

# In the Wilderness With God

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*Exodus*

By Van Morris

**Bible Text:** Exodus 1:1-15  
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Would you please join me and let's take our Bibles together and turn to the Old Testament book of Exodus 16. Also while you're turning, I'd like to remind you about Wednesday night and Wednesday night we've been in a study on the Sermon on the Mount for about almost a year and we are finishing up, which means we're in chapter 7, and I want to ask you to do something for me, well, for me, for yourself more than anything, I'm gonna ask you to consider coming over these next few Wednesday nights. We've got four more Wednesday nights where we will be dealing with the Sermon on the Mount and chapter 7, there's nothing like chapter 7, I'll just tell you. If you are, look, if you're just playing around, chapter 7 will get you and it'll just expose you. It will. If you're just playing around at Christian life, if you're about, you know, a quarter inch deep and two miles wide, chapter 7 will expose you. It will, and so I want to ask you to consider over these next few Wednesday nights, like I said there's four more, the three that are in February and then the second Wednesday that's in March, and we'll wrap up the Sermon on the Mount and we'll move on to something else, but if you can, I encourage you to be here. If you can't, I encourage you to catch this over Facebook Live or some recording because, again, chapter 7, I mean, it will dig deep in your life and, you know, that's the portion where you run into where Jesus says, you know, there will be many that will come to him on that day and, "Didn't I do this? Didn't I do that? Didn't I do this in your name? Didn't I do that?" And he says the most horrifying words I think in all the Bible perhaps, "Depart from me. I never knew you." "I was at church, I was doing this, I was doing that," you know, what would cause Jesus to say to people who have done all these, they've done ministry, they did ministry, what would cause Jesus to say, "Depart from me. I never even knew you"? I'll tell you what, I don't of any more sobering verses in all the Bible, so we're gonna get to those in the next few Wednesday nights but we're in chapter 7. I just invite you to come. If you really want to do, you know, allow the Spirit of God to do real serious diagnostic work on you, then please, please be here.

Exodus 16. I want to begin reading at verse 1, read through the end of verse 15.

1 They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. 2 And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled

against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, 3 and the people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." 4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. 5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." 6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, 7 and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?" 8 And Moses said, "When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him--what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD." 9 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'" 10 And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. 11 And the LORD said to Moses, 12 "I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'" 13 In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. 14 And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. 15 When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

This is God's word.

Let's pray.

*Our Father, just a few minute ago we read from Psalm 95 and you invited your people to come worship and bow down, but also you said to us that today as we hear your voice, do not harden your hearts. Even as we read this text, you are speaking. As your servant, I shall seek to expound upon these verses. You will speak. May we hear but not only hear, may we take heed and certainly may we not harden our heart. Holy Spirit, work powerfully and mightily in us that we will not blow this off, that we will hear the word of the Lord and we will obey. May we do it for the sake of the Word Jesus Christ. Amen.*

When I use the word salvation or the word saved, what would come to your mind? What comes to mind when you hear the word salvation or saved? Now for some of you, assuredly it will be the thought of someone walking forward in an evangelistic crusade.

They walked forward and they got saved. Or some of you will think of being in youth camp and making a decision for Jesus. Some will think salvation came when I prayed the prayer. Or let's put it this way: what if someone this week, someone in your family, someone on the job said to you, "You know, I've heard you talk about being saved. What does that mean? What do you mean by saved?" Get ready, okay, because oftentimes when we use the word saved and salvation out in secular society, we can use it and it can sound offensive, people can really get their feathers ruffled because some think that salvation or being saved is merely a bad person becoming a good person, and so when you say, "You need to be saved," what they hear is, "You're saying I'm a bad person," and they don't like that, they get offended. But is that all salvation is? Is that all it is, just this idea of merely a bad person becoming a good person?

