

Simplify

Welcome to the Wilderness

Recap

In the midst of this confusion and
'clutter' eventually we ask the
question "Where is God in all this?"



Recap

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are **healthy (focused)**, your whole body will be full of light.” **Matthew 6:22**



Recap

Ask and it will be given to you; **seek and you will find**; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. **Matthew 7:7-8**



The psychology of stuff and things, Christian Jarrett

As well as shoring up **our sense of identity**, our possessions also allow us to signal something **about ourselves to other people.**



The psychology of stuff and things, Christian Jarrett

The prevailing view in psychology is that materialism is bad for our well-being. Research by Tim Kasser (at Knox College) and others has revealed an association between holding materialist values and being more depressed and selfish, and having poorer relationships. Kasser has previously called for a revolution in Western culture, shifting us from a thing-centred to a person-centred society.



Simplify

Step 1-Declutter

Step 2-Embrace the desert



Gradually it dawned on me that God has a choice discipleship training school called the University of the Desert. It is not one in which we can formally enrol and undertake classes of our own choosing and be graded on our academic achievements. Rather, it is one in which God sovereignly works through the circumstances of our lives to test us in order to approve us and then entrust us with responsibilities that are known only to Him. Sometimes it is only God and I that are aware of the fact that the class in the University of the Desert is in session. Rod Denton





The Process of the Desert

God brings those He wants to
refine into the wilderness

Abraham

Moses

Israel

David

Isaiah

Jesus

John the Baptizer

John

Paul



The Process of the Desert

Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. Deuteronomy 8:2



The Process of the Desert Seperation

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness Luke 4:1

After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near Mount Sinai. Acts 7:30

During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the Word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. Luke 3:2



The Process of the Desert Seperation

“I gradually came to understand one of the most important things the desert had to teach me: To enter the desert is to relinquish the illusion of control.” Douglas Burton-Christie



The Process of the Desert

Seperation

The desert must start as separation from the comfortable world you are in. It's only in the agitation of a dry and thirsty place can God get your attention



The Process of the Desert

Testing

Beware, in the desert God
awaits, but so does your enemy



The Process of the Desert

Testing

In the desert God shows us many things. Our motives, our hearts, the stuff we cling to for meaning. God needs to refine/purify us so that we once again **remember what is essential**



The Process of the Desert

Testing

See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

Isaiah 48:10

God left him to test him and to know everything that was in his heart. 2 Chronicles 32:31



The Process of the Desert

Testing



The Process of the Desert

Testing

In pleasure we forget. In comfort we sleep. God needs to awaken us.
(Ephesians 5:14)



The Process of the Desert Revelation

After we have been separated and refined, we are ready for God to speak



The Process of the Desert Revelation

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.

And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him...

1 Kings 19:11-13



The Process of the Desert Revelation

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. Exodus 3:1-2



The Process of the Desert Revelation

Therefore I am now going to allure her
(Israel); I will lead her into the wilderness
and **speaK tenderly to her.** Hosea 2:14



Desert Final Thoughts

Desert isn't punishment

The time frame of the desert experience is up to God (although we have a role to play)

God walks closely with us in the desert therefore don't waste the wilderness experience



I strode into the desert of my will,
Obsessed with each mirage that I could chase;
God let me wander aimlessly until
I cried for the oasis of His grace. Gustafson



The desert simplifies us by refining us
and reminding us what is essential



Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.” Exodus 33:15

