



WAR IN THE WILDERNESS

Fight for Your Family
When Life Isn't as It Should Be

BRIAN HAYNES

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A small silhouette of a person wearing a long coat and hat, walking from left to right. The figure is positioned between the words 'IN THE' and 'WILDERNESS'.

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War in the Wilderness: Fight for Your Family When Life Isn't as It Should Be
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Dedication



For Polly

2 Timothy 1:5

Acknowledgments



Jesus is Lord.

Thank you to the faithful and brave women I call wife and daughters. There is not a person in my family who hesitates to share our story for the glory of God and the good of people. Write it down they said. It's our five loaves and two fish offered freely to Jesus. May He multiply it and nourish the people.

Thank you Randall House & D6 Family for the kingdom partnership forged years ago for the glory of Christ in the church and the family. I am so grateful.

Thank you to Candi Cordova and Vanessa Cordell for reading and refining the manuscript in its earliest version.

Thank you to many in the GTI family tree who invested the truths of the wilderness in me over time as we walked the lands together.

Thank you to Susan Sowell for teaching me how to fight in prayer.

Thank you Angie. Words aren't adequate. I love you.

Endorsements



“This is the best book I’ve ever read about the ‘wilderness experience.’ I think everyone finds themselves in a wilderness sometime in their life and Brian Haynes does a superb job of explaining how to deal with it. His biblical insight was so helpful and hopeful.”

—Jim Burns, Ph.D., president, HomeWord, author of *Doing Life with Your Adult Children* and *Have Serious Fun*

“After nine years without children, our twin girls died at birth. Brian Haynes’ family has also suffered deeply. Brian has interwoven powerful insights from Scripture with lessons learned from his family’s searing pain. The result is a book profoundly helpful for families that go through the hardest experiences of life.”

—Richard Ross, PhD, senior professor of student ministry,
Southwestern Seminary

“War in the Wilderness is a cool drink of refreshment in the midst of our stressful, painful, arid world. Brian Haynes brings Scripture to life as he empowers families to truly understand the battle we face, and he offers practical help, holistic advice, and biblical wisdom to families facing a crisis. An encouraging, hopeful read.”

—Mary DeMuth, author of 46 books including *Love, Pray, Listen: Parenting Your Wayward Adult Kids with Jo*

“It’s no secret there have been frontal assaults on the family the past 20 years but now it’s like the ground is literally shaking beneath our feet. We should not underestimate what we’ve been through with Covid, polarization, economic crisis—all of that combined with a lost culture is pushing families near the edge and sadly some over the edge. Brian tells his story, which is powerful, helps us look deeper at what’s going on and how Satan is wild with rage, then gives us practical help to move us forward. I highly endorse and encourage everyone I know to read this.”

—Bob Roberts, author, founder Glocalnet and Multifaith Neighbors Network, global senior pastor Northwood Church

“Brian Haynes is the real deal, and his authenticity shines through in *War in the Wilderness*. He helps readers navigate their family challenges by pulling back the veil on his own life. He provides sound biblical guidance while appreciating the common grace of medicine and counseling. Since family difficulties are common to all of us, *War in the Wilderness* is a must read.”

—Dr. Bruce Wesley, founding pastor, Clear Creek Community Church

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“As I began my journey through this book, I had no idea how much I needed to read it. Through *War in the Wilderness*, Brian has given us a rare gift of a book, that not only equips us to fight for our families, but deeply nourishes our souls along the way.”

—Matt Carter, Vice president of mobilization,
Send Network, North American Mission Board

“Life is far from easy and at times, downright impossible. It can feel like we are at war with ourselves, society, our loved ones, or even the devil himself. Allow Dr. Haynes to take you on a journey of healing and hope through the pages of *War in the Wilderness*. You will be blessed and discover footsteps of joy even on the hard paths.”

—Gregg Matte, pastor of Houston’s First Baptist Church

“Brian Haynes is no theoretician pontificating on the travails of the modern family. He is a pastor and a father who has walked through the darkest of valleys, clinging to the hem of Jesus’ garment every single step of the way. He is a wise guide for our moment, taking our hands and showing us the path that Jesus first showed him.”

—Steve Bezner, senior pastor, Houston Northwest Church

“I’m so grateful for Brian’s vulnerable approach to mental health struggles when addressing the battles families face in *War in the Wilderness*. As a professional Christian counselor of 25 years, I appreciate his hope filled, holistic approach that includes psychological, physical, and spiritual dynamics.”

