

## Wilderness

*“As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.’” Matthew 11:7-9*

There is a universal principle by which every human abides that goes: If we desire to see something, we will see it. “Seeing” here isn’t limited to vision, though. For example, a person who desires more than anything to take a trip to Hawaii will save the money and structure their schedule in such a way that that will happen. They desired it and so they saw it. This same principle is what makes honest and proper interpretation of the Bible so crucial, because the Bible speaks so widely on so many subjects that a person can easily twist any number of passages to fit what they want it to fit. They desire to see the Bible saying something, and so they see it, whether the Bible says it or not.

The people of Jesus’s day went out into the wilderness to see John the Baptist, whom they regarded as a prophet. John’s clothing wasn’t soft. His food wasn’t pleasant. His appearance, even his odor, was, in all likelihood, difficult to stand for many of the people – especially the popular and powerful people who decided the direction of the culture for Israel. And yet, lo and behold, there were still those who weren’t bothered by John’s appearance. They didn’t go into the wilderness to see the simplicity or beauty of nature, or to see a person well dressed. They weren’t concerned with appearance. They went into the wilderness – they went *to* John – to hear truth.

It may be difficult to believe, but this same principle applies today and it still happens today. There are still people who desire to see truth, and we can never forget this. They might be people who aren’t dressed in soft clothing, and they might not be the powerful people who decide the direction of our culture, but there are still those today who desire to see truth and want to find it, even if it’s found in unpleasant places. They’ll seek it even if it’s found in old buildings occupied by unpopular people. They’ll seek it even if it’s found in the wilderness.

**[DJR]**