**BETTER TOGETHER** in 2022

September 11, 2022

Dr. Jerry Edmonson, *Founding and* *Lead Pastor*

**The Jesus Way**

**The Way of the Wilderness**

Luke 4:1-13



Over the next six weeks, we are going to dive in, peel back, go underneath the layers of tradition that have been built over 2,000 years in order to discover and uncover … The Jesus Way.

God’s **Will** + God’s **Truth** = the Jesus **Way**

Deliberate **Practice** + Desirable **Difficulty** = Durable **Learning**

It was the practice of Jesus to get away, to leave the crowd, to spend time alone with His Father in the Spirit.

*And Jesus,* ***full of the Holy Spirit****, returned from the Jordan and was* ***led by the Spirit in the wilderness*** *…*

Luke 4:1

**The Judean Wilderness** - Because of its lack of water and good routes, the Judean wilderness has been (mostly) uninhabited throughout history. Consequently, it was an ideal place for those seeking refuge from enemies or retreat from the world. When on the run from King Saul, David hid in various places in the Judean wilderness. John the Baptist preached here, and it seems likely that this was the wilderness where Jesus was tempted.

What is a **spiritual** wilderness?

*A “wilderness experience” is usually thought of as a tough time in which a believer endures discomfort and trials. The pleasant things of life are unable to be enjoyed, or they may be absent altogether, and one feels a lack of encouragement. A “wilderness experience” is often a time of intensified temptation and spiritual attack. It can involve a spiritual, financial, or emotional drought. Having a “wilderness experience” is not necessarily a sign that a believer is sinning; rather, it is a time of God-ordained testing. www.*gotquestions.org

The question we ask when we are in a spiritual wilderness …

What am I here to **learn**? What did you come to **teach** me?

The Wilderness is a place where God **prepares** you.

Our true identity is often found in the wilderness.

We do not realize God is all we need until He is all we have.

We learn to let God write the story of our lives.

*And after you have suffered a little while,* ***the God of all grace****, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ,* ***will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you****.* 1 Peter 5:10

Jesus overcame the temptations of the wilderness in order to show us the hidden traps and snares in this world.

In your Wilderness, the **Tempter** will always show up.

*for* ***forty days****, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.* Luke 4:2

*Be sober-minded; be watchful.* ***Your adversary*** *the devil prowls around like a roaring lion,* ***seeking someone to devour****.* 1 Peter 5:8

In your Wilderness, you will find **spiritual** food.

*The devil said to him, “****If you are the Son of God****, command this stone to become bread.”* *And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’”* Luke 4:3-4

This is the trap of being driven by your **appetites** and **desires**.

*But he said to them, “****I have food to eat that you do not know about****.” So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “****My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work****.* John 4:32–34

Sin is meeting a legitimate **need** in an illegitimate **way**.

In your Wilderness **instant** **gratification** can become your **idol**.

Jesus had a **mission** and Satan offered a short cut …

*And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’ ”* Luke 4:5-8

When you short cut God’s **will** … you short circuit God’s **way** and you **shortchange** yourself.

In your Wilderness, God’s **promises** are never our **privileges**.

*And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “****If you are the Son of God****, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ” And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.* Luke 4:8-13

You can fall into **temptation,** or you can fall into God’s **kindness**.

In the Wilderness you will find **grace**.

He does not always promise to deliver us **from** … but He promises always to be **with**.

*Thus says the Lord: “The people who survived the sword* ***found grace in the wilderness****; when Israel sought for rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away.* ***I have loved you with an everlasting love****; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.* Jeremiah 31:2–3

*And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.* Luke 4:14

To these temptations Jesus replied that God is more important than food, that we must not tempt God, and that God is whom we worship and serve. It is not the other way around. **God is not our servant.**

**The Way the Wilderness** Challenge for **40 Days** (September 12 - October 21)

**Spend one hour with God** every day for 40 Days … that is 40 hours with God in your wilderness, preparing for your wilderness, coming out of your wilderness.

**Fast** – what if you skipped one meal a day for 40 Days and during that meal, you spent it with the Spirit.

**Remember** …

Deliberate **Practice** + Desirable **Difficulty** = Durable **Learning**