



The Least of These Ministries  
"A Works of Mercy Ministry"

# IN THE WILDERNESS



In Short:

- Incorrectly seeing our battles, living with insecurities, and bitterness can leave us in the wilderness.

## Seeing Our Battles

Often when in the wilderness I've wondered about my purpose. Am I doing what God has called me to do? Have I disappointed him in some way? Am I making the right decisions? During these times of wonder it's important to remember what God says in His Word.

*"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."*

Romans 8:28

For us who "love God" it's easier for us to accept and appreciate this scripture because we love Him no matter what. We know that God loves us and is always working every circumstance together for our good.

When traveling in the wilderness; God is able to help us become more inline with our core values. If we are facing a battle it doesn't mean we have failed or that God is absent. When we see our battles, God sees Christ's victory.

Sometimes it takes us passing through the darkness before we can really appreciate the light. In the wilderness it can be difficult for us to see our battles from a divine prospective and when things get difficult we are often tempted to look back to our old ways. Remember Lot's wife and be careful to not look back. Looking back is how we miss what God has set before us.

Do you believe that battles our for our own good? Can you give an example when a battle has helped you?

## Going Forward

God doesn't call the qualified. He qualifies those he calls. Even if you are incorrectly seeing your battles, living with insecurities, or bitterness; you're not a disappointment to God. He loves you and he has called you for a reason that you will fulfill.

When he sees you he doesn't see you with all your failures, he sees Christ with all *his* accomplishments. He is looking at Christ in you and sees the person you are becoming through him.

We are saved through his grace. God's grace is given. Not earned. The battle belongs to Christ and it's by *His* works that we are approved in God's eyes.

- When we see our battles, God sees Christ's victory.
- When we see our daily cross, God sees Christ's empty tomb.
- When we see our failures, God sees Christ's achievements.
- When we see the mountain standing in our way, God sees the mountain removed through faith in Christ.

You are not hopeless and you are not alone. God see's you and is with you. Don't let the wilderness you are going through convince you that your story is coming to an end. God is just turning the page. He has a plan for you and you have a future worth living.

Notice that forgiveness is "to leave it alone." Forgiveness is not the same as giving approval, giving in, restoring, re-hiring, or having an obligation to trust, forget, or to justify their actions. Because you do have the right to refuse further hurt, pain, and abuse. Being willing to let things go is not always easy but it does give way to healing. It's difficult to find a solution when we are obsessed with fixing the blame. Often when a person is consistently focused on how, when, and who hurt them they will be full of bitterness. Forgiveness gives the believer the ability to move passed the hurt; allowing the opportunity for the healing process to take hold.

There will be times in our walk where we will be asked to forgive someone more then once; for an action they had only done one time. You may find yourself needing to forgive that person who hurt you up to seventy times seven. In other words if you were to forgive someone for something they did that hurt you and then later the old thoughts and feelings returns; you will need to forgive them again.

Having the ability to forgive allows the believer the choice to permeate their mind to the point where it is reflecting their attitude. You think forgiveness and you act forgiveness. Forgiveness will show itself through your behavior because it is what you see, think, and believe.

Do you struggle with forgiveness? How does forgiveness personally help you heal from being hurt?



In your spiritual journal write what God is saying to you on your heart. What is He saying about incorrectly seeing your battles, living with insecurities, or fighting feelings of bitterness?

Visit us at [www.theleastoftheseministries.com](http://www.theleastoftheseministries.com)

References:

"Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible", by James Strong, LL.D., S.T.D. The New Strong's (2010) by Thomas Nelson Publishers)

## The Fear of Failure

Some of us have a hard time moving out of the wilderness due to our own fear of failure. There will come times in our walk when we will need to face this fear. Don't let your fear of failure tamper with your spiritual growth or prevent you from reaching your true potential.

Struggling with failures; we can find ourselves being on fire for God and yet still falling away. Because living with insecurities about our own ability's can discourage us from stepping out in faith. When our faith becomes stale do to our lack of involvement, things of the world are more likely to seep into the void left behind. We could then unexpectedly find ourselves living as if we are far from God.

If you find yourself living this way because your afraid of not being able to perform the task God may be asking you to do; I want to encourage you to not give up.

Stepping out in faith can be difficult or even discouraging at times. But you have a 100% chance to miss the shot you never take. Trust in God and take the shot.

I can't promise it will be easy. But I can promise that its worth it. When we see our daily cross, God sees Christ's empty tomb. God is a Good Father who wants you to try because He wants to see you succeed.

Have you had the fear of failure? What are some of the things we can do to help us start a task we feel uneasy about?



## The Good Father Parable

“One day a Good Father went to his two sons. He said ‘Sons today I’m going into work and when I return home I want your chores to be completed.’ The two boys both replied ‘Okay.’ Yet, as soon as the Good Father left for work the first boy says to himself:

‘Well, my father’s not here to *make* me do my chores before I go outside to play. So today I’m just going to go play outside and when he comes home if he’s mad at me, then he is mad at me. If he’s not, then he’s not. I guess I’ll deal with that when he comes home.’ The boy then goes and plays outside all day without doing his chores.

