow.

There is suffering. And he brings his comfort. But then, I will give her her vineyards.

Vineyards stand for Pentecost. I mean the experience. The things of the Spirit.

And the valley of Acre are weeping for a door of hope. In our wilderness there may be weeping, things to weep about. And she shall sing there.

It takes us through the wilderness to give us a new song. A song in the wilderness. And she shall sing there.

No more groaning, moaning, complaining. She shall sing there. Oh, this is like heaven to me.

In the wilderness. Then we've got something. Then we can lie on our bed in pain and still praise the Lord.

I'm thinking of a pastor who lost his boy in a very unfortunate way. They were very careful with their children. Took them to the doctor every six months for a check-up.

They wanted to be sure that nothing snuck up on them. And they were done with the doctor. They went home a short time thereafter.

One boy got sick and died from the sickness. And the doctor said, That's the one thing I forgot to check. If I had checked it and found it, he said, I could have saved the boy.

But that's the one thing I forgot. The parents. Now, why did the doctor forget the very one thing that caused the boy's life? Well, I wouldn't know.

But one thing I do know. I was speaking at the funeral. I saw the pastor stand back by the door.

That man had a glow of the radiance, the joy of the Lord on his face. At the funeral. That man was aglow with the joy of the Lord.

And they loved their children. Now, she broke. But he, I still see him stand there.

He said to me, Brother Feudler, people wouldn't understand this. But the Lord has given me such a joy as this little casket was passed me. He said, I could hardly contain from shouting.

That's Christianity, isn't it? And that man loved the boy. He could hardly hold back the rejoicing in the spirit in spite of what happened. And she shall sing there.

Now, when we can have the joy of the Lord, when we're standing in front of the casket of a loved one, when we can keep the joy of the Lord when things go wrong, then we've got something. And she shall sing there. Two points from Song of Solomon.

And then you have enough to practice, and that's for sure. And so do I. So is this. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Wait a minute. Yes, that's right. So is this that cometh out of the wilderness, out of cut corners, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense.

Hey, who is this that cometh out of the wilderness perfumed with myrrh and frankincense? The wilderness is God's perfume shop where he puts upon us the very perfume of the life and character of Jesus Christ. But he doesn't put it on the outside. He puts it on the inside from which the very nature of Jesus Christ is evidenced openly.

This hewler, my dear, came out of the wilderness perfumed. A lot of Christians, when they come out of the wilderness, they smell like a little animal dressed in black and white. You understand? A little cat dressed in black and white.

But nobody gets that. In this wilderness, the Lord gives us his perfume. Chapter 8, lastly, verse 5. Now, I guess we have a service tomorrow morning.

We won't be in this area tomorrow morning. We'll have something different. Then said I, wait a minute, wait a minute, I'm wrong, I'm wrong.

What did I say? 8, 5, yeah. Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? That's enough. Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? Now, in the Song of Solomon, there are three classes of people.

The bridegroom, Solomon, the bride, and the daughters of Jerusalem. In the passage just read, it is the daughters of Jerusalem that are watching the bride coming out of the wilderness. Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? The bride had been in the wilderness.

I do not know how she got there. But the bridegroom came for her and brought her out. Now, we are, hopefully, of the bride of Jesus Christ.

And if you don't know what to do in the wilderness, sit down and wait for the bridegroom. Wait for your beloved to bring you out. And these daughters looked over into the wilderness.

Said, who is that? Who is that woman that's leaning on the arm of her beloved? What would they have ever liked to be there? And here the bridegroom brings his bride out on his arm. She's now relying upon him. So in the wilderness, among other things, he perfumes us.

And if we can't find our way out, know how, he'll even come for us. And so to speak, give us his arm. Say, honey, just lean on me.

Come with me. We'll go out of the wilderness together. And the end result will be that you will be or can be the very envy of your Christian friends.

My, but you've had a great experience. My, but the Lord is so real to you. My, how your life has been changed.

My, I wish the Lord would do for me what he did for you. Let him take you into the wilderness. And if there you don't rebel and throw his book in his face and lift up your heels and throw in the sponge, but keep trusting him, believing him, submit to him, and wait.

He'll come for you. He'll offer you his arm, his support, his strength, and bring you out to the envy of your... in the way of the Lord in the wilderness.

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