—Michelle Nietert, M.A., LPC-S, clinical director of Hope Helps, author of *Loved and Cherished* and *Make Up Your Mind*.

“‘Things are not as they should be.’ Every image bearer of God feels this deep in his or her soul at times. *War in the Wilderness* sheds light on biblical truth that illuminates every dark desert path. It is a practical help for the reader to name the darkness, confront the enemy’s lies, and turn to Christ for healing and deliverance. If you are walking through a wilderness right now, you will find yourself in this book. And finding yourself here, you will be encouraged and equipped to face every dark day with relentless confidence in Jesus. The wilderness is dry, and the days are long, but as Dr. Haynes so magnificently demonstrates, the hope of Christ is water for every thirsty soul.”

–Tony Wolfe, associate executive director,
Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

“*War in the Wilderness* is a courageously authentic invitation to honestly face the realities of the trauma, tragedy, and heart-break engulfing families today. This book initiates critical conversation that demystifies and destigmatizes over-spiritualization of the complex intersection of faith and mental health that can sometimes cause a crisis of faith. With a trustworthy shepherd as author leading a journey with gentle truths, relatable transparency, simple explanations, and practical guide maps, families can find healing as Pastor Brian leads them to find living water overflowing with hope.”

–Jessica L. Peck, DNP, APRN, CPNP-PC, CNE, CNL, FAANP,
FAAN, author, *Behind Closed Doors: A Guide for Parents and Teens
to Navigate Through Life’s Toughest Issues*, past president,
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners,
clinical professor of nursing, Baylor University

“*War in the Wilderness* is a timely book written from the deep life experiences of a godly and faithful pastor. This book reminds us we are at war with a real enemy whose greatest joy would be to destroy our lives. As you read these pages, you will find yourself resonating with the struggles spiritual warfare brings, however, you will also find the tools necessary to rise up and resist the enemy. If you desire to maximize your walk with God, this book is a must read!”

—Nathan Lorick, executive director,
Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

“Your social media feed makes one thing clear—everyone else’s family is beautiful and happy. Oddly, many people around you think that yours is too. But the reality is different. Your home is filled with pain, conflict, and trauma. It feels like war—because it is. The time to fight for your family is now. Not in your strength. Not with worldly weapons. But in the mercy, grace, and supernatural power of God. The Scriptures in this book will give you the battle plan.”

—Dr. Rob Rienow, founder, Visionary Family Ministries

We easily tell others how to walk out their faith until facing an unimaginable situation and wonder if surviving such a desert is even an option. Brian Haynes is the Bear Grylls of spiritual warfare and walks us through personal experiences where he relied on biblical principles to make it through devastating dilemmas. Through *War In the Wilderness*, Brian provides us with a spiritual survival handbook to categorize the types of deserts we inevitably will face.

—Ron Hunter Jr., Ph.D., D6 Conference director

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Introduction



I suppose as we begin this journey through the wilderness together, I should tell you, this book is personal for me. I am writing in a season of time that has been a difficult and deathly struggle for the entire world. We are currently living through what will likely become known in the annals of history as the “Great Pandemic.” The years 2020–2022 at least will forever be etched in history with infamy. The COVID-19 virus itself, while highly contagious and deadly for many in the world, has ramifications of epic proportions beyond the actual illness. In my lifetime I have not experienced such a global episodic injection of chaos. The associated governmental and economic upheaval can only be characterized as destructive, divisive, and ultimately deadly. The primary solution throughout the pandemic has been social isolation. Schools were closed for in-person learning. Churches were closed for public worship and group gatherings for a time. Families did not gather for the holidays. Friends quit having dinner and coffee together. We were not created to be alone!

The ramifications for people and families are extremely negative. Depression and anxiety rage in the youngest generation. Suicidal ideation and death by suicide reached a new

peak in our world. Marriages are suffering. Increased levels of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and murder all characterize these years. Fear is as contagious as the virus. Anger is rampant. This very real experience is awakening people to the war in the wilderness. Everyone on the planet at this moment would agree—life is not as it should be.

