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The Power of Crucified Flesh

Promo Revelation Final Prophecy

Yes, the Wilderness is an experience of TESTING, PREPARATION, and TRANSFORMATION, but what is the outcome? Your flesh is crucified, and the result is God's EMPOWERING PRESENCE.

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Functionally atheist

Born again, love Jesus, evangelistic! No Holy Spirit

16 years later, high bp, overweight, maybe the one good thing—Mona stayed with me and never gave up on us.

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“I will build My Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18).

Youth group averaged 25 kids

Filled with the Spirit

Church today, well definitely more than 2 dozen, and this is 1 of 3 services. And I know the Spirit is just getting started!

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Turns out the biggest obstacle in my life was, well, ME!

It's not the devil, your wife, your boss, your parents, other people. Once I started to learn to not focus on myself and instead allow the Spirit to move, to save, to transform, to lead and build, that's where I began to see His power.

Bring censer

Burnt Offering Image

[Loop this video]

<https://youtube.com/shorts/5GZ4u5OGCRE?si=7dtKNH296hLZj8yJ>

One could spend a lifetime meditating on this imagery, and it would not be a wasted life.

When the flesh burns away, we're left with smoke, a metaphor for the Spirit.

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Isaiah's Prophecy

A voice says, "Cry!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All **flesh is grass**, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath (Ruach Spirit) of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever" (Isaiah 40:6-8).

700 years later, "John, are you the Messiah? Prophet? Who are you?"

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John the Baptist

For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight'" (Matthew 3:3).

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Peter' s Exegesis

“Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for

“All flesh is like grass

and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers,

and the flower falls,

but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

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So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation” (1 Peter 1:23-2:2).

In short, kill your flesh.

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In 1857, Charles Spurgeon viewed the “withering work” as the Spirit’s initial, convicting action in a person’s life. In his sermon on Isaiah 40:6-8 (e.g., “The Withering Work of the Spirit,” preached in 1857), he likened it to the breath of the Lord blowing over the grass and flowers—causing them to wilt. For Spurgeon, this wasn’t just about physical mortality but a spiritual reality: the Spirit reveals the emptiness of human self-reliance, achievements, and righteousness. The “grass” represents our natural state—vibrant on the outside but destined to fade. The “flower” is our fleeting glory—beauty, strength, or moral efforts—which the Spirit strips away to show their insufficiency before God.

This withering is purposeful and preparatory. Spurgeon emphasized that the Spirit dries up our pride and self-confidence, much like a scorching wind shrivels grass, so that we see our need for salvation. He often illustrated this with the sinner’s experience: a person might feel secure in

their own goodness or worldly success, but the Spirit's breath—through conviction of sin, awareness of mortality, or the piercing truth of Scripture—reduces them to helplessness. It's a painful but necessary work, cutting down illusions of permanence or merit.

Yet Spurgeon didn't leave it there. He saw this withering as the prelude to renewal. Once the Spirit has leveled the field of human pretension, the "word of our God" that "stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8) takes root.

For Spurgeon, this was the gospel—the imperishable seed (echoing 1 Peter 1:23)—which the Spirit then uses to bring new life. The same breath that withers the old plants the eternal. He often preached that without this humbling, we'd never cling to Christ; the Spirit withers the fleshly to make way for the spiritual.

In practical terms, Spurgeon applied this to both conversion and the Christian life. Initially, it's the **sinner's awakening**—realizing "all my righteousness is as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). For believers, it's an ongoing process: the Spirit withers lingering pride or self-dependence to keep us rooted in grace. Spurgeon's vivid imagery—grass burning under a divine gust—underscored his point: only when we're brought low can we rise in Christ, sustained by a word that never fades. It's a dual work of destruction and creation, central to his theology of regeneration.

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"The flesh is at war against the Spirit, but the Spirit is also at war on your behalf against the flesh! Trust that the same Spirit who began the work of salvation in you will be faithful to complete it."

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So is Mike done? Not by a long shot. So today I find myself driven yet again into the wilderness, where more flesh has to burn away. And I welcome the wilderness and whatever fresh power awaits on the other side.

Questions for Meditation and Discussion

1. Describe the two different Mikes.

2. How did the wilderness experience empower him?
3. What is the burnt offering imagery trying to show us?
4. Who is the voice in the wilderness that Isaiah prophesied?
5. What is our part in the withering work of the Spirit?
6. What did the Spirit say to you today?
7. How will you follow Him?