

Exodus: Life in the Wilderness

In this Together

Exodus 17

Part 2

Reflection Questions

1. **Shifting Perspectives:** Which of these roles—the active "Joshua" on the battlefield or the supporting "Moses" on the hilltop—do you currently feel called to in your season of life?
2. **Defining the Wilderness:** The message describes the wilderness as a spiritual moment where you realize you "don't have it all together" and need help. How would you describe your own "wilderness" experiences, and what did they teach you about your need for others?
3. **The Law of Christ:** Galatians 6:2 describes the "Law of Christ" as loving others just as Jesus loved us. Why do you think "bearing one another's burdens" is considered the fulfillment of this law?
4. **The Purpose of Support:** In the story of Exodus 17, Moses needed others to hold up his hands so the battle could be won. Why is it sometimes harder for us to accept support (like Moses) than it is to give it (like Joshua)?
5. **Engineering Connections:** God engineers circumstances to bring people together because they have mutual needs. Can you think of a specific relationship in your life that felt like a "God-engineered" intersection?

Life Application Questions

6. **Who's Got Your Back?** Beyond just family, who are the spiritual partners you can rely on when you are "worn out" in the wilderness?
7. **Whose Back Do You Have?** Is there someone in your current circle who is "stragglng" or struggling that you could support this week?

8. **Moving Beyond "Minding Your Own Business":** In our culture, minding one's own business is often seen as a virtue, but we cannot become who God called us to be alone. What is one practical step you can take to be more "all in" with your spiritual community?

9. **Cultivating Seedbeds:** Remembering when God came through in the past creates a "seedbed" for future growth. Share one time when you witnessed God showing up in your life or the life of someone you prayed for. How does that memory help you face your current challenges?

Summary

We are continuing our journey through the book of Exodus, specifically focusing on chapter 17 in our series, "Life in the Wilderness." The wilderness is a unique place; when you are in it, you know it. It is a spiritual moment where you might feel you don't have everything together, and it is precisely for those moments that this message is intended.

A Change in Perspective: Joshua and Moses

There is a beautiful shift that happens as we grow. When we are younger, we often identify with Joshua—the warrior on the battlefield, sword in hand, with sweat in his eyes and the smell of battle in the air. It is an active, frontline role that makes sense in the strength of youth.

However, as time passes, there is a new value found in the role of Moses. Moses went to the hilltop to make intercession while the battle raged below. For those who have "mileage" and a shared history, there is a profound opportunity to play a supporting role in the lives of the "Joshuas" around them, supporting what God is doing in the next generation.

The Law of Christ and Bearing Burdens

The core of our culture should be one of supporting one another. This is rooted in Galatians 6:2: *"Bear one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."*

What is this "law of Christ"? It is the new command Jesus gave: to love one another just as He has loved us. It means showing up for one another and caring about the person next to you, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who rejoice.

The Intersection of Belonging

Connection and belonging do not happen by accident. They occur at an intersection engineered by God. He brings people into your life because they have something you need, and you have something they need. When these two lines cross, you find life more abundant.

If you feel disconnected, it is often because you haven't yet found that overlap of mutual need. We are the body of Christ, and every relationship is meant to be mutual. You won't find this connection by arriving late and leaving early; it requires:

- Lingering longer in the foyer after service.
- Joining a small group, such as a men's or women's group.
- Participating in Sunday school or smaller community circles.

Two Vital Questions

As you reflect on your own "Life in the Wilderness," consider these two questions:

1. Who's got your back?
2. Whose back do you have?

While the world may suggest that "minding your own business" is a virtue, in the spiritual realm, you cannot become who God called you to be alone.

Remembering God's Faithfulness

Finally, look back. Can you remember a time when God came through for you or for someone you prayed for? These memories are the seedbeds where your life grows into everything God intended.

The Israelites in Exodus 17 were hungry, thirsty, and worn out, wondering if they were brought into the wilderness just to die. But the wilderness is not a place of abandonment; it is a place where we learn to be "in this together" and witness God showing up in incredible ways.