

SERMON GUIDE:

April 30, 2023, Pastor Jason Smotherman

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Have you been in a war or wilderness season? What is the most difficult part and how can we as a group help you in this season?
- Francis Chan says, "The modern American Christian doesn't want to be saved from their sin just the consequences from them." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
- Share your key takeaways from this "I see a church" series? How can we apply this to our lives?

SERMON NOTES - WAR OR WILDERNESS

PART 1: RECAP From April 23, 2023

You will never outperform the picture you have of yourself.

Possibly the way you see yourself is as important as the way you see God.

Many Christians will believe in the greatness of God but discount the greatness that God wants to do through them. You will act like the person you think you are.

Proverbs 23:7

As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

The way you see yourself determines your attitude toward life.

Your self-portrait is the way you see yourself.

Your self-portrait is the view you have of yourself.

Your self-portrait controls your self-confidence – and your self-conduct.

You will always act like the person you think you are.

You cannot outperform your persuasion.

When God wants to do something great in you the first thing he will do is change how you view yourself.

Stop saying what you are seeing and start saying what God is seeing!

When God sees the church, He sees it as advancing not surviving.

My confession, needs to match His.

I see a church that has **greatness in it and in front of it. Because God will be in it and in front of it.**

I see a church that **believes together is a good place to be.**

I see a church that knows **our land is worth fighting for.**

I see a church that turns **their ear towards God and listens** to Him because we know whoever has our ear has our future.



I see a church that **lives in what God is doing** not just what he has done.

I see a church that **reproduces life** and not death.

I See a Church (Part 2)

Exodus 13:17-18

When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, “Lest the people change their minds **when they see** war and return to Egypt.” **18** But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle.

War or Wilderness

God had it all planned out.

The people probably thought, out of Egypt into the Promise land.

Good times are here. Bricks will make themselves. Hard Labor is over. The sweet life is upon us.

Leveling up is never that easy.

It always requires something internal to change so that something external will be changed.

The first thing you need to notice about this passage of scripture is how God cared about what they were looking at, as an indicator of their current posture and the level of fight they had in them.

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What you see can change your mind IF your heart is not anchored in His proper perspective for your life.

God was noticing that the effects of the last season left them not equipped to face the next season. So it was the wilderness. The shaping ground. Every person will be required in this life to face their wilderness.

Even Jesus had his wilderness experience.

Matthew 4:1

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Wildernesses aren't something to be avoided.

They help shape perspective and conviction in our life for our purpose.



Perpetual or generational wildernesses should be avoided.

The Promise land, I believe, wasn't just a destination or position found on a map, **it was first about a position and perspective of the heart.** Before God could move them externally there was movement that needed to happen internally.

The people had no idea what was in front of them.

They knew what was behind them;

- years of slavery
- bondage
- hard labor
- no freedom
- building a legacy for other people
- raising their kids in a perpetual generational bondage

Their life was known, planned, and truth be told, they grew accustomed to bondage.

Bondage taught them how to think.

They were hand fed structure, disappointment, agony, but don't miss this, **it was the hand feeding that had to change.**

You will never get to your purpose in life by someone else's revelation of God.

No voice, no matter how much you respect it, **will ever reach into a place in your life that will shake you and change you like God's voice.** YOU need to learn to hear HIS voice for yourself.

John 1:-:27-28

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

When I rely on others to tell me what and who I am and what I am supposed to do, I will always struggle believing what and who God says I am and what He wants me to do.

PART 2:

They had grown accustomed to being told by man what to think about themselves.

I believe they could have saved a 40 year wandering if they would have looked internally to surrender their heart rather than externally to their idea of a promised land. They thought they were ready to level up. God knew there were two ways for them to level up; **it was either confront your enemy in war or confront yourself in the wilderness and then confront your enemy in war. It was either war or wilderness.**

We know that the wilderness exposed them.



It showed them the result of living years in a defeated posture.
The bondage created in them a bent towards **complaining and not believing**.
They saw themselves as slaves and captives, God saw them as free.

We have lived for years in America, where no spiritual awakening has happened.
Our nation, our world, our church, our families, need an awakening to God and his voice
in the worst ways.

Our society is ripe for the greatest move of God ever seen.
It starts with us. You and I, dusting of our tuner, repenting and returning to a new place
where God speaks to us again.

When they see

When your sight is not right, most will opt for the wandering in the wilderness and never
face the giants that in the way of your promised land.
I pray when God looks down at me, this church, He will say they are ready for the war not
just the wilderness.

It will always be our job to bring the faith and His job to bring the victory.

The Wilderness exposes our convictions or our conveniences.
Three things that the wilderness can expose:
These are the why we continue to wander for a generation.

Sin

Francis Chan

The modern American Christian doesn't want to be saved from their sin just the
consequences from them.

Self

James 1:7-8

That man should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 He is a double-minded
man, unstable in all his ways.

Seasons of needed growth

From the Prayer of Commitment, to the Process of sanctification, to become the Product
of God. You will never escape the process. The process doesn't reveal to God what is
inside of you, its reveals to you what's inside of you, so you can submit those things to
the foot of the cross.

In the wilderness, If I submit to God, I win.
In the war, If I submit to God, they win.



PARKWAY
CHRISTIAN CENTER

The War exposes 3 areas of growth:

Weariness

Who is our source?

Wounds

Who do you go to when you're wounded?

Wondering

Are we ever going to win?

In war, you must know our weapons:

The Holy Spirit - the person and work of the Holy Spirit

The person provides comfort and companionship and the the work provided gifting.

Spiritual **gifting** and supernatural **generosity** are the two tangible ways the Holy Spirit works through us.