

Life Group Questions w/b Sunday 21 February 2021

1st Sunday in Lent: Facing the Wilderness

Introduction

Jesus is at the start of his adult ministry, and has just been baptised. (Luke 3:21-22)

- Why then do you think that the next thing he does is to retreat into the wilderness for forty days?
- Have you ever been on a retreat of some sort? What do you think are the benefits of this, if any?
- In this time of lockdown we are distanced from others, but it is not of our own choice. What difference does this make compared to choosing to spend time away from others?
- What sort of desert or wilderness experiences are you going through at the moment?

Read: Luke 4:1-13

Jesus viewed the wilderness as a place of formation – a time of preparation for what is to come. There were three main areas in which he wrestled with temptation so as to be better prepared for what was to come.

Self-sufficiency (4:1-4)

- How much have we learned at this time about being dependent on ourselves, on God, and on one another?
- What temptations have you faced in this area?
- Jesus fasted from food. What is your experience of fasting? How helpful have you found it?
- How does Jesus resist temptation in this area of being self-sufficient?
- What new things are you learning in this aspect of life?

Idols (4:5-8)

- In what ways has lockdown highlighted areas in your own life where you have been tempted to put other things, or people, before God?
- What does 'authority and splendour' (4:6) mean in our context? Are there ways in which you have been called to lay this down in the last year?

- What are you learning from having to lay down things that you would normally have been doing in the past?
- How does Jesus resist the temptation to rely on things other than God?
- What new things are you learning in this aspect of life?

Identity (4:9-12)

- What do you notice here about the skills of the Evil One?
- How have you encountered this in your life?
- Jesus' identity was confirmed at his baptism, and God's love for Him was affirmed. Yet here he is tempted to doubt God's plan and purpose. How has this temptation to doubt impacted you in lockdown?
- How does Jesus resist temptation here?
- What new things are you learning in this aspect of life?

Prayer Focus Suggestion

Consider what you have been learning from God in this season. Count your blessings, confess your struggles, and ask God for his grace that we might all know his presence more deeply at this time.