

# Calvary Assembly

 **The Foursquare Church**  
Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8

*Bunbury, WA, Australia*

*The Sword of the Spirit*



*The Word of God*

*From the Pastor's heart*

## **Spiritual Wilderness**



Spiritual wildernesses are real places that occur now and then during our Christian walk on this earth. Man does not understand these places or the timing associated with them and what to do in them. The result from this lack of knowledge is, many years are lost and some even die in them without ever reaching their destiny. It is a sobering thought to think that such places even exist. Many preachers never tell the people this side of things and end up preaching a "bless me" gospel or some watered down version of the truth which alienates the people from God when these wildernesses turn up at their doorstep.

The Bible teaches us about these places and gives us examples, so it would be wise on our part to understand this concept and learn to walk with God through them, so that we come out the other side untouched adversely by our experiences but made stronger through them. Essentially, wilderness periods by God are designed for strengthening and coming to know God's ways. Yet, human nature cringes from these experiences because of what it brings. The wilderness experience is a fact of life and one must learn to embrace them. There are forces other than God that are at work to take us into wilderness experiences as well but their aim is to cause us to come out as losers through the experience.

Over sixteen years of walking full time with God has taught me about these places and after reading about them in the Bible I have come to know that I am not alone in such experiences. I draw comfort from this fact and realise that I am in good company with great men of God in the Bible and others I have met along life's journey who have shared their experiences with me. I do not look forward to these wildernesses in my life or in others but I know enough now to embrace them and make good on them. I feel very much for those who have to go through this period in their lives but I understand what it takes to see them through. As a result, I have learnt to leave the butterfly alone when it is trying to come out of the cocoon. If I interfere, I will end up with a mess and new life will not come out.

Let us identify spiritual wildernesses and see them for what they are.

1. God induced wildernesses
2. Self induced wildernesses
3. Enemy induced wildernesses

### **God induced wildernesses**

*Mat 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.* It is evident from this verse that Jesus Himself was sent into the wilderness by God for specific reasons. One of the reasons was, to be tempted. The typology in this experience that Jesus went through was to emulate what Israel went through in their 40 years of wandering and then to overcome it in Himself in order to prove God and show that God is all sufficient for anyone of us. Jesus fulfilled the 40 years in 40 days and overcame the devil by the scriptures which is the written word of God and then went onto the next phase of His journey in life.

In order for us to understand how this then relates to us personally is to bring the same scriptures and more into play in our lives when we face God induced wildernesses. **The promises of God are "yeah" and "Amen" in Christ Jesus**". Many preach that God would never intentionally put you in a difficult place. I beg to differ because there is enough Biblical evidence that He does. Understanding why He does is most important for us to survive. It is in the wilderness that faith, trust, patience and faithfulness is developed as character strengths in us. God is only interested in those who will believe Him for who He is and then trust Him in life's journey to come through for us. Yet, we must

understand that His ways are not our ways and the end result of our victory may be obtained in a manner quite unexpected.

The victory Jesus obtained was by crucifixion. This is foolishness in human reasoning. The promise of the Holy Spirit and all of God's blessings for us was obtained through this wilderness sacrifice. Now, I would say; that would be worth many wildernesses. Many children of God who have come through spiritual wilderness when accepting Christ as their Saviour have lost all that they have owned and been persecuted beyond belief for their faith. The cross they bear, many of us do not even get a hint of. Yet, we complain about the most insignificant things when we do not get our way and have to face even the slightest difficulty. The Jews complained about their wilderness in spite of God's presence and provision for them in the wilderness and as a result many died. Let us not be like them but rather learn Godly fear from their example. *1Co 10:5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 1Co 10:6 Now **these things were our examples**, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.*

### **Self induced wildernesses**

These are wilderness periods that can become extremely dangerous for the one who constantly strives with the Holy Spirit. *Eph 4:30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* This verse is in the middle of the Chapter which speaks about self induced sin which comes upon us as a result of our actions, thoughts and speech. Apostle Paul warns us of such behaviour, so that we do not find ourselves in self induced wildernesses. I have come across many Christians who had been called only to lose their calling and destiny because they failed to listen and obey the Holy Spirit. The Galatians were a people just like that. They indulged themselves in sin just like the Corinthians did and ended up in spiritual wildernesses that Apostle Paul kept trying to get them out off by teaching them the ways of the Lord. Those of them who did not listen ended up a shipwreck. *1Ti 1:19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith **have made shipwreck**: 1Ti 1:20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.* Apostle Paul's admonition to Timothy a young man of God was not to end up in the same place as these other guys.

Many Christians do not know where they are in Christ and many others are wandering in Church wilderness, living outside of Godly fellowship while thinking they are good practising Christians when they are not. They even know they are in the wrong and still keep up their lifestyle of sin in the hope that they will be accepted just as they are and be allowed to continue in their sin. God's grace only extends so far. This is something modern day preaching does not allow for. They speak of grace as an unconditional extension of time and that God will see you through anyway. *Heb 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man **fail of the grace of God**; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; **Failing the grace of God is a reality, more than one could imagine. His Spirit will not always strive with man.***

### **Enemy induced wilderness**

*Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?* The word bewitched means being deceived by witchcraft. In this instance, the turning back to the law. However, witchcraft takes on other forms of falsity as well that lead Christians away from the truth causing them to go into spiritual wildernesses. I just finished reading a book on the Jehovah's witnesses and how this author had come out of them after many years of being deceived by their doctrine and theology. The Mormons are in the same boat. Evil angelic intervention has caused many cults, spiritual orders and false doctrines and theology that is not from God. There is such a thing as a cult spirit whose job is to deviate the thinking of Christians into false religions and theology. I have met this spirit and know its agenda. Many a good Christian has been caught up in some sort of dogma (code of belief) that has alienated God from their lives that they cannot see the forest for the trees. One girl I met in New Zealand cut off her ear lobes with a shaving blade because the devil told her to base it on the sacrifice of Jesus and said to her that Jesus would like her to shed her blood for Him. That is how much people can be deceived. **The subtle is more powerful than the raw.** That is why God instituted wildernesses in our lives that would teach us His ways. *Deu 8:2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. Deu 8:3 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 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.* The word humbled thee is used here in these verses to show us that we need Him.

So what does one do in the wilderness? Well, first of all, one has to humble themselves, eat the word of God that is manna from heaven and then position oneself in obedience through faith for a miracle of deliverance from the wilderness into the Promised Land. Nothing less will suffice. The wilderness teaching is right through the Bible and it would pay to study it thoroughly. It will serve you well in many situations in life that you may face.

*Lots of love*  
*Pastor Noble*  
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