

Clarence Park Baptist Church

Question for Week following service 7th March 2021



Big Idea of the Series

Everyone one of us will experience times of wilderness in our lives. These are the times of loss and hardship perhaps caused by bereavement, a loss of employment, broken relationships, illness or loneliness and isolation. What does God want to teach us through these situations?

And how can they help us to grow not just closer to God but deeper in our worship to him?

(this series is based on resources by engageworship.com)

Week 2 – A Simple Journey

Luke 4:1-13

Preparation

1. Watch the sermon from the church YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/4w_qeVsTF3M
2. Read the passages on the next page and reflect on the questions before meeting with the rest of the group to explore your journeys together

Group Study

- Begin with a time of prayer – asking God to help you learn something new

Luke 4:1-13 New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

Jesus is tested in the wilderness

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ²where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

³The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.'

⁴Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone."' "

⁵The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶And he said to him, 'I will give you all their authority and splendour; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷If you worship me, it will all be yours.'

⁸Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Worship the Lord your God and serve him only."' '

⁹The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down from here. ¹⁰For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you
to guard you carefully;

¹¹they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." '

¹²Jesus answered, 'It is said: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." '

¹³When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

Elijah flees to Horeb

19 Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, 'May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.'

³ Elijah was afraid^[a] and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴ while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. 'I have had enough, LORD,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.' ⁵ Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.

All at once an angel touched him and said, 'Get up and eat.' ⁶ He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, 'Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.' ⁸ So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he travelled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹ There he went into a cave and spent the night.

The LORD appears to Elijah

And the word of the LORD came to him: 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'

¹⁰ He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.'

¹¹ The LORD said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.'

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. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³ 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, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'

Questions for discussion

Reflect and share your experiences together using the following questions.

Take time at the end to ask what is God teaching you this week to help you grow as a disciple of Jesus?

1. Is there anything from the readings or message this week that stood out to you?

2. SIMPLICITY FROM NOISE

We often use the loud and dramatic to help us relate to God, we like the sound of others around us singing etc... Yet Wilderness worship by contrast is quiet, gentle and silent. In the reading from 1 Kings 19- when the Lord passes by Elijah, he does not appear in the powerful wind, the earthquake, or the fire. God's presence is revealed in a "gentle whisper", or a "still small voice". Or one translation prefers "**the sound of sheer silence**" (NRSV).

- a. What would it be like to hear "the sound of sheer silence"?
- b. Do you find that God speaks louder in the silence? Explain...

Acts 13 New International Version - UK (NIVUK)

13 ¹Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ²While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' ³So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

3. SIMPLICITY FROM DISTRACTIONS

As the church in Acts prayed, they heard God speaking.

What distracts you when you try to pray?

What ways of remaining focused can you share that might help others?

4. SIMPLICITY FROM STUFF

The Prayer in the box is a response to the things in our lives that distract us from worshipping God. In Luke 10:1-7 Jesus sent out the 72 with just a small purse.

How can you live more simply to remain focused?

This Lent what might you need to "put down" to spend more time with God?

Jesus, teach me to occasionally live with less, to fast those things which distract me or in which I am tempted to put my trust.

I know that you have the best for me and are leading me in the way of everlasting, abundant life. Amen.

Prayer

Take some time to share prayer needs, pray for one another, for the church and for our local community before finishing with the words of the grace.