

Devotion Saturday 5 March 2022

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

This Sunday's reading is the temptation of Jesus, there is so much going on in that text and so much that is relevant to this time that for the next couple of days we're going to be working through parts of it.

We generally look at the wilderness and wilderness experiences as bad things. Who really wants to give up the comforts of home to go out into the dry barren conditions of the wilderness? But that is where the Holy Spirit leads Jesus, out into the wilderness. But the wilderness is often where we find the deepest clarity and connection with God. If you've ever been to the wilderness before, the first thing you will probably have noticed is how quiet it is and how at night you can see so many more magnificent stars. It is often in these moments when we are void of all the distractions of life, when the world is quiet and still, that we can concentrate on what is most important to us.

While we can't all go out into the wilderness to have a still and focused experience with God we can make time to be still and just be with God. Grab a pen/pencil and paper, set aside all distractions (yes that means silencing your cellphone and not checking messages and social media), find a place you are not likely to be disturbed and you can just be with God. Close your eyes and take time to recognise all the noises around you, the traffic, a clock ticking, a dog barking, people talking, recognise them and then push them aside. Then concentrate on your body, hear yourself breathing, feel your diaphragm moving up and down. Concentrate on emptying your mind and just being with God, feel God's presence with you. If something you need to do pops into your mind or your mind starts to focus on something you're dealing with, or something that might be important, stop and write it down and then let it go for later. Bring your focus back to God. It doesn't matter if it happens over and over again, write them all down and then let them go and focus back on God. Give yourself time to find some peace in God. You can decide when you need to bring your focus back to the world but I hope you will spend some time with God and find his peace, the peace that passes all understanding.

Later, come back to what you have written down, other than the to-dos, is there perhaps something that God was focusing your mind on? What might God be telling you or preparing you for?

Prayer:

Almighty God, thank you for wilderness times, for times that we can be still and leave behind us the busyness of the world and just be with you. Thank you for the deep peace we experience when we allow ourselves to draw near to you. Help us to set aside more time to just be with you, without filling it with all our wants and needs and help us to appreciate your presence with us.

In Jesus name we pray,

Amen.

Rev KS Brown