

## Welcome & Intro :: walking through deserts

walking through deserts - posted by nowhereelse, on: 2010/1/16 17:03

Greetings all

I'm encouraged by much on this site, not least the 'heart for Jesus' so richly expressed by so many.

So here I go about to pour out my heart to one and all.

The desert, sometimes we're led into this wilderness, to learn how to walk by faith, not sight.

We discover our weakness and God's power.

We learn that apart from Christ we can do nothing, and likewise, through Him we can endure and do all things.

Also, we need to understand, we can end up in a dry place if we resist Holy Ghost conviction and harden our hearts.

I'm sure every believer who truly wants more of Christ will be led into the desert. If Jesus spent time there, we must surely follow in His steps.

By 'desert' I speak of a dry place, a hard place spiritually. Where energy to seek, pray and feed on the Word, is in short supply. It's a place, or more accurately, a time, when just maintaining a vibrant Christian walk is just plain hard work. In fact it's impossible without total dependence on the Lord. (This of course, is the lesson we need the most to learn)

Plans of service, of 'doing great things for God' all seem to fall flat. Sometimes these may be things we know God has led us to do, but the timings not right.

We keep trusting, keep believing, and keep laying our lives on the altar (This is the problem with a living sacrifice! We keep wanting to jump off the altar!??)

And most importantly we continually ask Jesus to search our hearts and show us anything in there He wants to deal to.

Now to my story. I've been walking in a desert for the past ten years. I am thankful that I'm still walking, and I praise God for this.

I've served the Lord overseas, I've been involved in some wonderful ministry. I know my family and I are where He wants us to be. In many ways I've come to love the desert for the truth I've learned about myself, and about God's faithfulness and provision.

I'm part of a small fellowship in the capital city of my country. A hard place spiritually at the best of times!!

We're a 'motly crew' of saints who're hungry for revival, and hungry for a deeper presence of God in and through our lives. We want to see souls saved, we want to see the western church revived, reformed and re-ignited into what the church should be.

Of course when I say 'western church' I mean us!!! Hence we need to let God operate on our hearts first.

This journey has been hard. It's cost me the fellowship of my family. I don't mean we've split up, I mean spiritual fellowship. My wife and teenage children no longer participate in church. We're a close family but they found the dryness too much.

One of the hardest crosses I bear is knowing I'm where we're supposed to be. When my wife left our little group, I decided we'll all go together to one of the bigger, 'livelier' fellowships. The Lord told me "No". It's too easy in such a place to wear a Christian mask and to hide the true state of your heart. Please note this was His word to us personally and not a statement about big churches!!:-)

So, it hurts like hell (Forgive the terminology) but I continue in our fellowship without most of my family. My son still comes

s with me, but it's more for me, than for God, if you know what I mean.

OH boy this is getting long!!! My heart is for the nations. Another big struggle is a totally closed door to minister this heart for missions. Again I realise it's part of the wilderness season I (we) are in.

Here is my cry. I understand the season, I see the need for the desert. I even have a picture that the deeper the foundation, the greater the building will be. ie the deeper the longer the preparation, the deeper the greater the work will be.

Even so, knowing the need for this season, it doesn't make it easy, I'm hurting, I'm tired, I'm struggling, I'm frustrated. And to be bluntly honest, some days I'm no different from the guy I was before God saved me.

So many psalms have the cry "How long O Lord!!"  
This is my cry

I love Jesus. I am so thankful, even in the dry places He provides. I'm still His.

Can any of you saints relate to this?  
Have you any words to encourage a weary fellow-traveller?

Thanks for your prayers

**Re: walking through deserts - posted by Ceri (), on: 2010/1/16 20:40**

Yes, we certainly can identify with you - my husband and I went through a desert for ten years after being forced to leave our small fellowship after the Toronto blessing broke out in 1995. My Husband was in the leadership and we were both very involved in a leadership role. We cared too much though and fought for a year against the frightening manifestations and false teaching that was coming in. As we had no transport we didn't attend Church for ten years but had our own family service, which our kids called 'dad's Church' This time in our lives very deeply affected us even though we had support from strong Christian friends.

