

WHAT IS THE WILDERNESS?

- A time in a person's life when his or her **SOUL** is parched or dry
- When **TODAY** is hard
- When the **FUTURE** seems barren
- When as far as you can see, there is nothing but **DEVASTATION**
- When you wonder if there's any **WAY OUT**
- And you may even feel the **ABSENCE** of God's presence

BEEN THERE?**WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE WILDERNESS?**

1. It can be **SIMPLE** and simply unpleasant
2. It can feel **UNBEARABLE** and involve immense suffering and deep sorrow
3. Often, it can bring us to the **BREAKING POINT**
 - a. **PHYSICALLY**
 - b. **EMOTIONALLY**
 - c. **SPIRITUALLY**
4. Sometimes it follows a spiritual **HIGH**
5. Sometimes it precedes a spiritual **BREAKTHROUGH**
6. Always, it is **IMPOSSIBLE** to go through the wilderness without being changed

"In every great life, great battles must be fought and won. And the most important battle is always fought and won in the heart of the hero. But it must fought. There is no way around the wilderness, we must go through the wilderness because it is there that the battles of the heart are so often won... battles that change us and later change the world." – Rob Renfroe

WHO ENDS UP IN THE WILDERNESS? EVERYONE

- It can have a **KNOWN** cause
- It can have an **UNKNOWN** cause
- God **ALLOWS** wilderness times

"Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He (God) will reveal to us later." Romans 8:18

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW US TO GO THROUGH WILDERNESS TIMES?

- To **PREPARE** us for future experiences
- To **TEACH** us lessons
- To **DEVELOP** our character
- To **MAKE** us more like Jesus

"God's purpose is not to make us happy. God's Son died to make us holy." – Rob Renfroe

"God isn't so much a problem-fixer as he is a life-changer." – Rob Renfroe

THE QUESTION

Who will you **BE** when this difficult time is over?

- Make the **WRONG** choice(s), and you may step out of the wilderness broken, bitter and far from God
- Make the **RIGHT** choice(s), and you will step out of the wilderness stronger, with a deeper faith, and closer to God than ever before

THE TWO-FOLD GOAL OF THIS SERIES

- To discover a way **THROUGH** the wilderness so that we can come out more like Jesus than when we went in.
- To discover how NOT to **WASTE** our wilderness