

How You Can Draw Near to God in a Dry Season

Once upon a time, I had a garden. This garden had a fence around it. It was watered and cared for, and it appeared to be as happy as could be. As time passed, the fruits and veggies looked fantastic. It didn't matter that we were in a dry season because we watered the garden. However, the local wildlife was having a difficult time finding food and began to eye up the garden.

We woke up one morning to find all the fruits and vegetables in the garden missing! The deer had jumped the fence and had a tasty dinner. All that was left were the stalks. The next night, even the stems were gone.

The fence was high enough that it usually kept the deer out. However, in a moment of desperation, the deer jumped the fence, and you know the rest of that story.

As I was reflecting on dry and desert seasons in our lives, it dawned on me that often we stay in our comfort zone when maybe we need to jump a fence!

We all encounter these dry seasons. Psalm 10:1 (AMP) reads, "Why do You stand far away, O Lord? Why do You hide [Yourself, veiling Your eyes] in times of trouble?"

One of the New Testament passages that comes to mind is from Luke 24. In verses 13-35, we have the account of Emmaus. A couple of men were traveling from Jerusalem to Emmaus, discussing the state of current events. Jesus had just been crucified, and their hope was gone. As they walked, Jesus appeared with them, but they didn't recognize Him.

How often does Jesus appear in the moment of our desert—and we fail to recognize Him? As the men continued along the road,

Jesus began to explain to them the very things of Scripture, and eventually, they realized that it had been Jesus right there with them.

Several years ago, I was listening to Bob Hazlett. He made a comment that has stuck with me for years. He said if God doesn't seem to be answering our question, we may be asking the wrong question and need to ask a different one.

The men on the road to Emmaus were asking the wrong question. Amid that line of conversation, they missed Jesus in their midst.

Of course, once they recognized Jesus, they had the strength they needed and headed right back to Jerusalem!

"We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy" (Col. 1:11, NLT).

I love this verse from Colossians, as it states that we are strengthened with *His* (God's) power. In other words, we can look to Him. We often feel as though we have to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, but in reality, what we need to do is shift our focus.

Over the years, I have learned that how I shift my focus has varied by season. I bring this up because I have learned that what worked in the last season may not be the key for the current season (remember what Hazlett said).

When I was doing distance running, there was nothing like a good, long run to shift my focus. Sometimes cleaning the house would do it, or a long walk. Recently, God has been showing me the power of praise and how to adjust my stance even during worship.

What are ways that you tackle the desert seasons?

How do you shift your focus?

What keys has God given you?

For more teaching from Ruth Hendrickson on drawing near to God, listen to this episode of *Real Truth With Ruth*. {eoa}