

# Powerfully, Productive Desolate Places

Luke 4:42-44 on 2019-01-13 by Ben Deaver @ Tallgrass Church

Welcome back from the holidays and Sunday mornings!

## Go Chiefs! Chiefs Kingdom!

- Let's start thinking kingdomly.

## Stranger Things

- You've got a month or so until we utilize the upside down analogy for a sermon illustration.

## The Upside Down Kingdom

## Ella reads Luke 4:42-44

## Pray

## Intro

- 30 years later...
- Jesus had been a carpenter, just like His adoptive dad, Joseph.
- Jesus was now a travelling preacher.

## Luke 4:40-41

<sup>40</sup> Now when the sun was setting (it had been the Sabbath), all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. <sup>41</sup> And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

- How did Jesus make such a big impact in this world...which by the way, is continuing to this day?
- How did He know what to do day by day?

## Pressures

- Pressures can be good, bad, or indifferent. They are the things pulling for your time and attention, your resources.

## What were Jesus' pressures?

- Celebrity status
- No home
- Heal the sick
- Cast out the demons
- Don't blow My cover
- Check in on the carpentry business
- Check in on mom

- Check in on My bros
- Grieve the loss of My adoptive father
- Grieve the loss of My cousin and probably best childhood friend, John the Baptist
- Raise Lazarus from the dead
- Dip in and out of Jerusalem strategically
- Clear the Temple right quick
- Train the 12
- Set up the travel plans
- Get the 5000 fed, actually more like 20,000
- Spiritual battle against Satan! How mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually taxing do you think 40 days and nights in the wilderness duking it out with Satan would be?
- No technological assistance
- ???
- ???
- ???

### What are your pressures?

- Some of the pressures I face:
  - How do I shepherd this flock known as Tallgrass Church?
  - How do I reach out to others who aren't connected?
  - What groups do I stay connected with?
  - Do I keep going to the Tuesday morning pastors prayer? What about the monthly Manhattan Ministerial Association?
  - What relationships do I need to really lean into?
  - How can I not neglect my kids in this season? How can I proactively invest in my kids?
  - Laundry? House projects? Leaky faucets? Car repairs?
  - Get the kids to school. Pick the kids up. What activity am I supposed to take who to...and when?
  - What are my hobbies? People say I need hobbies.
  - Should I read for fun? Is reading fun? If so, what should I read?
  - Listen to and read Blogs, Podcasts, articles, all that cool stuff on Facebook, Instagram, etc.
  - Phone, watch, Alexa, Google Home, Siri, huh? Who am I talking to? Am I hearing voices?
  - ???
  - ???
  - ???
- Illus: Have one person come up to the front and be YOU. Then have others volunteer to be typical pressures we face. Then they need to turn up the pressure. Have another person pull them out of there to a desolate place to get away and clear the mind.
- Stay at home parents can't get to a desolate place! That's exactly why you need to take a baby step towards a desolate place!
- Folks with super demanding jobs can't get to a desolate place! That's exactly why you need to take a baby step towards a desolate place!

## Desolate Place

**Luke 4:42a** And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place.

- Jesus had too much to do, too many people to help, too many pressures to continue with business as usual. He was desperate for a desolate place.
- This desolate place was a breath of fresh air. A moment of reprieve...
- I am desperate for a desolate place! Are you desperate for a desolate place? When and where is your desolate place?

## Desolate Places

**Luke 5:16** But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

- Jesus had multiple different desolate places to get away to.
- He got away often, or so it seemed.

## Prayer in Desolate Places

What do you talk about with God? Basically two things.

- What does He say about you?
- What is He asking you to do?

These two questions can be summarized in two words. Loved and love!

1. You are loved.
2. You are to love.

**Tallgrass Mission Statement:** Because God first loved us, we are to love God and love our neighbors.

**Mark 1:35** And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

- For Jesus it seemed to be early in the morning.
- The Psalmists sure seem to like mornings. Highly productive people throughout history also seem to utilize mornings. But, not everyone uses mornings for their desolate places. What will work for you...in 2019? This month? This next week?
- What is prayer? Talking with God, which includes listening, just like when talking with anyone. Or at least it should include listening.

**Luke 5:15-17** <sup>15</sup> But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. <sup>16</sup> But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray. <sup>17</sup> On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.

- Power

**Big Idea:** The upside down path to power for purposeful productivity is found in desolate places.

- Push back against life's pressures. If King Jesus was desperate for desolate places you'd better be too.
- Where and when are your productively desolate places?!?! #desperatedesolateplaces #tawG
- This is an upside down aspect of the Kingdom of God. The world has taken notice though.

