

This is the story of Christmas. God sent His one and only son Jesus as the Christ, Messiah, and savior to our broken world. God became flesh and dwelled with us.

This is why we Celebrate Christmas today!

Matthew 1:23 NLT “**Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'**”

God With Us Through the Valley

We May Enjoy God on the Mountaintops,
But We Get to Know Him Intimately in the Valleys.

God With Us In The Wilderness

Experience God in the Wilderness.
Our Deepest Need Becomes A Gift When It Drives Us To Depend On God.

God With Us In The Storm

Never Let The Presence Of A Storm Cause You To Doubt The Presence Of God.

I think one of the biggest problems we have is that we allow the Valley, the Wilderness, and the Storms to cause us to take our eyes off of Jesus.

ILL: In a traditional Nativity scene, every character is designed to be looking at the newborn Christ Child. One of my pet peeves is that when people are hastily decorating for Christmas and they set up the nativity scene and place one of the characters (a Sheppard, a Wise Man, even Joseph or Mary) looking away from Jesus rather than keeping their eyes on Jesus.

This is what valleys, the wilderness, and storms tempt us to do; to look at something other than what we should be looking at, to take our eyes of Jesus. (Examples)

It has been my prayer that during this series, at the conclusion of this 2020 wild ride, Jesus has lovingly reached out His hand, taken you by the chin, turned your face directly to His face, and said to you, *“Look at me. I’m talking to you. I’m here, I’m with you.”*

Hebrews 12:1-3

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, (You see there are many others who have gone before us. Those who have already gone through the valley, that experienced His presence even in the wilderness, and those who learned not to doubt His presence no matter how many storms they had to go through.) **let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,**

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

Not only do we have the example of those who have gone before us, but Jesus is our perfect example. **For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.