

"For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face."

1 Co 13:12 NRSVue

O DELIGHTFUL WOUND

Navigating the Spiritual Wilderness

HERMENEUTICAL KEYS

How we interpret what is happening?

What lens are we applying?

Does this approach give us understanding?

THREE DISTINCT PHASES / SEASONS / MOVEMENTS

Essential Discipleship

“The struggle to get our lives together”

Generative Discipleship

“The struggle to give our lives away”

Radical Discipleship

“The struggle to give our deaths away”

This shows us the way in wh^{ch} we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus w^ould
unbraid had not this been the case.

**"For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror,
but then we will see [presence] to [presence]"**.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:12

VEIL OF THE SENSES

VEIL OF THE SPIRIT

VEIL OF LIFE ITSELF

*active night
of the senses*

*passive night
of the senses*

*active night
of the spirit*

*passive night
of the spirit*

**YOU
(Eros)**

HEAVEN

Ascent to Mt. Carmel
Book I

Dark Night of Soul
Book I

Ascent to Mt. Carmel
Books II & III

Dark Night of Soul
Book II

Face to face with God,
others & the world

The Gratification Principle

Your own metaphysics

Life

This shows us the way in which we must deal with unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is a sin & should be treated as such. Jesus at Gethsemane approached this way. This is the way we should follow. Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature (*teleios*) and complete (whole), not lacking anything.

JAMES 1:2-4 NIV

**CONSIDER THE MOST
TRANSFORMATIVE TIMES
IN YOUR LIFE...**

**CONSIDER THE MOST
TRANSFORMATIVE TIMES
IN YOUR LIFE...**

They most likely happened in times of wilderness.

Mark VII. 14

This shows us the way in wh^{ch} we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus at first
unprovided, but out this been the case
in the case before us they had repeated
testimonies from their own brethren & backed
his own testimony. He was crucified & yet daily
to be seen in the world with you itself.

O fortunate and choicest wound; you were made only for delight, and the
quality of your affliction is delight and gratification for the wounded soul!
You are great, O delightful wound, because he who caused you is great!

JOHN OF THE CROSS, THE COLLECTED WORKS, 660

Mark XVI. 14 /
This shows us the way in w^{ch} we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus w^o not
upbraided had not this been the case.

HINDSIGHT

John of the Cross

Jacob in Genesis 32

My own life

crisis, calling, conversion

GOD'S GRAND GESTURES

- 1990: **Faith crisis** led to discipleship / ministry life
- 2003: **Church crisis** led to grad school / restructured
- 2009: **Needs crisis** led to uprooting and moving to Africa
- 2016: **Personal crisis** led to OST / spirituality / DCE



Mark XVI. 14 /
This shows us the way in w^{ch} we must deal
with unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus at first

**WHY DO SOME STAY
FAITHFUL TO THE PATH
AND OTHERS DO NOT?**

A PERSONAL CREED

I believe that I am made in the image and likeness of God.

I believe I am loved by God, and God, in love and for love, works in my life.

I believe I have been given unique gifts to serve God's kingdom.

I believe I walk in the Spirit in shared agency:

- ★ The Spirit leads and shapes me.
- ★ I am responsible to humbly listen, discern, and follow the Spirit's lead.

I believe this active life in the Spirit carries a "both/and" blessing:

- ★ It give me hope in the life to come.
- ★ But it is SO much more. It is the grand adventure; life to the full.

KNOWN BY MANY NAMES / METAPHORS

Suffering / Hardships

New Testament language

Dark Nights

Spiritual writers and mystics

Wrestling

Jacob in Genesis 32

Wilderness

Biblical theology

VITAL WILDERNESS PRINCIPLES

- ★ Our lives are interwoven with God.
- ★ Wilderness is meant to disorient & awaken.
- ★ Wilderness's purpose is to form & re-form.
- ★ We will always be in some state of wilderness.
- ★ God acts in love and for love in wilderness.

“Therefore I am now going to allure her;
I will lead her into the wilderness
and speak tenderly to her.

There I will give her back her vineyards,
and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.

There she will respond as in the days of her youth,
as in the day she came up out of Egypt.

“In that day,” declares the Lord,

“you will call me ‘my husband’;

you will no longer call me ‘my master.’”

HOSEA 2:12-14

Mark XVI. 14 /
This shows us the way in wh^{ch} we must deal
with unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
to be treated as such. Jesus at first
approached and not this been the case.
They had repeated
their own brethren, & backed
him up but we have even made
him to be risen & yet doubt
with us itself.

O sweet cautery,
O delightful wound!
O gentle hand! O delicate touch
that tastes of eternal life
and pays every debt!
In killing you changed death to life.

JOHN OF THE CROSS, "THE LIVING FLAME OF LOVE"

WILDERNESS SERVES MANY PURPOSES

- ★ It is a place of emptying.
- ★ It is a place of testing.
- ★ It is a place to be still.
- ★ It is a place of presence.
- ★ It is a place of naming.
- ★ It is a place to be called.
- ★ It is a place of being filled.

