

## QUESTION: “Is a Shift to Slow Normalcy to be Expected?”

From my experience, Father gives us a taste of his goodness, of his abundant life, so we're aware of what he has on offer. We decide, "Yes. That's what I want." He then puts us through a test, as if to say, "Do you really want it? If you do, are you prepared to allow me to mold and shape you so you can become the son I want you to be? You can't have all my goodness while you're who you are now, as I have work for you to do in my Kingdom."

This wilderness you're experiencing is part of the testing you need to go through. Jesus did it before he was released into his main Kingdom assignment. We all have to go through the same destruction of the control we have over our life and circumstances, so we fully surrender to Father and let him oversee our lives. This is where the 'servant' mentality comes from in the NT – it was a word picture from society to help 1<sup>st</sup> century readers understand what it meant to give up their life for the Kingdom. Father wants us to relinquish the autonomy he gave mankind at creation, so we can partner with him in his Kingdom, rather than doing things our way. That's because our way is not his and our way doesn't work.

Two things to understand here:

1. 'Testing' ('trying') is for refinement, not destruction or anything negative. The word used in Greek is an iron worker's term which refers to the iron going through the fire so that it ends up having all the impurities removed.
2. The wilderness experience, testing and destruction of "self" is what Jesus was referring to when he said we must count the cost before we make a decision to come into his Kingdom.<sup>1</sup> It's also what "taking up our cross" really refers to.<sup>2</sup>

Everything will be used to pressure you in your wilderness period of testing. But, if you want to receive all the benefits of the Kingdom, you must let Father change you, bit-by-bit, so you become the son you need to be, to carry out the assignments he has for you. If you can't weather the testing, you won't grow and mature as a son and be able to experience the wonderful Kingdom life to its fullest.

The way to go through the testing and wilderness is to:

1. Allow yourself to be stripped of whatever Father wants to remove from you and your life. You have to do that willingly – you must really want it. Otherwise, he can't do anything to your character and you'll limit what he can do with you in the future.
2. Use the wonderful intimacy you experienced previously to be the life you turn to. Live out of that relationship as you go through the chagrin<sup>3</sup> (pain) of your testing. Father allowed you to experience his wonderful life before you entered the wilderness, so you'd look there to be sustained through everything.

The life of intimacy is what you must foster for yourself. You've experienced it. You know how to access it. So, it's up to you to push through your negative soulish feelings and live in intimacy. That's where you'll transform intimacy into a relationship of deep oneness – there's no other way to get there.

Take courage that others have been through this same journey. Actually, the life of testing goes on all the time, until we reach maturity as sons. That level of maturity, of course, is a long way further than we believe it is. When we think we've arrived there, Father lets us know that there's more to go. He decides when we're mature enough to enter fully into our sonship and destiny.

The important thing is that you **MUST** learn to enjoy the processes he puts you through. If you don't, you won't make quick progress, and you'll most likely stagnate.

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1 – Luke 14:26-33

2 – Luke 14:26-27

3 – MEANING: to vex or unsettle by disappointment or humiliation; distress of mind caused by humiliation, disappointment, or failure  
[www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/chagrin](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/chagrin)

The great benefit of being stripped down and rebuilt, in your character and thinking, is that you'll start operating as a son, not a Christian. You'll form a working relationship with each member of the Trinity and you'll partner with them in everything you do. They'll supply all your needs and give you the wisdom, knowledge, understanding and discernment you need to handle life effectively. Here's Father's promise about that:

*“Indecision is no man's land. There are no answers there and no place to go. You need to fill your thoughts with Me, seek My face, and come into My presence where I can give you direction and guidance. Wait for My wisdom about every situation. Stand still until you have clarity, and do not fret.”<sup>4</sup>*

When your reliance is on Father, then you'll let him do the work you can't do in your life and you can relax that he's definitely in control, come what may.

So you see, what's happening to you is for your benefit. It's not punishment from an angry God, as you may think. He's pure love, so everything that happens to you as a son has a purpose that benefits you, as well as benefiting the Kingdom.

Laurence

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)