

THE WILDERNESS IS A TIME OR SEASON IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE ARE:

OVERWHELMED – **TESTED** – TEMPTED – **TRAPPED**

Our hearts are **HEAVY** – Our spirits are **DRY**

LIFE is hard – The **FUTURE** seems barren

And we wonder how we are going to **MAKE IT**

IT IS ALSO A TIME OR SEASON:

To **LEAN IN** to God's WORD, God's PEOPLE, and God's SPIRIT

Where we discover enormous **OPPORTUNITIES**

To learn to **TRUST** God in a deeper way

To grow **CLOSER** to Him than ever before

To be **TRANSFORMED** into the image of Christ

WE ENTER THE WILDERNESS BY:

- Our **ACTIONS** and **CHOICES**
- The actions and decision of **OTHERS**
- The **NATURAL FLOW** of life
- The **PLAN** of God

More important that what happens **TO YOU in the wilderness is what happens **IN YOU****

"It's impossible to go through the wilderness without being changed. Rather than swooping in to take our problems away, more often God works to change who we are through the problems and the pain of our lives." Rob Renfroe

SO THE QUESTION IS...

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

THE BENEFITS OF THE WILDERNESS

1. The wilderness will reveal **WHO** you are

WEAKNESSES & FAULTS you were not fully aware of
STRENGTHS you didn't know you had
DEPTH of FAITH – STRENGTH of CHARACTER – COURAGEOUS SPIRIT

"The wilderness is a spiritual stress test." Rob Renfroe

The wilderness will show you the real condition

- Of your spiritual **HEART**
- Of your **CHARACTER**
- Of your **FAITH**

"Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be." Matthew 6:21

2. The wilderness will **CHANGE** you

"You will always come out of the wilderness different than when you went in." Rob Renfroe

STRONGER or WEAKER – Full of FAITH or full of DOUBTS
CLOSER to God or FURTHER away
More like CHRIST or more SELF-CENTERED
SOFTENED or CYNICAL heart

"It's possible for us to come out of the wilderness but for the wilderness to remain in us." Rob Renfroe

"Be careful ... Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God." Hebrews 3:12

3. The wilderness will give you a **GIFT** to share

"There are some pains, some questions, some losses that we never really get over. We have to live with them. But we can live lives that are full and that bless others if, while we carry our loss, we know that we are not alone and that God is with us." Rob Renfroe

What most profoundly impacts the lives of others is what we have learned from our struggles and failures. The pain can give us a gift to share with others who are lost and alone." Rob Renfroe

The wilderness brings us to the **END** of ourselves

So that we can have a **NEW BEGINNING** with God

"My purpose is to give you a rich and satisfying life." John 10:10