

Notes & Quotes – March 15, 2009

Psalm 63

Indicators that you might be in the wilderness...

- Consistently feeling “emotionally blah”
- Find yourself praying, “*Lord, I don’t understand...*”; “*God, why this, why now...*”
- Struggling to enjoy the present moment
- Easily discouraged
- Wanting to withdraw from the people you care most about
- Internally a sense of being spiritually dry
- Tired of waiting
- Frustrated with God’s timetable

**Deserts of
Ziph,
Maon,
En-gedi**
(1 Samuel 23-26)



Spirit work in wilderness settings...

- A sifting of our appetites (v. 1-5)
Q: What do I want more – an exit from the wilderness or greater intimacy with God in it?
- A deeper awareness of our God-dependence (v. 6-8)
Q: What am I trying to do in my own wisdom & strength?
Where do I sense God’s voice saying...trust me?

Sometimes you can only discover *God is enough*, thru the valley of *God is all I’ve got*.
- A higher perspective on current reality (v. 9-11)
Q: What am I seeing more clearly right now than I’ve seen before?

I am not what I do.
I am not what I have.
I am not what others say about me.

“...God must from time to time, and sometimes very insistently, disrupt our lives so that we release our grasping of life here and now. Usually through pain. God is asking us to let go of the things we love and have given our hearts to, so that we can give our hearts even more fully to him. He thwarts us in our attempts to make life work so that our efforts fail, and we must face the fact that we don't really look to God for life. Our first reaction is usually to get angry with him, which only serves to make the point. Don't you hear people say, *'Why did God let this happen?'* far more than you hear them say, *'Why aren't I more fully given over to God?'* We see God as a means to an end rather than the end itself. God as the assistant to our life versus God as our life.” – John Eldredge

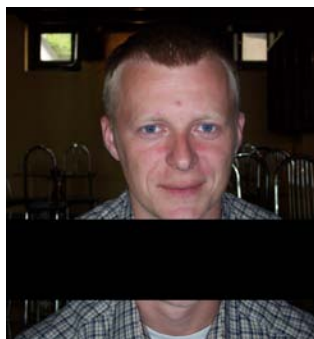
Types of wilderness experiences...

- **Pruning wilderness (David...1 Samuel 23-26)**...the dry, arid plains of Judah were the pruning shears God used to sift David's appetites, to deepen his God-dependence, and to grant him a higher perspective on the current circumstances...to clip away what holding David back from becoming who He's been created to become and doing what He's been called to do
- **Testing wilderness (Jesus...Matthew 4)**...the opening words of Matthew 4 state that the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to test him; sometimes our desert experiences are God's way of testing and exposing the foundations of our lives
- **Chastening wilderness (Moses...Exodus 2)**...some wilderness experiences are self-inflicted, in Moses' case he killed an Egyptian and had to flee to the desert for 40 years; God's work in self-inflicted wildernesses is one of chastening, of disciplining, of correcting...like a Father with his children, allowing them to bear the consequences of their actions for the sake of maturity

Bridge to church in Breza, Bosnia



Church in Breza (former brothel house)



Mladen – pastor of Breza Church