I don't think so. In fact, I'm sure it's not and I know because of the book of Exodus and we've been in the book of Exodus for a number of weeks now and Exodus provides us a clearer picture of what salvation is. In fact, the book of Exodus provides us a picture of God's goal, what God is really after as he deals with humanity. The book of Exodus provides us actually a picture of God's heart as he thinks about us. The book of Exodus gives this definition, now I'm not suggesting that you can read the book of Exodus and you'll find this definition but what I'm saying is you can read the book of Exodus and here's what emerges about salvation: salvation is God liberating us from the things that enslave us that we might serve him. When I read the book of Exodus, I come away with a picture of salvation being God liberating us, setting us free from the things that enslave us that we might serve him. You see, there's little point in one being set free from Pharaoh if one is not free to serve the Lord.

These last few weeks, we've been going through the book of Exodus and we've been tracking God's work with the Israelites. Remember they were slaves in the land of Egypt. They were harshly oppressed and remember, remember, they cried out to God. They wanted to be free so they cried out to God, they wanted freedom, and God heard their cry. God intervened. He liberated them and even defeated their enemy. Remember last time we were looking at this, we were in chapter 15 when God parted the waters of the Red Sea and his people were able to go across on dry land, and then it closed in on Pharaoh and his armies. So God not only liberated his people, he defeated their enemy, and now – listen – they are out of Egypt physically but as we see here in this passage, internally there is still a problem. Physically they are out of the land of Egypt, they've been set free, but internally there is still a deep serious problem.

Verse 3 helps to identify that problem just a bit. In verse 3 the people of Israel said to Moses and Aaron, "Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full." Now verse 3 is language of addiction. Many of you are familiar with addiction, maybe you have had in the past maybe addiction problems, maybe somebody in your family is severely addicted to something. This is addiction language. Now what do we mean by that? Well, what they once hated, they were in Egypt, they were oppressed, they were crying out, "Get us outta here! Help us! Lord, help us! We don't like this! We don't want anything to do with this! We hate this!" In verse 3 we are seeing now what they hated, they now see as good. Oh,

not long ago they saw it as bad. I mean, isn't that the language of an addict? "I want to get free from this," and everybody rallies, everybody comes around, "We're gonna help you. We're gonna help you." "I want to get free from this. I want to get free from this. I don't like this. I don't like living this way. I don't like this." And they get free and then later they start looking back and now desiring what they once hated. You see, internally what that means it's internally they're still addicted. Or you've got them away from their friends, you've got them away from all the folks that are bad to hang out with, maybe you even have them in a treatment center. Physically their situation has changed but internally they are still addicted. You see, you can get people out of slavery but it's a different matter getting the slavery out of people.

The Israelites are legally free. God by his gracious hand has set them free, brought them out of Egypt, rescued them, but they have not yet learned how to work out their salvation. That phrase sound familiar? Paul writing to the Philippians, "Work out your own salvation. You've been saved, God has graciously rescued you, he has saved you, now work that out." That's what's happening here for these Israelites. They are free from serving Pharaoh but now they must be trained to serve the Lord, and is this important to us? Yes. How so? 1 Corinthians 10, notice these words. Paul is writing about the Israelites and here's what he says, "Now these things happened to them," do you see that? Happened to them, he's talking about the Israelites. He's talking about the ancient Israelites, "These things happened to them as an example," but notice, "they were written down for our instruction." For the church. The book of Exodus was not originally written to you, it was written for you. For your, for my, for our instruction. For the church in every generation and every age.

So here's what we want to look at, two things this morning, two simple things. The first thing is this, we want to see God's wilderness training. Let's focus on that. God's wilderness training. Now think with me. Didn't God promise his people that he was gonna take them into a land flowing with milk and honey? That's part of the deal, right? That's part of the deal, gonna rescue you. Remember, he had promised Abraham, "I'm gonna give you a land, all your descendants." He's promised them a land flowing with milk and honey. It's gonna be better than what you had. But now they're in the wilderness and there's no food, much less milk and honey.

