A Personal Word

From the Coile Family

September 9, 2026

Dear friends,

I have a memory to share with you from the first wilderness retreat we did several years ago. On the first night, the Bible study was about God's wild nature. Often, those who seek God end up in wild places. Moses was on Mount Sinai where there was thunder, lightning, loud noises, and smoke. The disciples were in the boat on a stormy sea. John the Baptist lived in the wilderness. Followers of Christ experience many storms (literal and figurative). Nevertheless, God promises to be with them always. That night, Dad made a memorable statement. He said, "When the storms arise, keep paddling, knowing that God is still with you in the hard times."

The next day, we were going to take our long-awaited canoe trip. We put on our life jackets, grabbed our paddles, and started out across the lake. In the middle of our endeavor, it started raining—hard. We could barely see through the torrential downpour. Dad was worried that the kids would be disappointed that it rained during the canoe trip. We continued paddling toward the island. As we pulled the canoes up on the shore, Dad looked around. Everyone was grinning. "Wow, that was awesome!" one kid exclaimed. "It's just like you said, Mr. Freddie," another chimed in, "When the storms come, keep on paddling!"



Canoe trip during this year's Wilderness Retreat

That day, the kids understood what Dad had been teaching them. The Christian life isn't for those seeking comfort who quit when the going gets rough. God doesn't promise that life will be easy, but He does promise that He will always be with those who trust in Him.

We just hosted the Wilderness Retreat, a time to get away from the distractions of everyday life and focus on our Creator. That's the beauty of camp ministry. We want to help kids get grounded in God's Word so they can weather the storms of life.

God bless,

Eden Grace Coile

for the Coile family

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