

God is with us in the wilderness.

The wilderness is the space between.

“They did not say, ‘Where is the Lord who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the **wilderness**, in a land of **deserts** and **pits**, in a land of **drought** and deep **darkness**, in a land that none passes through, where no man dwells?’” *Jeremiah 2:6*

Instead of losing faith, you recognize his care.

“Then I said to you, ‘Do not be in dread or afraid of them. The Lord your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes, and in the **wilderness**, where you have seen how the Lord your God **carried you**, as a **man** carries his **son**, all the way that you went until you came to this place.’” *Deuteronomy 1:29-31*

God is who leads you into the wilderness.

Matthew 4:1

His plan is to bring you through it.

Isaiah 43:2

1. God helps us to understand ourselves in the wilderness.

“Remember how the Lord your God led you through the wilderness for these forty years, humbling you and **testing** you to prove your **character**, and to **find out** whether or not you would obey his commands.” *Deuteronomy 8:2*

James 1:2-4

2. God is teaching you to live by faith.

“Yes, he humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna, a food previously unknown to you and your ancestors. He did it to teach you that people do not live by bread alone; rather, we live by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. For all these forty years your clothes didn’t wear out, and your feet didn’t blister or swell.” *Deuteronomy 8:3-4*

For we live by **faith**, not by **sight**. *2 Corinthians 5:7*

3. God is disciplining you.

“Think about it: Just as a parent **disciplines** a child, the Lord your God **disciplines** you for your own good.” *Deuteronomy 8:5*

One Year New Testament Devotionals

Small group discussion questions related to the weekend message will resume in January during our next 10-week group semester. Until then, use these One Year New Testament questions to discuss with your small group or answer individually.

Sunday, December 9: Read Revelation 1:1-20

Be Fearless

Verses 13-18 describe the vision John receives of Jesus. This was not a meek, “Sunday school” version of Jesus. He was all-powerful, and John saw Him in all His glory. Because John saw Him this way, he fell at His feet in awe. Seeing Jesus for who He really changes our perspective. When someone like Jesus is for us, fear is eliminated. How is John’s vision of Jesus different from how you picture Jesus? With Jesus on your side, what fear can you overcome?

Monday, December 10: Read Revelation 2:1-17

Don’t Go Through the Motions

Jesus told the church of Ephesus He’d seen the way they served and He was not impressed. Why? Because they forgot why they served. It’s easy to go through the motions of serving instead of being in love with the One we serve. What we do will never be as important as who we serve, and when we correctly prioritize this, serving is a joy, not an obligation. How are you serving the church? What can you do this week to “remember your first love?”

Tuesday, December 11: Read Revelation 2:18-3:6

Look How Far You’ve Come

There is always a next step we can take to become a better follower of Christ, but sometimes we have seasons in which we feel growth is insignificant or even nonexistent. In those moments, we must stay focused on how far we’ve come instead of focusing on how far we have to go. John encourages the church in Thyatira by telling them “you are now doing more than you did at first.” We always have steps to take, but those steps are built on the steps we’ve already taken. How has God been faithful to you in the past, and how will you be faithful to Him today?

Wednesday, December 12: Read Revelation 3:7-22

A Command for Every Christian

It can be difficult to wrap our minds around how Jesus loves. We easily fall into the habit of viewing Jesus’ commands as rules to follow instead of a means to intimacy with Him. John reminds us that we obey the rules out of love for Jesus, not the other way around. If we measure our value on how well we follow the rules, we make our faith about us instead of Jesus. How could valuing obedience produce oppression instead of freedom in Christ? How will you prioritize Jesus over the rules today?

Thursday, December 13: Read Revelation 4:1-11

We Exist To Worship

Scholars focus on what the different creatures in this chapter represent, but rather than focusing on their differences, the focus ought to be on what they have in common. Each creature is praising God. No matter how different they are, their purpose is the same: to glorify the Creator. This is our purpose as well. We exist to worship God – not just on Sunday, but with every thought and every breath each day. Looking at your decisions today. What do they say about the way you worship the Creator?

Friday, December 14: Read Revelation 5:1-14

He Is Worthy

Today we encounter the sacred scroll that no one can open—except Jesus. He is the only one worthy because He sacrificed Himself for all. Nothing can offer us the gift of abundant life except the one who is worthy, but we often search for life in other things besides Him. None of these substitutes will ever fulfill the desires of our heart. Only He who is worthy to open the scroll can do so. Where are you searching for life in something other than He who is worthy of your searching?

Saturday, December 15: Read Revelation 6:1-17

Judgment Day Is Real

In Revelation 6, God begins the final judgment of humanity. In His great mercy, God withholds His wrath to give all of us time and opportunity to repent and follow Jesus, but that opportunity will finally come to an end one day. The earth is temporary, and the day of judgment will come. Who do you know that is living in the midst of the opportunity to repent and follow Jesus but hasn’t yet made that decision? What can you do to help them understand that our time is limited to do so?