So why are they in the wilderness? I mean, couldn't God have just short-circuited this whole wilderness mess? Boom, you're out of Egypt. Boom, you're in Canaan. He could have but he certainly didn't and so why, why are his people who he saved, why are they in the wilderness? We don't have to scratch around for an answer, all we've gotta do is turn to Deuteronomy 8 and you'll see it. Deuteronomy 8. Moses is about ready to die and he's explaining some things and here's what he says, "And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not." Now listen, if you want an answer as to, maybe you do, maybe you wonder, I hope you do, I hope you wonder, "Why all this wilderness experience? Why did that have to happen?" God was doing something. Notice that he might, what? Humble you. That he might humble you. Now why is that important? God

desires a humble spirit. God hates the proud heart. God hates a proud heart. God holds at a distance proud people but he gives an abundance of grace to humble people, and so God wants humble people. He desires a humble spirit in men and women. My teenage friends, God desires humility. Get a good education, do that, learn as much as you can, but there's nothing quite as valuable as a humble spirit. God wanted to humble his people.

Secondly what does it say? Testing you to know what was in your heart. Now what does that mean? Well, it's a word that means also to train. To train. God is bringing his people in the wilderness to train them to know what was in their own heart. My goodness, I mean, how many of you are 100% sure you know what's in your heart? No, we don't know. We don't always know, right? I mean, we think we do, we think we do, but the Israelites must have thought, "Hey, we've got it together. We know what we're doing here. We've been saved. We're ready to go." But God says, "I need to train you so that you'll know what's in your heart."

You see, a car manufacturer will test the critical parts of a car to the point that they fail and they're not trying to destroy the parts, they're just trying to determine where they're weak so that they might be made strong, and that's what God is doing with his people. God doesn't want to break us, he wants to test, to train us to find out that we'll see our weaknesses, where am I weak, you see, that we might be made strong. These wilderness struggles were a training ground that the Israelites might work out their salvation. Certainly it was difficult for them, I mean, they're complaining, they're grumbling, it's tough, it's tough to wake up and there's no food, right, I would imagine, but God is training them, testing that they might work out their own salvation, or to say it this way, they might work out – listen, listen – they might work out what is in their head that they might be able to say, "You know, if this is true, if what God has said is true, if he will do what he has said, if he will keep his promises, then I should live this way. I should trust him." You see, that's what God wants to bring us to, that we have that moment where we say again and again in this moment, "If this is true, if what God is saying is really true, then I need to line my life up around this." In other words, this needs to become the functional reality in my life.

Explain it maybe this way. In the fall of 1980, I was five weeks away from turning 25 when I came to faith in Christ. I heard the Gospel, responded to the Gospel, came to faith in Christ. Katherine and I were married. I had an enormous gambling debt. I worked a day job and I worked five nights a week playing music in nightclubs. I knew when I had this encounter with Christ, immediately a struggle began. I began to realize that my nightclub job was not conducive, one, for a healthy marriage nor, nor was it conducive for a healthy Christian life, but I justified it because I needed the money. That's what I told myself, "I need the money. I got a huge debt. I got gambling debts. I gotta pay these things off. I can't just walk away from this. I need this." That's what I told myself. I began to ask people around me, I began to ask my pastor, I began to ask other people and they gave me various answers and I said, "What should I do? What should I do?" And some would say, "Well, you need to quit," and others said, "Well, no, you don't need to quit right now." This mixed bag of things and they were actually at a disadvantage. You see, where they were trying to help me, they could not and could not possibly know what was

really in my heart. I struggled. You see, while I could say, if you would've asked me at that time, "Are you trusting Jesus," I would have said, "Absolutely, I am. I'm trusting Jesus." It was stuff I knew in my head. I knew all the right answers, you know, "Yes, Jesus died for my sins. He rose on the third day." I knew biblical doctrine. I knew these things. I had this stuff in my head but here was the problem: my relationship with God through Christ had not gone deep enough into my heart yet.