I do think it a shame that you go to different Churches though. In our situation God moved a miraculous way and we moved back to my home town and returned to my family Church. Although my husband is not hundred percent happy, it's the best Church we have and our teens love it, so he attends with us.

It is true that in the desert you cannot thrive, you only survive, yet everyone with a calling of God on their lives goes this time - and it's a time when God calls us aside for preparation and to build a strong personal relationship. God still tells my Husband to keep calling on Him while He is near - keep searching.

John the Baptist was the voice calling in the wilderness, Moses spent 40 years in the desert being prepared for his role, Saul after becoming Paul was I think, 14 years\* in the desert before his ministry. \*(was actually 3 years in deserts of Arabia - see amendment in next note)

What is interesting is that during Solomon's building of the temple there was not a sound of chiseling or hammering or any tool at the temple site, 1 Kings 6 v 7; all the work on the stones was done at the quarry - in the desert! the stones when ready were transported and slotted straight into their places - a perfect fit!

In verse 11 God gives Solomon a promise "concerning the temple you are building, if you keep my laws and regulations and obey all my commands, I will fulfill through you the promise I made to your father David, I will live among the people of Israel and never forsake my people!"

We are the temple of the living God, 2 Cor 6 v 16, and He is preparing his stones in the quarry of life in the desert place.

Whenever I go through bad times I live on Psalm 139 & Romans 8 - God knows everyday of my life before I've lived it - and nothing will ever separate me from His love.

Don't ever give up!

I watched a nature programme, this planet earth, which really spoke to me, a family of elephants were trekking across the desert to find the waters, after days and days getting tired and weary the baby elephant started buckling at the knees and the mother had to keep nudging him along. Finally you thought he'd had it, he kept rolling in the dust and wanted to give up, absolutely exhausted - the mother wouldn't let him and kept picking him up onto his feet and nudging him again - then suddenly there was the water ahead of them, this little baby elephant had a surge of energy and slid straight into the

water with such joy! we were all in tears! what if he had given up all hope the day before.  
Don't ever give up, strive towards the goal - the prize is for those who endure to the end!

Read all the trials Paul went through, 2 Cor 11 v 16 cf, yet he was able to say 'I know! that all things work together for good - to those that love the Lord...  
through it all - I know!

**Re: walking through deserts - posted by Koheleth, on: 2010/1/17 10:20**

Quote:  
-----So many psalms have the cry "How long O Lord!!" This is my cry  
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Let me turn this around to an encouragement for you, brother. I do believe when we are in the wilderness, when we way with the Psalmist, "My soul yearns for you, my flesh longs for you in a dry and weary land where there is no water," this is actually a very healthy spiritual sign. It is those who are not crying, "How long, O Lord!?" that are cooling spiritually. Crying to our Father daily is a sign of life, even in the desert.

Quote:  
-----And to be bluntly honest, some days I'm no different from the guy I was before God saved me.  
-----

I beg to politely disagree, see below.

Quote:  
-----I love Jesus. I am so thankful, even in the dry places He provides. I'm still His.  
-----

No man can say, "I love Jesus," except by the Holy Spirit. You are not the same as before. You are a man crying out who loves Jesus. Continue on in those and to look up to Him. This will keep you alive in the desert and in the abundance. God's blessings to you to not only survive but be strong in the Lord.

**Re: - posted by White\_Stone (), on: 2010/1/17 18:01**

Hello Ceri,

I truly appreciated your reply, especially the part about Solomon's Temple.

However, I am curious where you get the information about Paul being in the desert for 14 years.

The information doesn't have to come only from Ceri, if anyone else has it, please share.

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Hello Koheleth,

Your reply is also very edifying. Thank you for posting.

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To the original Poster,

I can't add much more to what has already been posted, such good answers. Please know, my husband and I wandered in the desert for years, it is not the worst place to be.

Soon we will get to go home,  
White Stone

Thank you,

**Re: the 14 years! - posted by Ceri (), on: 2010/1/17 18:52**

yes - sorry about that and to the others that noticed - well it was 2am when I wrote to you! and was so engrossed in trying to help I didn't realise the time! lol!

Have added an ammendment to my original note.

