



Sunday, May 3rd

Preacher: Pastor Howard-John Wesley

Sermon Title: 'See The Signs - Wandering in the Wilderness Part 3'

Scripture: Numbers 14:5-16

Then Moses and Aaron fell facedown in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there. Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes and said to the entire Israelite assembly, "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them." But the whole assembly talked about stoning them. Then the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the Israelites. The Lord said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them? I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they." Moses said to the Lord, "Then the Egyptians will hear about it! By your power you brought these people up from among them. And they will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that you, Lord, are with these people and that you, Lord, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. If you put all these people to death, leaving none alive, the nations who have heard this report about you will say, 'The Lord was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them on oath, so he slaughtered them in the wilderness.'

Sermon Summary:

This sermon is Part 3 of a series on the examination of the signs of God's presence and guidance in the wilderness. The forty year journey of the children of Israel in the wilderness mirrors the uncertainty of the pandemic journey we find ourselves in today. Wilderness seasons bring scarce resources, difficult grief, political upheaval, and fear, but they teach us how to trust

God in a way we never had before. In the midst of the wilderness we always find out that God provides clarity, direction, and guidance through clouds, which are ways that God confirms internal revelation of God's will, plan, and purpose for our lives.

In this week's lesson Pastor Wesley taught us that there is a difference between external confirmation and internal revelation. Sometimes we fail to embrace the external signs because external signs should only confirm the revelation we've already received internally. Before God proves it in our eyes God speaks it in our heart. When it is time for God to confirm something externally there are five ways that God confirms God's internal revelation of his will in our lives. God confirms God's will through the following external signs:

1. **Closed Doors** - God's will is greater than your want and God shutting one door is God's way of redirecting you to something better.
2. **Answered Prayers** - Every open door is not God's calling for you to walk through, but prayer will reveal which opportunity is ordained for your life.
3. **Wise Counsel** - God surrounds you with people who have wisdom to pour into you and embracing that counsel helps you to walk in faith rather than foolishness.
4. **The Preached Word** - A good pastor is God's gift to your life because the Holy Spirit will align the preached word to confirm the revelation you've already received.
5. **Obstacles and Opposition** - Sometimes God confirms you are where you should be through an obstacle in your way.

Life Application Questions:

1. Pastor Wesley says that if you have a dedicated devotional life and if you've been in prayer and if you're in your word and you sense God speaking to you, TRUST IT. Is there any area in your life where God has given you an internal revelation but you don't trust it, what is preventing you from doing so? How can you move past fear to walk boldly in faith?
2. Think of a time when you have totally missed the will of God. Looking at the five signs of confirmation, can you see where God used one or more of the five signs to speak to you about his will? In missing the will of God, did you try to listen to God, but misunderstood the signs? What do you think you could do differently next time to gain more clarity? If you understood the signs, but chose to ignore them, why?
3. Do you suffer from analysis paralysis? Are you the person who questions so much that you don't trust that you can hear from God? If so, how can you apply the principles of this sermon to help you move past indecisiveness to the joy and peace of being confident in your ability to hear from God and make wise choices?
4. At the end of the sermon, Pastor Wesley said if you don't have a sense of peace about a situation, it may not be God's will. When have you pushed past feelings of peace to pursue your own will and desires despite anxiety and inner turmoil? What were the consequences? When have you followed peace and what were those outcomes? What kinds of reminders or discipline can you put in place to help you follow God's will and let peace to be your umpire?

Spirit Work:

1. For the next five days, after your dedicated time of prayer and engaging God's Word, look at one of the five external signs that Pastor Wesley shared during the sermon. Review what was said about that particular sign then ask yourself the question of whether has God confirmed his internal revelation to you through this sign? Write examples of how God has used this particular sign in the past to confirm his internal revelation to you. Continue each day until you have written about each of the signs. On the sixth day, look back over your notes. What have you learned about how God speaks to you and confirms his revelation to you?
2. Pastor Wesley says that discernment is like a muscle; the more you use it and trust it, the more you will hear God. Write down three areas in which you want to develop your discernment muscles. During your dedicated devotional time, look at each of the three areas and answer the following questions: What do I sense God saying to me about this issue/desire? What does the Word say about this issue/desire? Have I received any external confirmation about this issue/desire? Afterwards, write out a prayer for each issue/desire. Commit to praying this prayer until you have peace and joy about God's internal revelation to you and the external confirmations that you have received.