MAPPING THE WILDERNESS

A Theology of Wilderness

How we think about wilderness

A Spirituality of Wilderness

How we live in the wilderness

A WILDERNESS THEOLOGY

Wilderness as a geographic place

Wilderness as a creation paradigm

Wilderness as a transformation paradigm

GEOGRAPHY IN SCRIPTURE

★ **Mountains**—encounters with the Divine

★ **Gardens**—intimacy and temptation

★ **Plains**—normalcy of life

★ **Seas**—miracles and awakening

★ **Wilderness**—formation and Presence

Mark VII. 14

This shows us the way in wh^{ch} we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus at first
upbraided them for their unbelief.
In the case before us they had repeated
testimonies of his power & yet they
his own words but we have even more
guilt for unbelief than him to be risen & yet doubt
to be raised from the dead.
Call it what you will, but it is a hard down
to be laid down.

WILDERNESS AS A GEOGRAPHIC PLACE

Mark XVI. 14

This shows us the way in w^h we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus at first

Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them
from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a *good and
broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

EX 3:7-8; ITALICS MINE

SHARP CONTRAST

Egypt | flesh/bread | fullness

wilderness | hunger | death

Promised land | milk/honey | fulfillment

TWO PARADIGMS

paradigm—typical example or pattern of something; a model

Creation
out of nothing

Exile
as transformative space

This shows us the way in wh^{ch} we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus at first
unperceived had not this been the case.

In the case before us they had repeated
testimonies

WILDERNESS AS A CREATION PARADIGM

his own words but we have even more
guilt of doubt
To what end
I have been down

When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I the LORD will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
I will open rivers on the bare heights,
and fountains in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
and the dry land springs of water.
I will put in the wilderness the cedar,
the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive;
I will set in the desert the cypress,
the plane and the pine together,
so that all may see and know,
all may consider and understand,
that the hand of the LORD has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.

God as agent

ex nihilo

**Life where there
was no life**

ISAIAH 41:17-20

WILDERNESS AS A TRANSFORMATION PARADIGM

something re-created / re-formed
“rite of passage”

When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer; for God thought, "If the people face war, they may change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led the people by the roundabout way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of the land of Egypt prepared for battle.

EXODUS 13:17-18

ISRAEL - BEFORE & AFTER THE WILDERNESS

MILITARY

SPIRITUAL LAW

TRIBAL STRUCTURE

SEASONAL RHYTHMS

GOVERNMENT

CULTURE

CIVIL LAW

KNOWLEDGE OF YHWH

The LORD went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

EX 13:21-22

Shekhina = "that which dwells"

VARIOUS SPELLINGS INCLUDE SHECHINAH AND SHEKINAH

This shows us the way in which we must deal with unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is a sin & should be treated as such. Jesus at once
Divine Presence—or the “Indwelling Presence,” the Shekhina, literally “that which dwells.” This is the quality of God’s immanence, His manifestation to man when He is close, as opposed to His transcendence.

THE CLASSIC MIDRASH

A WILDERNESS SPIRITUALITY

Israel

Moses

contemporary sojourners

active—what we do

passive—what God does

Mark XVI. 14

This shows us the way in wh^{ch} we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus at last
of his side had out this been the case
In the case before us they had repeated
testimonies from their own brethren & backed
his own testimony. We have even more
guilt for our sins than to be risen & yet die
to be raised & yet die.

BELDEN LANE, DESERT SPIRITUALITY AND CULTURAL RESISTANCE, 16

TWO PRIMARY OUTCOMES

where we end up

who we end up being

This shows us the way in which we must deal with unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is the whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

EXODUS 16:1-3

HOW DO WE NAVIGATE THESE TIMES?

1. We can return to what we knew
2. We can get stuck in the wilderness
3. We can move forward in trust and surrender
(God is doing God's work in love and for love)

TEN HELPFUL BEHAVIORS FOR WILDERNESS

1. A Humble Disposition in God's Presence
2. A Posture to Hear the Divine Voice
3. The Courage to Engage Doubt
4. The Fortitude to Ask Tough Questions
5. The Willingness to Be Led by the Spirit Into Uncharted Waters
6. The Audacity to Wrestle with God, Self, and Others
7. The Faith to Believe in the Living Word of God
8. The Mettle to Overcome Limiting Dogma
9. The Need for a Wider Community
10. The Faith to Accept the Journey's Outcome

Copyrighted Material
A Book of Blessings *for the Seasons*



CIRCLE
of GRACE

JAN RICHARDSON


Copyrighted Material

**BELOVED
IS
WHERE
WE
BEGIN**

This shows us the way in wh^{ch} we must deal
unbelief in ourselves, & in others. It is
& should be treated as such. Jesus w^o not
upbraided had not this been the case.

QUESTIONS

In
test
his
guilt for ever. Jesus him to be risen & yet death
to
self
down
down



“For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face.”

1 Co 13:12 NRSVue

O DELIGHTFUL WOUND

Navigating the Spiritual Wilderness