## Back to the constant pressure!

**Luke 4:42** And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them...

**Luke 4:43-44** <sup>43</sup> ...but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."

## Purpose

- Healing the sick and casting out demons here is good...but preaching the good news of the kingdom of God in these other towns is better at this time.
- Difference between our situation and Jesus' situation.
  - People and their endless problems often became distractions from Jesus' bigger purpose.
  - Entertainment and technology and endless choices/decisions often become our distractions from our bigger purpose.
- Let's get to spending out time asking our heavenly Father for discernment between the good and the great! Let's quit spending time on the mediocre to terrible things.
- Also, spending time with your heavenly Father is a huge part of the purpose for which you were created!
- Think about it practically for Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He WANTED to be with His Father. I believe that is one of the reasons He so often sought these desolate places. But Jesus also needed the space to clear His mind in conversation with His Father. We call that prayer!
- Think about a relationship where you need to spend time together.
  - Parent, spouse, child, friend, coach, counselor, etc.
- Conversation with Kate—"I like being with you!"

**Big Idea:** The upside down path to power for purposeful productivity is found in desolate places.

**Map—Luke 4:44** <sup>44</sup> And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea (Galilee).

- Next week we'll look at one of the times Jesus was in the synagogue in Nazareth.
- For now let's go to...

## Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives

Baby Steps of Faith / Scary Steps of Faith / Reflection Questions

### When and where are your desolate places?

- Not looking for scary steps of faith tonight as much as baby steps of faith... However, even baby steps may be scary!

### When and where are your desolate places?

- Rhythms—Daily quiet time, tawG, monthly reflection, personal retreats, etc.
  - What rhythm and routine will work for you and your family?
- When? Mornings? Evenings? Lunch? Weekends? Weekdays?
- Where? House? Park? Coffee shop? Office? Elsewhere?
- Get creative! Lean on others to help you, like your spouse.

Our King & Kingdom Scripture Memory cards with study questions

### WOTY

- Spiritual Disciplines
- Tallgrass Prayer
- Word Cloud—See 2017 WOTY Word Cloud

### Resources:

- *What's Best Next*
- *The Bullet Journal Method*

## What's one of your goals for 2019?

What are you working on this year? What are some of your goals? How are you going to accomplish these goals? What distractions or hindrances might keep you from these goals?

## Q&R

- ABCs—Audible, Brief, Christ-centered
- Please share your name.
- We're keeping Facebook Live going tonight. We usually shut it down but we'll try to keep it going this time.

## What about the Gospel connection tonight?

Let's take a look at another desolate time and place for Jesus.

## The Garden

**Luke 22:39-42** <sup>39</sup> And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup> And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." <sup>41</sup> And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

**Luke 22:43-46** <sup>43</sup> And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. <sup>44</sup> And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. <sup>45</sup> And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, <sup>46</sup> and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

- Good News here! Even Jesus' closest disciples fell asleep in the desolate place. They failed...three times in this one story. And then again immediately following.
- In fact, Jesus' purpose of preaching the Good News was exactly for men like these, men and women like you and me, who are so prone to wander from our purpose and even drift off to sleep when Jesus is calling us to stay awake with Him and His purposes.
- **Matthew 11:28-30** <sup>28</sup> Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

## The Crucifixion

**Luke 23:39-41** <sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" <sup>40</sup> But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? <sup>41</sup> And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."

**Luke 23:42-46** <sup>42</sup> And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." <sup>43</sup> And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." <sup>44</sup> It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, <sup>45</sup> while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup> Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

- In this desolate place the Father didn't show up...for the first time...and last time.
- **Psalms 22:1** "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?!?!"
- Jesus went to this uniquely desolate place so that we can always be with the Father.

**PRAY!**

# Chopping Block:

## Hedonist vs. Ascetic Venn Diagram???

### Paul's desolate place—See Galatians 2

- Where are your productively “desolate places”?
- When is your productively “desolate places”?
- How do you keep your purpose in front of you?
- What's your “purpose”? How is your purpose connected to the King?

### Desolate Place

- **Matthew 14:13** [ *Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand* ] Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a **desolate place** by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.
- **Matthew 14:15** Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a **desolate place**, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”
- **Matthew 15:33** And the disciples said to him, “Where are we to get enough bread in such a **desolate place** to feed so great a crowd?”
- **Mark 1:35** [ *Jesus Preaches in Galilee* ] And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a **desolate place**, and there he prayed.
- **Mark 1:45** But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in **desolate places**, and people were coming to him from every quarter.
- **Mark 6:31** And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a **desolate place** and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.
- **Mark 6:32** And they went away in the boat to a **desolate place** by themselves.
- **Mark 6:35** And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a **desolate place**, and the hour is now late.
- **Mark 8:4** And his disciples answered him, “How can one feed these people with bread here in this **desolate place**?”
- **Luke 4:42** [ *Jesus Preaches in Synagogues* ] And when it was day, he departed and went into a **desolate place**. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them,
- **Luke 5:16** But he would withdraw to **desolate places** and pray.
- **Luke 9:12** Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, “Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a **desolate place**.”