



# DON'T WASTE YOUR WILDERNESS

## It's All About the Blessing

September 10, 2023 Message Notes

*TEXT: NUMBERS 3-6*

You may need to say 'no' to a few things starting today, so that you can say 'yes' to all of the blessings God has for you. If you want to get the most out of your wilderness, you need to live connected to God and connected to His people.

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## NOTES

Today is a day of vision for you.

“Where there is no vision, people cast off restraint.”

*Proverbs 29:18*

“With a vision, people embrace restraint.”

You may need to say ‘no’ to a few things starting today, so that you can say ‘yes’ to all of the blessings God has for you.

If you want to get the most out of your wilderness, you need to live connected to God and connected to His people.

- Tabernacle – God’s presence in our lives
- Tribes – Our place in His presence
- Priests – A calling to carry out

“A year after Israel’s departure from Egypt, the LORD spoke to Moses in the Tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai.”

*Numbers 1:1*

Within the Tabernacle was the Tent of Meeting, and only the priests could enter in. Inside there was the Holy of Holies and only the High Priest could enter into that space where the Ark of the Covenant sat.

But something incredible happened for you and for me:

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

*John 1:14*

The Greek word for ‘dwell’ - σκηνόω - means: to have one’s tent - to tabernacle.

God became a man and tabernacled with us. Now everyone can have access to Him.

Through Jesus, the Holy Spirit can dwell in man and we, as Christ-followers, become little tabernacles in this world.

“Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him.”

*Ephesians 3:17*



This is where the Christian life begins, along with a new vision and a new and better trajectory for your life.

**StartUp** helps you learn what we are all about as a Church, get connected and stay connected, begin to see the path God has laid out for you.

“Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong.”  
*Ephesians 3:17*

**EDGE** helps you learn and grow deep roots in your own discipleship – take the next steps in your Christ journey.

God doesn’t just build things, he builds people.

“Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one.”  
*Numbers 1:2*

Every individual matters to God and He created us for community.

The Christian life doesn’t end at accepting Jesus or getting baptized. That’s just the beginning.

Don’t do life alone.

Real life-on-life happens in circles, in living rooms, in coffee shops, around dining room tables - even on a Zoom or Google Meet.

“Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.”  
*1 Corinthians 8:1*

Content is not a substitute for community.

There are over 30 ‘one another’ phrases in the New Testament referring to God’s people being together.

“Be devoted to **one another** in love. Honor **one another** above yourselves.”  
*Romans 12:10*

“So it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to **one another**.”  
*Romans 12:15*



“Be kind and compassionate to **one another**, forgiving **one another**, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

*Ephesians 4:32*

“Therefore encourage **one another** and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

*1 Thessalonians 5:11*

“No one has ever seen God; but if we love **one another**, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”

*1 John 4:12*

It's in Community that you can experience the fullness of the Body of Christ.

It's in Group that you can find your tribe.

“They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people.”

*Acts 2:46-47*

What is something that you might need to say “no” to so that you can experience the true blessing of authentic community with others?

Change is scary but so is doing life alone.

Maybe you've been in groups before but now feel stuck, stale and are just going through the motions. Get in a new group!

“And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.”

*Hebrews 10:25 NLT*

“Then the LORD gave these instructions to Moses and Aaron: “When the Israelites set up camp, each tribe will be assigned its own area. The tribal divisions will camp beneath their family banners on all four sides of the Tabernacle but at some distance from it.”

*Numbers 2:1-2*

Find your tribe and set up camp. Don't go anywhere. Let those people become like family to you. The blessing is in community.



Don't waste your wilderness. You might miss the blessing in it.

God has always desired a priestly people – living bridges between God and the lost world.

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

*1 Peter 2:9*

“And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.”

*1 Peter 2:5*

We all have a part in the building up of a spiritual house, of the Body of Christ. We need to be active participants in order to have a proper home – a shelter, a place of safety and refuge.

### **How can we offer spiritual sacrifices?**

With prayers of thanksgiving, with gifts of our time, of growth in God's Word, and as we live generously and empowered on mission.

Our spiritual sacrifice is living together on the EDGE.

God designed it this way because the blessing is in the community.

In Hebrew tradition, the book of Numbers is known as במדבר (*bamidbar*): the “in the wilderness” scroll.

Are you in the middle of your very own wilderness? Are you facing it alone? You don't have to.

There is blessing waiting for you even in the midst of the wilderness if you follow the heavenly vision God has for you.

Say 'YES' to Him - as Savior, to experience His fullness in community, to His vision, to the BLESSING.

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”

Numbers 6:24-26



1. **The Lord bless you and keep you** - It's not about the “stuff”. The blessing is JESUS himself and being in community with others. We want His favor and protection.
2. **The Lord make his face shine on you** - Hear Him say to you today, “my child, I just want to make my face shine on you. I love you. I am so pleased with you.” This happens when we follow the Father in obedience. Get connected.
3. **And be gracious to you;** - Our God is merciful and full of compassion. He is so kind and patient with us. His grace abounds. Thank you God.
4. **The Lord turn his face towards you** - This is God’s approval. “I’m going to stop what I am doing and I’m going to give you my full attention. You are mine. You are the apple of my eye.”
5. **And give you peace** - Peace is what we need - in our minds, in our hearts, in our wilderness.

Don't waste your wilderness, you might miss the blessing in it.

