



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

Desert

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Desert refers to the spiritual dryness or barren periods of our life. It is the time when our joy, peace, or enthusiasm for the gospel of Jesus Christ is disturbed and worse, it is not present. However, this difficult experience gives us important lessons to enrich our walk with the LORD.

1. The different meanings of the spiritual desert of our life:

- 1.1. It is the moment of God's testing (Ex. 15:25).
- 1.2. It is the moment of shaping or changing our lives.
- 1.3. It is the moment of frustration.
- 1.4. It is the moment of preparation. It is the starting place for receiving God's fulfillment.
- 1.5. It is the moment that leads to victory.

2. What are the effects of the spiritual dryness of our life?

- 2.1. We immediately notice negativity in ourselves. In Ex. 16:2 and 17:2, the Israelites underwent hardship and dryness in their exodus to Canaan, but they barely realized God's presence and His provisions: manna, water, quails, pillar of fire, pillar of cloud, and divine guidance.
- 2.2. We experience daily miracles from God. Unlike Israelites attitude during their wandering in the desert, our perfect response to our spiritual dryness should be rejoicing (Phil. 4:4; Jam. 1:2-3).

3. Does God want us to live or leave in the spiritual desert? In Deut. 1:29-36, God never intended to let the Israelites to live in the desert, but they stayed there for 38 years because of their sins. We will be like the Israelites wandering in the desert for a long

time if we will not listen to the Lord. On the other hand, our Lord Jesus Christ went to the desert, but He conquered it (Lk. 4:1-14):

3.1. He lived by the word. He has rebuked Satan with Scriptures.

3.1.1. In temptations of the flesh, he said, "Man cannot live by bread alone" (Deut. 8:3).

3.1.2. In temptations of idolatry, He said, "Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only" (Deut. 6:13).

3.1.3. In temptations of pride, he said, "Do not put your God to the test" (Deut. 6:16).

3.2. He walked in the Spirit. Like Jesus, we have to follow where the Spirit leads us (Gal. 5:16), and let us hold on to God during our spiritual dryness.

4. Does God allow our spiritual desert on purpose and for a purpose? Our Christian life is not exempted from spiritual dryness and we long for God's presence along the way, but God assures us that He is watching over us (Ex. 2:7).

Conclusion:

We (Christians) will pass through the spiritual dryness, testing our faith in God. However, we must take it as an opportunity for our faith to mature through trusting God's will, praying, and meditating on His word. We will leave the desert knowing God's will and purpose in our life.

Reflection:

1. What are some of the important lessons you learned during your spiritual desert?
2. How do you cope during your spiritual dryness?
3. How do you utilize the word of God during your times of passing the desert?

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