

THE WILDERNESS - Choosing Jesus in the Dry Places

Based on the message by Mona DeVous

OVERVIEW

What do you do when you don't feel close to God?

Every follower of Jesus will experience seasons of wilderness—times that feel dry, difficult, confusing, or lonely. In this message, Mona DeVous teaches that the wilderness is not a place to abandon God but an opportunity to know Him more deeply.

Teaching from Psalm 63, Mona shows how David responded while running for his life in the wilderness. Instead of allowing his circumstances to define him, David chose to seek God, praise Him, remember His faithfulness, meditate on His Word, and hold fast to His promises.

Jesus also entered the wilderness. When He was tempted, He didn't respond with His feelings or emotions. He answered every temptation with the truth of God's Word.

This message challenges us to stop letting our feelings determine our relationship with God. Instead, we are called to seek Jesus, trust His Word, allow Him to reveal what is in our hearts, and stay connected to the family of God.

"David wasn't looking for relief. He was looking for communion with God." - Mona DeVous

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read → Respond → Reflect → Pray → Live It

Open your Bible and carefully read the Scriptures before answering the questions.

Let God's Word answer the questions before your feelings or opinions do.

As you work through this guide, ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart, deepen your dependence on Jesus, and help you continue choosing Him—even during difficult seasons.

Take time to read, pray, reflect, journal, and discuss these questions with your parents, youth leaders, friends, or small group.

Don't rush through the questions. Wrestle with them. God's Word is meant to shape the way you think, live, worship, obey, and follow Jesus.

SECTION 1 — THE WILDERNESS DRAWS US CLOSER TO GOD

FOCUS

The wilderness becomes a place where we choose communion with God instead of simply looking for relief.

READ

Psalm 63:1–8

RESPOND

1. What did David thirst and long for?
2. What had David looked for in the sanctuary?
3. What did David say was better than life?
4. What did David choose to do with his lips, his hands, and his thoughts?
5. What did David remember during the night watches?
6. What gave David confidence while he was in the wilderness?

REFLECT

- When life gets difficult at home, school, work, or in a friendship, what do you usually turn to first?
- What distractions—your phone, social media, entertainment, sports, or relationships—can keep you from seeking Jesus?
- What would choosing time with Jesus look like in the middle of a busy school week?
- Are you more focused on God fixing your situation or on knowing Him more deeply through it?

Further Scripture Reading

Psalm 42:1–2, Isaiah 55:1–3, James 4:8

SECTION 2 — THE WILDERNESS REVEALS OUR HEARTS

FOCUS

God uses difficult seasons to expose what is in our hearts and teach us dependence on Him.

READ

Deuteronomy 8:2, Psalm 139:23–24, Jeremiah 29:13

RESPOND

1. According to Deuteronomy 8:2, why did God lead Israel through the wilderness?
2. What did God want to know about His people?
3. According to Psalm 139:23–24, what did David ask God to search?
4. What did David ask God to reveal and where did he ask God to lead him?
5. According to Jeremiah 29:13, when will people find God?
6. What do these passages teach about God's desire for our hearts?

REFLECT

- What comes out of your heart when you feel stressed, disappointed, left out, corrected, or misunderstood?
- How do you respond when your parents, teachers, coaches, or leaders make a decision you do not like?
- Are you depending on God, or are you trying to control everything yourself?
- Is there an attitude, habit, relationship, or hidden struggle that you need to surrender to Jesus?

Further Scripture Reading

James 1:2–4, Romans 5:3–5, Hebrews 12:10–11

SECTION 3 — CHOOSE THE WORD OVER YOUR FEELINGS

FOCUS

Feelings change, but God's Word remains true.

READ

Matthew 4:1–11, 1 Thessalonians 5:24

RESPOND

1. Who led Jesus into the wilderness?
2. How did Jesus answer every temptation?
3. What repeated phrase did Jesus use?
4. According to Matthew 4:10, who alone deserves our worship and service?
5. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:24, what is true about the One who calls us?
6. What do these passages teach about responding to temptation and difficult seasons?

REFLECT

- What feelings most often try to lead you—fear, anger, loneliness, jealousy, insecurity, pressure, or the need to fit in?
- When friends, social media, or school culture say something different from God's Word, which voice usually shapes your choices?
- What Bible truth do you need when you feel rejected, anxious, tempted, or not good enough?
- What change could help you spend time in God's Word before checking your phone or starting your day?

Further Scripture Reading

Psalms 119:9–16, Hebrews 4:12, Joshua 1:8

SECTION 4 — DON'T WALK THROUGH THE WILDERNESS ALONE

FOCUS

God designed His people to encourage, strengthen, and walk with one another.

READ

Ecclesiastes 4:9–10, 1 Thessalonians 5:11

RESPOND

1. Why are two people better than one?
2. What happens when one person falls?
3. What warning is given about someone who falls alone?
4. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:11, what are believers instructed to do?
5. What do these passages reveal about God's design for Christian community?
6. How can biblical friendships help us stay faithful during difficult seasons?

REFLECT

- When you are struggling, do you talk honestly with someone you trust or pull away and pretend you are fine?
- Do your closest friendships help you follow Jesus, or do they make it harder to obey Him?
- Who can speak truth to you when you are making an unhealthy or unwise choice?
- Is there someone at school, church, or in your family who may feel alone and needs encouragement from you this week?

Further Scripture Reading

Hebrews 10:24–25, Galatians 6:2, Proverbs 27:17

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Each day this week, ask yourself:

- Am I seeking relief, or am I seeking Jesus?
- What does God's Word say about my situation?
- Who can encourage me, and who can I encourage today?

Choose one practical step each day that puts God's Word into action before you pursue comfort.

JOURNAL IT

- One area where I feel like I'm in the wilderness:
 - One truth from God's Word I need to believe:
 - One step of obedience I will take this week:
 - One person I can ask to walk with me and encourage me:
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FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

The wilderness is not a season to give up, it is an opportunity to know Jesus more deeply.

Choose Jesus. Seek Him with your whole heart.

Answer your feelings with God's Word.

Stay connected to people who will encourage you and point you toward Christ.

Even in the dry places, God is faithful. Keep choosing Jesus.