The second boy then says to himself: ‘I want to play outside, but I also want to please my dad and I want him to be pleased with me when he comes home. So I’m going to go look to see what the chores are.’ The boy then goes to read the chores.

The first chore is to clean his room. So he cleans his room. The second chore is to sweep the hallway. So he sweeps the hallway. The third chore is to clean the living room. He says to himself: ‘The living room is mostly clean already. So all I’ll have to do is clean off a few coffee tables.’ He then cleans the living room. The fourth chore is to take out the trash. So he takes out the trash.

Now each boy has five chores and the fifth chore for each boy is the same. This chore is the chore they are suppose to work together to finish. But since the first boy decided not to do his chores the second boy is forced to complete it alone.

The second boy reads the fifth chore and can see that is says to clean the gutters. The boy says to himself: ‘Woo I’m just a kid. How am I suppose to clean the gutters by myself? But that’s what my dad wants me to do.’

Outside the boy grabs the ladder from the side of the shed and lays it against the house. He then heads up the ladder.. one step.. two steps.. three steps.. the ladder then begins to shake and he becomes to scared to go up any further.

The first boy out in the yard starts to make fun of him saying: ‘Ha Ha! I knew you couldn’t do it. I don’t see why you even bother to try.’ After being made fun of by his brother; the second boy becomes so depressed that he doesn’t even want to play outside anymore. So he comes off the ladder and goes back inside.

Some time then goes by and the good father comes home to see the first boy out playing in the yard. He sees the ladder up against the side of the house. He says to himself: ‘well I see the boys must of done their chores.’

The father goes inside and sure enough the living room has been clean, the hallway has been swept, and the trash has been taken out. He says to himself: ‘Alright things are looking good.’ He then looks over the rest of the house and finds that the first boys room, the bathroom, and the dishes still haven’t been cleaned, and there is still a basket full of clean clothes on the dining room table.

He says to himself: ‘Well that first boy didn’t do anything!’ Now he is a good father so what does he do? I’ll tell you. He calls that boy inside. He then sends him to his room and tells him that he can’t come out until his room is cleaned.

The father looks around and says to himself: ‘Now the second boy must of done his chores.’ So he looks into the boy’s room and sure enough the boy’s room has been cleaned. But the boy looks up to see his dad standing in the doorway and starts crying. The father ask the boy ‘Why are you crying? Didn’t you do your chores?’ The boy then confesses “I wasn’t able to complete them.” He then started to cry even more.

Now what does the good father do? I’ll tell you. He will exalt the boy. The father says to the boy “Please don’t cry. Just look at all the good things you *did* get done.” And because he is a good father he even goes further by rewarding the boy. He says to him “Now why don’t you go on outside and play with those other kids.”

This same way is how our good father deals with our sins and short comings. If we behave like the first boy in the parable and take lightly what our father is asking us to do; we will have to answer for that when he calls us home.

If we set out to complete the task set before us and have complication as the second boy had, our good father will want to comfort us. He will not only want to exalt us but he will even go as far as rewarding us for the things we did get done. Especially if we are to humble ourselves before him by confessing our shortcomings as the second boy had.

As you can see in this parable stepping out in our faith may not be easy but it will always be worth it in one way or another. God’s total forgiveness when dealing with our sins and shortcomings is done at the point of salvation. The debt has been paid by Christ. When we see our failures, God sees Christ’s achievements.

Why do you suppose starting a task and yet not being able to complete it can still be seen as a good thing? Can you give an example?



### **Moving Mountains**

“... For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”

Matthew 17:20

When all we see is the mountain standing in our way. The Lord see’s the mountain removed.

Having faith that can move mountains is having faith that relies on Jesus’s power. Not our own. Since Christ alone is the glorified savior, the disciples ability to work depends totally upon *His* empowerment. When we see the mountain standing in our way, God sees the mountain removed through faith in Christ.

Do you agree or disagree with this? Why? Can you give an example when you trusted in Christ to empower you to move a mountain in your life?



### **Struggling With Forgiveness**

When a believer lacks the ability to forgive they will find themselves in a emotional wilderness. It’s said that when someone holds on to resentment in their heart its like drinking poison yourself and expecting the other person to die.

“Then Peter came to Him and said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’”

Matthew 18:21-22

70\*7=490 times. Peter assumed that forgiving up to seven times was ample to forgive anyone. But Jesus responds that seven is insufficient. Jesus is saying to Peter that a true disciple will have the character to forgive an unlimited amount of times.

In The New Strong’s Concordance it states that the Greek word used here for “forgive” is *aphiemi*. “*Aphiemi*, *af-ee-ay-mee*; ... various applications: leave, forgive, suffer, let, forsake, and let alone... **(1)** to send away; **(2)** to permit, allow, not to hinder, to give up a thing to person; **(3)** to leave, go way from one: **(3a)** in order to go to another place, **(3b)** to depart from any one, **(3c)** to depart from one and leave him to himself so that all mutual claims are abandoned.” (Strong, 2010, pg. 48)