We are a planet at war in real-time. During the time of this writing (Spring 2022), the Russian President Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine, a people near to my heart. I know them by name. Smartphones and social media make it simple to communicate with people who are living through unimaginable atrocities. We are all watching videos and hearing messages of traumatic horror out of Ukraine. So much suffering and loss! The war is having a global impact. Alliances are forming that once seemed impossible. Economic calamity is rising to an even greater level on the heels of the pandemic as sanctions are imposed and inflation rises significantly even as far away as America. Everyone in the world is suffering in a new way.

People, in general, are anxious and angry. My wife and I often discuss anecdotal evidence. There are grocery store screaming matches and road rage murders in the major cities of our country. Everything seems more distressed than before. More than once I have heard friends, family, and peers say, “Everything is just harder now.” People recognize something is changing, perhaps they cannot put their finger on it exactly, but all people know something has shifted in the world. Things have always been broken, but people are very sensitive to that fact in this moment. Families are feeling it. Churches are feeling it. Businesses feel it. The governments of the world feel it. Eyes are opening to the war in the wilderness.

On a very personal note, in the last five or six years, my family experienced the depths of the world's brokenness and the peak of any spiritual battle we have faced together. You will sense this at least by way of the illustrations used in several of the chapters ahead. It wasn't a one-time episode. The battle lasted five or six years in a painfully acute form. In some ways, it is not over but it is much less intense because we have experienced a lot of healing. We are now looking back at this season in our family life from the other side of a very deep valley. We found help, healing, and hope when we felt like we were bleeding out. As with any experience, we learned some things; we learned how to follow Jesus in the deepest, darkest, most painful parts of life. Importantly, we learned to fight for our family when life isn't as it should be. We have scars, but we are whole and we have hope. Only because I can record this in the annals of history in a way that seems lasting, permit me to brag. Jesus is awesome! He is trustworthy and true. He is the Good Shepherd. He knows the way through travesty and war. My wife is my greatest hero. Compassionate and strong, she is a proven warrior with spiritual weapons. My daughters are my heroes. If you only knew.

This book is both parental and pastoral. It is not my intention to throw a bunch of statistics and research at you. Instead, I want to offer you age-old biblical wisdom—the ancient paths. I want to share my years of ministry experience. I want to expose the work of Satan in our families. I want you to understand how he is at work and why. I hope you will gain discernment coming from the Holy Spirit as you read this book. I am praying even as I write. I am praying our great God gives you ears to hear and eyes to see how your family is currently being impacted by spiritual warfare in the wilderness called life. I want you as a parent

or a grandparent to know how to fight for your family when life is not as it should be. Mostly though, I want you to know you can thrive in the wilderness. I want you to have hope.

Admittedly, the first half of this book is an unveiling of reality. It highlights our current environment and the spiritual warfare we engage in life as people and as families. I am going to write a lot about our enemy, Satan. I don't relish giving him any glory in the pages of this book. He is a defeated foe and he knows it.

Most people don't think about life from a clear biblical perspective. Opening your eyes to such reality might seem dreadful at first. I need you to promise me you will read the entire work. I need you to commit to praying your own version of the prayers at the end of each chapter. I need you to understand the Scriptures filling the pages of this book are the very words of God Himself. Think of this as a journey. We will traverse the desert. That is never easy. You will have to keep drinking. We will climb into deep valleys and summit mountain tops together. We will experience war, wound, and victory together.

Keep this in mind follower of Christ. Jesus experienced the war in the wilderness to the extreme. Just outside the city of Jerusalem, He was crucified. He was buried in a borrowed tomb. On the third day, He was resurrected according to the Scriptures. He went through the worst and came through victoriously. He ascended to the right hand of the Father and He sent His Holy Spirit to be with us. He will return in power. He knows you and your family by name. He knows you are in a war. He loves you and He is making all things new. Come to Him all you who are weary and burdened. He will give you rest.

Chapter 1



Reality

And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. Genesis 2:8

I looked for shade but could find none. The sun blazing down upon my weary soul and the scorched land under my feet burning my soles as the skin of my being slowly blistered. Thirst overwhelmed me as I fantasized about just a few drops of water potent enough to relieve the dryness of my heart. My emotion betrayed me, driving me deep into a pit of despair. I crouched down on the ancient path so many others walked before me staring at my own shadow. How did they make it? Alone and anxious, I wept. The salt from my tears burned my eyes as they dripped on the rock and sand, a physical representation of my emotional and spiritual pain. Guttural sounds emerged from within that no one heard but me, or so I thought. I hurt. My bones ached. I was exhausted, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. *Life is not as it should be!*

Someone lied to me, I think. Or maybe it wasn't any one person but an ensemble of voices painting an unrealistic picture of

my future. I expected some version of paradise but didn't anticipate the desert. Growing up in the American suburbs has this effect. You expect the "white picket fence," the perfect family, a successful career, and instantaneous reward for good behavior given by a god we have fashioned with our own hands. When we are good, he blesses. He protects us from disease, pain, suffering, and abuse. Life tells a different story. I believed a lie. At least one.