It seems Paul was 3 years in the deserts of Arabia being taught of the Lord, but I knew 14 years was there somewhere so I checked it up, after his conversion he went to preach in Jerusalem and wanted to spend time getting to know Peter but was only there for 15 days as he had to flee for his life as many Christians didn't trust him and he caused riots - he then allowed himself to be sent home to Tarsus. It then goes fairly quiet about Paul.

Then after 14 years Barnabas went to his hometown of Tarsus to find him and he was finally trusted by local Christians to take famine relief gifts to the elders in Jerusalem.

Galations 2. That was when his ministry began in earnest.

Hope I don't start off a debate about the timeline of Paul now! I'm quite new to the forums and to sharing thoughts and advice on here.

Didn't mean to raise question marks that's why I said I wasn't sure - in future if I doubt I'll leave it out - and wait until the morning to check it out! lol

Spoke today to my husband about your posting and he still feels as you do and told me he still can't feel at home in our Church, although we know without a doubt that we are where God wants us to be because of the miraculous way God moved us here and is using us. We know that He has not brought us this far to abandon us now!

My husband and family will tell you that I always keep a positive attitude to life and believe with all my heart Psalm 139 - All my days are ordained by him and are written in His book - before I've even lived them, so no matter what comes my way whether good or bad I know it's in His hands and all for a purpose. I'll save all my 'whys?' until the day He shows me Why.

**Re: - posted by White\_Stone (), on: 2010/1/18 13:19**

Quote:

-----no matter what comes my way whether good or bad I know it's in His hands and all for a purpose.

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Good day Ceri,

That is my belief, too.

Praise Jesus, all the day long.

White Stone

**Re: a question?? - posted by White\_Stone (), on: 2010/1/18 17:06**

Wasn't this thread started on the General forum?

I was pulling my hair out trying to find it last night and only happened on it here earlier today.

If a thread is moved, it is normally common on other forums to leave the thread title and upon opening it there is a message and link to the new location, explaining the move.

This especially bothers me as I had planned to send the URL to it to someone. It would be fruitless to send a dead link and may turn them off on the message altogether.

Kind regards,  
white stone

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2010/1/18 17:17**

Greetings White stone

Greg did post asking everyone to be more thoughtful about posting under proper forum topics, so moderators would not have to keep moving threads. It makes more work for them I think. My guess is since this particular thread was started by a new poster to the forum they may not have read the rules before posting and that is why the moderators decided to move it to the welcome and intro topic instead of leaving it in the general forums.

God Bless  
mj

**Re: - posted by White\_Stone (), on: 2010/1/18 19:29**

I am wondering if the original poster, who is new to this forum has come back to find his thread gone. This could be very hurtful, as it could be misconstrued.

Perhaps they sent him a note but how would one know if it was not reported to have been done?

It all strikes me as very odd.  
white stone

**Re: , on: 2010/1/18 23:10**

I have lived in the desert most of my life. I have come to lean upon my lover. I don't really want to leave this place, only to be with Him in glory when I pass from this life. I may cry for relief, or complain to Him in my grief, and I pray that He ignores those cries. I've been to the mountain, where the air is thin, cold and barren. However, the valley of the shadow of death, which this world is, death is all around us, out of that springs life, even in the places that we'd think life was impossible.

I'd like to share from Thomas A'Kempis words:

Quote:  
-----If you want to make any progress, keep yourself in the fear of God, and do not wish to be too free; but curb all your senses under discipline, and do not give yourself to foolish mirth.  
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**Re: walking through deserts - posted by nowhereelse, on: 2010/1/18 23:24**

Thanks for all the encouragement.

Re: white stones comment, I did wonder where the post went :-)

I purposely posted it in "General Topics" because I felt it was a subject many people related to.

No big deal.

Just want to say I'm blessed by people's prayers and encouragement.

How long one sojourns in a desert is entirely up to Jesus, so long as I keep short accounts and don't let sin get in the way.

It is hard because it's a desert!!! The flesh doesn't like it!! One thing I've learnt is my heart is a deceitful little critter, it must be continually laid on the altar and given up to the Lord.

So, to the moderators ... sorry if I posted in the wrong forum :-)

to all who responded ... thank you very much

to anyone reading this whose feeling tired and slogging it through the wilderness ... keep your eyes on the Lord, your feet on the ground, and your heart on the altar

Rock on for Jesus