I had the right answers, I had all the head stuff and, you see, the truth wasn't money. That's what I told myself, I said, "I've gotta hang in here because I need the money." That was not the truth. The real truth and God helped me to see this, my identity was tied up in what I was doing. My identity was tied up in what I was doing. The roots of my self-identity was still very much rooted in people's approval and admiration. I wanted, I wanted applause. I wanted people's admiration. I wanted them to say, "Yeah, way to go." I needed that. I felt like that was my identity. I was rooted in that, not so much in Christ's love though, you see. And by the way, this explains why there are many professing Christians who can be racist and greedy materialists because they have a shallow Christian identity. Have you ever wondered that? Have you ever wondered why, you know, someone can profess Christ but yet they are a racist at heart? Ever wondered why people can say, "I love Jesus," but you go, man, you seem like a greedy materialist. It's because Christian identity is not gone deep enough.

People could have counseled me and they did, people could have counseled me to quit. They could've said, "You need to quit," and I could have quit, I would have been out of the nightclubs, physically I would've been out, I would've been home with my wife, but internally I would still remain enslaved to unhealthy passions and desires. Do you see that? You see, I could've been out but there was still internal problems. I was needing to learn about my new identity in Christ and live that out.

I remember, I can take you to the spot, the expressway coming from New Albany. I was driving home and a thought came to my mind, "Would Jesus be sitting on a stool playing a guitar, singing what you're singing? Would Jesus be doing what you're doing?" And I got home and I walked into the kitchen and I told Katherine, I said, "You know, look, if this is true, if this Christianity stuff is true, if it's true we're gonna have to live accordingly. We're gonna have to get real. We're gonna have to line up." And I say this, that's what we did and we're still in training, both of us still very much in training, still going through the struggles and still, still, you know, sometimes misplacing our identity where it should be.

You see, how does all this apply, you might say? Well, here's my point: once a sinner has turned to Christ, to salvation, what happens next? What the Bible calls sanctification. You see, if you're here this morning and you think, "Look, I've already prayed that prayer. I've kind of got that stuff taken care of and, you know, Brother Van, you don't have to worry when you do my funeral. You can just, you know, you can just... I prayed the prayer. I've got it all taken care of, it's all tucked away nicely." And that's what it is for you, you prayed some prayer and you kinda, you're really not all that zeroed in on following Jesus, not really all that concerned about reading the Scriptures and hear Jesus

speak to your needy heart and observing what he has taught and obeying him, not so much into that but you certainly want to go to heaven, listen, you don't know jack about Christianity. You don't. You don't know jack about Christianity. If you think that's all Christianity is, if you think salvation is just that, you don't know. You don't know. When someone comes to faith in Christ there is sanctification.

What is sanctification? It is a long, hard, difficult process of being conformed into the image of Jesus, being trained to serve, trust and obey him. Yeah. You go into wilderness training and I say wilderness because the church is in the wilderness right now, between the first and the second coming of Jesus, and our sanctification is our training, God's wilderness training in our lives, all designed to teach us to depend upon our Lord and to have absolute confidence in his faithfulness in the darkest of times. God's wilderness training. If you're here this morning and, you know, you face those struggles of like, man, you know, I'm living this way, I'm doing this, and you feel this tension going on, thank God for the tension. Thank God that the Spirit of God's at work in your life. Now what you must do is obey, must surrender to him. If there's no struggle going on, if you someone see that you can drop in on Sunday morning and you can just kind of go through the motions but you can live the way the world does during the week, man, if there's no tension going on, if there's no conviction going on, you are in trouble. I warn you this morning, you're in trouble. There are some of you sitting here this morning, all of your time, all of your resources, all of your possessions, all of your money, it goes to you and you alone. Don't you see? How can you say that you follow Christ and you live such a selfish life? How can that be? It cannot be and I fear for your condition, friend. I do.

It's God's wilderness training. How are you doing with that? Really, how are you doing with that? There's one other thing, there's God's provision for wilderness training. The Israelites are not doing so well with their test. Chapter 16, we see, you know, God's testing, training them. We know why they're there. God has them in training and they're not doing very good. Chapter 16, we hear them grumbling and complaining and they're, you know, Moses was right. He nailed it. "You're not aiming this at us, you're aiming this at God. You know, on the very bottom floor of all your grumbling and complaining, it's you're grumbling at the Lord."

