

34 AD – Paul’s conversion
35-45 AD – Paul’s “silent years” in Arabia and Tarsus
46-48 AD – First missionary journey
49-50 AD – Paul attends Jerusalem Council
50 AD Galatians
50-52 AD – Second missionary journey
51-52 AD 1 & 2 Thessalonians
53-58 AD – Third missionary journey
56 AD 1 & 2 Corinthians
57 AD Romans
58-60 AD – Paul’s arrest, imprisonment, & journey to Rome
60 AD Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon
62-67 AD – Paul’s trip to Spain
63 AD 1 Timothy
64 AD Titus
67 AD 2 Timothy
67 AD – Paul executed in Rome by Nero

Acts 9:21-22
21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?”
22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

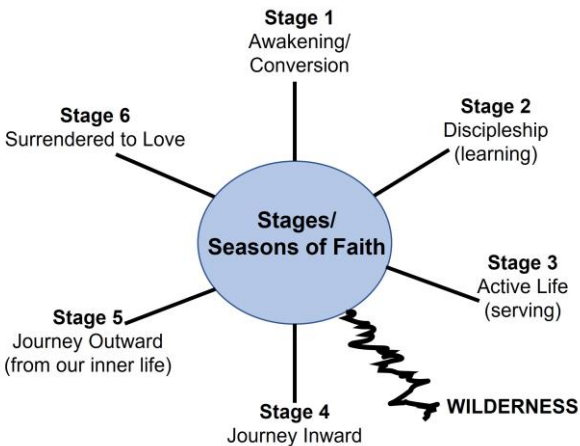
Acts 9:23-25
23 After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, 24 but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him. 25 But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall. 26 When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were

all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple.

Acts 9:27
But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus.

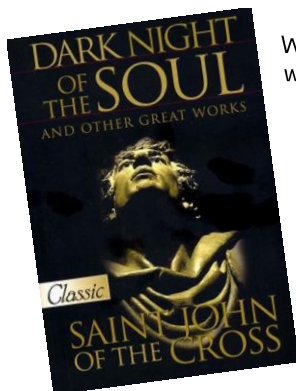
Acts 9:28-30
28 So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him. 30 When the brothers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

wilderness = eremos (eh-ray-mos) = desert, solitary place, a place of thorns (nothing grows) and thirst (all the wells are dry)



"The difference is that now we give out of a new, grounded center of ourselves in God. We have rediscovered God's profound, deep, accepting love for us. A deep, inner stillness now begins to characterize our work for God." – Pete Scazzero

7 deadly "spiritual imperfections" that God deals with in the wilderness. (St. John of the Cross)



- **Pride**

We have a tendency to condemn others and become impatient with their faults. We become selective about who can teach us.

- **Avarice (Greed)**

Enough is never enough. Constantly discontent.

- **Luxury**

Taking more pleasure in the spiritual blessings of God than God himself.

- **Wrath**

Easily irritated. Lack gentleness. Have little patience to wait on God.

- **Spiritual gluttony**

Resists the call to "die to self". Respond like testy children when we don't get what we want.

- **Spiritual envy**

Comparison trap. Unable to rejoice in the success of others.

- **Sloth**

Laziness at the center. Shrink back from anything hard. Mastered by good feelings.

"God is purging the soul, emptying it or consuming it (even as fire consumes the moldiness and the rust of metal) all the affections and imperfect habits which it has contracted its whole life...These are deeply rooted in the substance of the soul." – St. John of the Cross (1542-1591)

When you've been through an *eremos* season, you'll find...

- 1. Brokenness replaces judgementalism**

"...the root and origin of sin is the arrogance in which man wants to be his own and his neighbor's judge." – Karl Barth

- 2. A deeper ability to wait for God**

Psalm 27:14

Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.

- 3. A greater detachment**

"The critical issue on the journey with God is not 'Am I happy?' but 'Am I free? Am I growing in the freedom God gave me?'" – Thomas Merton