

INTRO

- In 2020, have you used the line “when things get back to normal”? What’s one thing you meant by that statement?

READ

Psalm 66:5-6

Hebrews 3:5-14

The story of the deliverance of God’s people, Israel, from slavery in Egypt to the land God promised them is told and retold throughout the Bible. A significant part of this story is the 40 years spent in the wilderness. This passage from Hebrews is a reminder for us that in those times that feel like wilderness in our lives, we are to take care as to how we respond.

*So watch your step, friends. Make sure there’s no evil unbelief lying around that will trip you up and throw you off course, diverting you from the living God. **The Message***

REFLECT & RESPOND

What is the wilderness?

- the time between something we have left behind & something unknown lying ahead
- the season between the life I knew and an unknown future
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Our tendency in the wilderness is to fear the unknown in our future, so we cry out for the way things were.

1. Imagine

— a life ahead where we don’t lose the gifts and goodness we’ve discovered during our Covid19 lockdown.

Qu: What is something you have enjoyed during the lockdown which has been a gift to you?

Qu: What is might it cost you to hold onto this gift? Or, said another way, might you need to let go of or change?

2. Dream

— What if “normal” wasn’t quite as good as we think, and God has a better future for us to move into individually and as a society?

— What if we are actually longing for the “leeks and onions” of Egypt (Numbers 11:5) when God has “milk and honey” of a promised land (Exodus 3:8) ahead for us?

To dream of a better future, we have to acknowledge the brokenness of the life we’ve known.

We pray: “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Qu: Identify some things in your life, our city & our nation where you long to see change to reflect more of God’s kingdom.

3. Pray

Read: 2 Chronicles 7:13-14

Titus 2:11 begins: “For the **grace** of God has appeared, bringing **salvation** for all people.”

Prepare for our time of prayer by considering the following:

- your need for personal repentance
- your hope for land to be healed and God to be known

Qu: As you imagine goodness and dream of change, name things name things we can pray together for.

PRAY

Let us then with **confidence draw near to the throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

- pray for strength in this wilderness
- pray concerning your fears for your future
- pray for continued hope