I read an article not too long ago about hospital workers and maybe you'll hear this and you'll think you want to be careful the next time you go in the hospital. They did some research and found that when we complain and grumble at the nurse or the hospital staff, you know, we start barking out orders and, you know, we're not thankful, we're just really really nasty, here's what they found out, that grumbling and complaining negatively impacts their ability to perform. Now that shouldn't come as any surprise. I mean, would you want anybody just biting on you all the time? It probably would affect how you perform, right? Well, that's what they've shown. They've shown that for nurses and hospital staff, that the heightened level of grumbling causes them not to be able to perform up to task. You want to remember that when you're next time in the hospital. "Oh, I forgot your shot. I'm sorry."

Here's why I bring this up. I want you to look at something here. For the hospital staff, grumbling negatively impacts them, just find it difficult to perform, but not with God. Oh no, not with God. Instead of grumbling negatively impacting his ability to perform, he responds with sweet provision. Look at verse 12. He's repeated this a few times but look at verse 12, "I have heard the grumbling of the people." A few verses before that he tells Moses and Aaron, "Tell the people, tell the people to come on out here. I heard their grumbling." Don't you know they were, "What? My goodness, I didn't know he heard me!" You know? And they're like, "What's gonna happen?" Here's what's gonna happen, verse 12, "I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread.'" I wish I had more time to just camp out on this for a moment but do you see God's patience and longsuffering with his people? Do you see that? God has opened up the floodgates of grace and poured it out upon these undeserving people like them and you and me, and he has rescued them by his grace, he's brought them out, and at the first sign of hardship, they grumble and complain against him. Now what you and I might have done is said, "Okay. Alright." Not God. Friends, I want you to pause for just a moment and you don't have to say this out loud but I'll tell you what we ought to thank God every day for his patience and longsuffering with complaining, grumbling saints such as ourselves.

These verses are absolutely fascinating. If you're here this morning and you've struggled, you've fallen, you might even be sitting here right now and, you know, what I've said previously, you might be going, "Oh no, oh no, oh no!" God is patient. God wants to help you. He doesn't want to break you, he wants to help you. He wants to train you to love him, put him first. He wants you to have good, he wants good for you. He does.

Let's look quickly at God's provision. Manna, this bread from heaven. It's like a wafer made with honey. For a time in the morning, it would lay on the ground and here's what they were supposed to do, God is telling them, "You actively get up every morning and go after it." Now God could have easily said, "You know, we're gonna just short-circuit that whole thing. You get hungry, I'm just gonna, boom, it's just gonna be in your belly." He could've done that, I guess so, but that's not what he did, right? No, you get up in the morning. It's gonna be out there for a while. You've gotta actively go after it. Six days, not on the Sabbath but six days they were to get up and go after that manna to sustain them.

Why? Why? Why did God do it this way? I want to know, don't you? I want to know. What? This sounds kinda weird. It's like stuff falling down, lands, the dew goes away and there's this manna, little wafers and, you know, we all gotta get a little basket like on Easter and run out and pick it up, you know? Why? Why? Why is this happening? Again we look to the word of God and God explains it to us in Deuteronomy 8:3. Moses is getting ready to die and he's letting all the secrets out. "And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna," notice this, "that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD." You see, as the day wore on and the sun grew hot, the manna would melt and it was gone. So what is Moses saying? Listen, he is saying this: to truly live, to truly live, not just this meager, average, secular life that so many are living, no, to truly live, to



be sustained in the wilderness they would need nothing less than the word of God. You see, they were thinking, "I've gotta have bread. I've gotta have bread. I've gotta have bread." And God said, "Let me tell you what you really need. If you're gonna make it, if you're gonna make it, if you're gonna endure, if you're gonna persevere, nothing less than the word of God." This manna represents God's word, God speaking in the sense that this will be theirs and our daily sustenance that we must actively go after.