The Garden of Paradise

To read the Bible is a liberating venture. It doesn't lie but clarifies what is real, obliterating falsities. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). God who existed before the beginning created everything, and it was good (Genesis 1:31). I repeat, "good." To live now, we can't even imagine how good life was for the first humans. It was paradise and it was peace. The man and the woman were placed by God in a garden in the East called Eden, meaning "paradise." According to Genesis 2, Eden was a perfect environment consisting of every tree, pleasant to the sight, and good for food. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden. Everything needed for life flowed perfectly from Eden. Also within Eden were two special trees: The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve were placed in the garden together to have dominion. They were the stewards of paradise. Relationally, Adam and Eve were perfectly intimate, joined together as one flesh, naked and unashamed. Think of it for a moment. No shame. They were completely innocent before God and each other for a season. Nothing was broken. No one was at war. Perfect paradise and perfect peace. This is the first garden and this is life as it was designed to be lived.

God gave Adam and Eve complete freedom to govern their lives as they lived in perfect paradise and perfect peace, with one exception. He said, “but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17). Why would God do that? Why place a tree in the garden that was detrimental to life? Why create a one rule law for humanity to obey? It’s simple really—true love is exercised in free will and demonstrated in obedience. If there were no tree of the knowledge of good and evil, then no opportunity would exist for Adam and Eve to truly love God, to choose God’s way completely. And so, in the first garden of paradise and peace, there was a crossroads with a sign placed by God Himself saying, DANGER: Eating of this tree will lead to death. At that point in creation, no one had ever experienced death; only life.

The serpent enters the scene full of lies; his native language. We will learn more about this ancient nemesis later, but for now all we need to know is that in Genesis 3 he is described as the craftiest of all the animals and his clear motive is the death of the first man and woman created in the image of God. He is either Satan himself or guided by the sinister fallen angel. “He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say, “You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?”’” (Genesis 3:1b). To which the woman replied with a great understanding of the truth: “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die’” (Genesis 3:2b-3). The follow-up dialogue is damning. The serpent wickedly suggested to Eve her Creator lied and His motives are self-centered and insecure. “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God

knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:4-5). The temptation for the mother and father of humanity is to move away from a relationship with God only effectively described as “*shalom*” and move into a harsh reality characterized by unbelief. *Shalom* is often translated into English as “peace.” *Shalom* is much more than the absence of war. *Shalom* is “wholeness” or “completeness.” It is the opposite of chaos. It is righteousness and rightness in relationship to God and others. In one sense *shalom* is the mission of God in the world. It is the relational environment we were create for and Adam and Eve had it. Until they chose to trust the serpent and believe him thus rejecting the voice of their Father. All hell broke loose. This is why things are not as they should be. Paradise was lost. Peace was no more. *Shalom* was invaded.

Immediately following the first choice to believe a lie, to trust another, to reject the voice of God, came a familiar brokenness. Shame exposed Adam and Eve as naked. Sin gave instant birth to shame and shame placed the first humans in bondage. The eyes of both were opened. Instead of seeing themselves created for relationship with God in paradise, they saw themselves through serpentine eyes. Having never worn clothes, they sewed fig leaves together crafting a covering for their nakedness. Created perfectly they now felt compelled to cover what God said was good and what they never counted as shameful about themselves and each other before. Though still in the garden of Eden, spiritually they had already been ejected from paradise. They would never again experience life completely devoid of shame.

“And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees

of the garden” (Genesis 3:8). Before we continue, think of this. Adam and Eve lived in a paradise where they experienced the presence of God so closely, that they could hear His footsteps. Genesis 3 makes it clear. We are not just talking about any god; we are talking about the LORD God. This is *YHWH Elohim*. It is the covenant name for God. The God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and David, of whose throne there would be no end. Before the LORD God ever made a covenant with Abraham, raised up Moses, “king-ed” David, or sent His Son, His only Son, the one He loves—He walked with Adam and Eve in paradise. He came near just after they sinned. Obviously, the relationship between a Holy God and sinful humanity was now different. Not because God’s love for Adam and Eve changed but because humanity rebelled.

