

Somewhere in the Desert

First Week of Lent – Mark 1:12-15-Sunday, February 18, 2018

Somewhere in the desert, Jesus found the resolve to embrace the mission set forth for him by God the Father. The Son steps into the wilderness to face off with Satan. In the midst of this encounter, Jesus is victorious. His forty days in the wasteland and wilderness have given him insight and experience into the deepest of human temptations.

We are left to wonder what Jesus might have encountered during this time of trial. **“The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among wild beasts and the angels ministered to him.”** This account gives us few details but a wide opportunity for imagination.

What do you think his desert experience was like? Was Jesus hungry? Did he thirst? Was he lonely or afraid? It would appear that Jesus experienced a wide range of human emotions, along with spiritual and physical trials in the midst of his journey. It also gives us an opportunity to imagine the goodness that he might have encountered in the angelic care that he received from God. Not all in the desert was evil.

Jesus emerges from that experience with a determination and commitment to accomplish what he had been sent to do. **“Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God. “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand.”**

The essence of this first week of Lent is a call for each one of us to spend time facing off with some of the evil, temptations, bad habits or wrongdoings that have crept into our life. Lent is not the newest “diet plan.” Rather, Lent is a time to face what Jesus faced. It is a time to look at the good we encounter while at the same time we are to confront and move beyond the darkness that can overtake us. We cannot accomplish this task without the Divine care of God’s profound grace.

Somewhere in the desert of our lives, we have the opportunity to encounter Christ. We are called to be the fulfillment of the kingdom, embracing all that is good and sharing that with the world. As we travel together over these next few weeks, we are called to respond with our lives to what Jesus asks of us this week: **“Repent, and believe in the gospel.”**

Happy Lent!


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