You say, "Wait a minute, they didn't have a Bible." No, they didn't. They didn't have a full Bible. No, but listen, I want you to understand this word is more than just a book. Every word spoken from the mouth of the Lord, this word is more than a book. No, we're told the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus, the second person of the Trinity was sent from heaven to come down to this broken earth, the Word made flesh. And then we're told and this makes, now this makes so much sense in John 6. Look, "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Look, now listen, "Jesus then said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.'" Oh yeah, there's stuff that we think, "I've gotta have this to live. I've gotta have this to live. I've gotta have this to live." Jesus comes down, the Word made flesh comes down and says, "No, you've gotta have me to live. You've gotta have me to truly live."

Have you ever had that occasion where you, this is before GPS by the way, step back a few years, you're driving, you're lost, and you pull over in this little gas station and you say, "Hey, I am lost." And they say, "Where are you trying to get to, buddy?" And you say, "Well, I'm trying to get to So-and-so," and they break out in this big smile and they start going, "You don't have any idea how lost you are." Have you ever had that happen? You know, and then you start really getting scared, like, "Oh my goodness, I didn't realize I was that far off!" You know? And what do they say? What does this old country boy say? He doesn't say, "Well, now you gotta go down there by the tree and you turn left and then at the mailbox you turn right." No, he doesn't, he doesn't do that. What he says is, "Hey, let me get in and take you there. Let me get in and take you there." Friend, what they have done is they have become the way. They didn't tell you the way, they became the way, right?

You see, Jesus is our way. Jesus is our way. He didn't shout out, "Here's how you do it and I'll just stand back over here and I'll tell you how to do it." No, he comes and says, "Here, let me take you." He became our way and our sustenance in our wilderness training. Jesus is our sustenance. He is our way. As we, as the church travels in the way of the wilderness and we learn how to work out our salvation, we learn how to put our trust in the faithfulness of our Lord and sometimes the clouds are dark and the storms are tough, but all that time God is training us and we keep our eyes on Jesus because he is our way and our sustenance.

You don't need me to tell you the Israelites failed the test miserably, didn't they? And we do sometimes, don't we? Is there anybody here this morning that could say, "Look, all of God's training, I nail it every time"? No, we fail sometimes, don't we? So what do we do?

We give up? No. No, don't give up. Look to Jesus. Now you say, "Well, sure that sounds great. What do you mean?" Well, Jesus was led into the wilderness, wasn't he? Remember the Spirit led him into the wilderness. After he had this great experience, this great experience, he's being baptized and the Father speaks from heaven and says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased. I love him. I love him." Boom, next verse, the Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness. What? Is that love? It is. Jesus was led into the wilderness, he fasted 40 days and Satan came to him, tempted him, "Turn those stones into bread." What did Jesus say? You remember, don't you? "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." The same thing. The same thing we've been looking at.

Notice how it just all connects together through the Old Testament. All that's happening in chapter 16 is pointing you and I to Jesus, the true bread of heaven, which is to say this, Jesus passed the test perfectly. He passed the test perfectly which means that Jesus understands the wilderness challenges that we face. He really does. He understands. He's been there. Jesus understands temptation and that's why he says to you and me, "You don't really realize how lost you are. Let me take you. I'll be your way. I'll be your sustenance. I'll be your bread from heaven given by the Father to you to give you life. You think you need this, you think you need that, not really, you need me." That's what Jesus is saying. Jesus faced hunger so that you and I could have the bread of himself. Jesus will be our daily sustenance. Go after him. Go after Jesus. This week, go hard after Jesus. Now what I mean by that, I mean this: observe what he has said and obey him. Yeah. Jesus said, "Go and make disciples, teaching them to observe what I have taught you." So go hard after Jesus and say, "Jesus, what are you saying?" And you've gotta open this book, gotta open it up and say, "I want to know, I want to hear what you're saying. You are my sustenance. You are my way." If I'm gonna make it, if I'm gonna make it in this Christian life, if I'm gonna make it in this sanctification wilderness training, it'll be him who will ultimately lead us home.

So my Christian friends, go hard after Jesus this week, and for all others here, I ask you, have you received the bread that God has freely given? If you haven't, may you do so today.