When the man and woman heard God, they hid from Him. Sin gave birth to shame and shame changed the way Adam and Eve understood their relationship with God. No longer did they want to commune with Him in paradise. Now they just did not want to be in God’s presence. And this is what happens isn’t it? We sin, we feel shame, and then we hide from the God who can forgive, who can take away shame, who can restore. We feel unworthy, too grotesque, not good enough, shameful, or angry with God. To no avail, we hide from a God who knows and sees everything.

“But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, ‘Where are you?’” (Genesis 3:9). It is just like God to pursue the ones He loves even when they are hiding. It is not as if God didn’t know what was going on. He knew the condition of Adam and Eve’s souls. He knew how and where they were hiding just like He knows the condition of our souls and how and where we hide. And yet, He asks. The questions from God keep com-

ing. “Who told you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” (Genesis 3:11). “What is this that you have done?” (Genesis 3:13). God was not looking for information. He was searching the hearts of His children so Adam and Eve might come back to Him. Sin is wrought with consequence. The first sin was in fact the most consequential because it meant exile and it meant war. “Therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to work the ground from which it was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life” (Genesis 3:23-24). Because of sin Adam and Eve were driven out. They were kept from the tree of life, the Father’s great mercy. For if they ate from the tree of life they would live forever in their sin and that is hell. They were banished from the Garden of Paradise and walked into the wilderness, their new home. Our home. This is the desert called life.

The Garden of Peace

Before we explore the wilderness reality of life as we are experiencing it, you should know there is another garden; a garden of *shalom*. This garden is in our future. We aren’t there yet but it is promised. This is our great hope of eternity and this is good news. In the book of Revelation, John describes a vision of the future given to him by Jesus, the risen Son of God. After generations of life in the wilderness, a new day, the Great Day, brings with it a second garden with some similarities to Eden only this one is called *Yeru Shalayim*. Translated, “City of Peace.” Jerusalem, but not the old one that is mysterious and beautiful, yet chaotic and volatile. Instead, the New Jerusalem is a perfect city of peace. Hear the Word of God:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:1-4).

These Scriptures cause me tears of joy. In a spiritual sense, things will come full circle.

Life will FINALLY be as it should be. Once again, the dwelling place of God will be with His people. Imagine a life experience with God in which there is no more reason to cry. A life that will not end in grief because there be no more death. A way of living and loving in a place absent of pain, mourning, brokenness, and sin. It will be so perfectly different from the life that is our experience today. This is the coming reality for those who trust Jesus as Lord and Savior. John, the writer of Revelation, told us it is Jesus who does the work to make everything right again.

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his

God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death” (Revelation 21:5-8).

Wow! Jesus is making all things new in the best way. Imagine, everyone who is spiritually thirsty can drink from the spring of the water of life for free. This picture is provided for sojourners like you and me who are living life in a desert. People who come from the wilderness where there is little to no water find a constant flow of living water provided in the New Jerusalem. “The one who conquers” is the person who holds on to faith in Jesus even in the harshness of the wilderness called life. Think of a new life reality, a new Garden of Peace, a new Jerusalem where all things are made new by Jesus. As in the first garden, there is no sin or impact of sin. No murder, no sexual immorality, no witchcraft or sorcery, no idolatry, and no more lies. Truly, I long for it. Hold on to this future reality in Christ as you read the next few chapters. There is so much to look forward to in Christ, but I get ahead of myself. Between the gardens, Eden (Paradise) and New Jerusalem (Peace), there is only the desert; a biblical metaphor for life and the place we are loving and leading our family, our spouse, our children, and our grandchildren.

We want life to be paradise. We work hard to create “paradise” for our family. Some of us intuitively know everything is broken and we live in a parched land. Our environment and culture scream the “wilderness reality” at us every day. Others, given privileged circumstances, can become blind to the obvious but it won’t last. Every family in every nation and in every

socio-economic class will surely realize at one time or another that life is not as it should be, discovering suddenly the reality of the wilderness. Has anyone sinned against you or your spouse or your child in a life-altering way? Has your sin caused your family grief, shame, and destruction? Have you and your family been stricken by sudden tragedy or trauma, sickness, and disease, or even death? Things like addiction, depression, anxiety, suicide, isolation, pandemic, body dysphoria, identity crisis, eating disorders, cutting, abuse, and psychosis slither into our homes and crush people we love. Have you ever been in the fetal position as a parent agonizing over your child no matter what their age? Have you been at a total loss as a spouse begging God to save your marriage? Then you know, *Life is not as it should be*. We are in between two gardens. We are in a war in the wilderness.

A Prayer for Spiritual Awareness

LORD Jesus, by Whom and for Whom all things were created. You are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of it all. You made me for paradise. You placed a longing inside of me for peace. In reading your Word, I am now aware that life is not as it should be because of the onslaught of sin in the world; my sin and the sins of others. Sometimes, Jesus, I am guiding my family through spiritual chaos. I just didn't know that was the reality. Jesus, open my eyes to the reality of my environment. Let me see from Your perspective. Give me eyes to see how to love and lead my family in a life between two gardens. Jesus, Your name is Immanuel, God with us. Your Word says You will never leave us or forsake us. Your Word says nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. In this moment I pray for awareness. Jesus, make me aware of the perils of the wilderness that is life. Give me an understanding of what is spiritually real. Help me to see what is

happening around me. More than that, help me to fix my eyes on You, Jesus. By Your Spirit lift up my eyes from the difficulties of life and allow me to fix my eyes on You. You are with me. Let me sense Your nearness today and every day. Jesus, teach me about the wilderness and who You are in a barren wasteland that my family and I may not only survive, but thrive even in what seems impossible. You are the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Jesus. Make me aware of the desert. Make us aware of Your presence and Your peace in the midst chaos. Amen and Amen.

Conclusion



If you read this far, I commend you. The subject matter isn't easy. As with any work on a particular subject, this book does not begin to cover everything that could be addressed when it comes to fighting for your family in a wilderness war. I am grateful for you, the reader, and in a general way, I have prayed for you as someone who is looking for hope in a difficult family struggle. There are two truths I would like to leave you with as we end this journey together.

Second Corinthians 4:8-9 says, "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed but not driven to despair; persecuted but not forsaken; struck down but not destroyed." This was the apostle Paul's testimony about us, the people of Jesus. This is my testimony to you as a follower of Jesus. This is our story as a family belonging to God.

Romans 16:20 says, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

So be it.

About the Author



Brian Haynes, D.Min., is lead pastor of Bay Area Church in League City, Texas. He is a graduate of Baylor University, Southwestern Seminary, and Liberty Theological Seminary where he earned a D.Min. for his work in discipleship and family ministry.

He is the author of *Shift: What It Takes to Finally Reach Families Today* and *The Legacy Path: Discover Intentional Spiritual Parenting*; co-author of *Relentless Parenting: The Crucial Pursuit of Your Teen's Heart* with his wife, Angela; and a contributing author for *Recalibrate: A New Measure for Family Ministry* and *Family Ministry and the Church*.

He and Angela have three beautiful daughters who are walking with Jesus. They live in Houston, Texas with their dog Hoyt. You can connect with Brian through Twitter @MBrianHaynes, Instagram @mbrianhaynes or at www.brianhaynes.org.

We live between two gardens: Eden and the New Jerusalem.

Between the gardens there is only desert; a biblical metaphor for life. Three main words in the Hebrew language describe the desert: *midbar*, *t'siyah*, and *yashymown*—three kinds of deserts and metaphorically three kinds of life experience. In *midbar* you can survive if you know what you are doing. *Midbar* is what we call, normal. It's not exactly right, but it's as good as it gets outside the Garden.

In *t'siyah* you can survive if you have help. This is deeper, darker, hotter, and even more chaotic. There are times in life when the soul of your family is scorched. In the *t'siyah* parts of life, you can't survive unless you have help. *Yashymown* is desert you cannot survive. *Yashymown* is wild, unbearable, and unfit for dwelling. In this time of life, only a miracle of God and His presence will sustain you and your family.

Life between the gardens is a desert. It's all challenging but some parts are almost impossible. The most important action we can take to lead our families through such a war in the wilderness is to cry out to God. He will hear you.



BRIAN HAYNES, D.MIN., has served the church locally and globally as a ministry leader and pastor for over 25 years. His work focuses on family, parenting, and discipleship. As a husband and father, Brian has led his family through spiritual warfare, and he shares his experience of fighting for family when life isn't as it should be.

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