

The Great Outdoors

By

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Theme:

This monologue portrays an outdoorsman who loves to get outdoors to enjoy God's creation more than he likes to shoot things. The monologue makes a strong point of the beauty of God' creation and the way God purposed things to work together in a way that only an intelligent creator could. This world didn't happen by chance.

Biblical Reference:

Psalm 8:2

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place

Approximate Running Time:

10-15 minutes

A lot of people seem to think that guys like to get outdoors because they like to shoot things. I admit, some of us like to hunt a lot. I know a lot of guys who hunt for deer, bear, squirrels, turkeys, pheasants, elk, moose, woodchucks, duck, and who trap things like fox, coyote, mink, and beaver, and I haven't even mentioned fishing. But I don't think that the only reason they like to get outdoors is because they like to shoot things.

Most of us guys who are into some sort of hunting or fishing like to do it because we get a chance to be alone out in the wilderness to witness the beauty of God's creation. There's nothing like being alone in the middle of the woods, or on a lake or small pond, with no evidence of civilization anywhere to be seen or heard. Our day by day lives get so caught up in the business world that we just like the opportunity to get away from it all for a while and forget about everything that we have to deal with during the business week. That's why I've become a sportsman.

Take fishing for example. Now let's face it, we fishermen spend the majority of the time we're out fishin' sitting in the boat just trying to catch fish. Most of us catch very little, and just about all of us let the fish back into the water after we've caught them. If I'm out on a fishin' trip I may take a few back with me for a late breakfast or lunch, but I still let most of the fish go so that someone else can catch them at a later time.

Catching fish isn't why I go fishing. I go fishing so that I can be away from the rest of the world, alone in a quiet alcove, far from the cares of the world. There's nothing like sitting out on a small pond when the sun comes up in the morning and watching the way that it affects everything that is around me. When I first get out onto the water there isn't a light around. All is black, quiet, still, and the sound of my paddle in the water is all I can hear. Then the sun begins to come over the eastern sky. As it rises in the sky bright reds, magentas, pinks, blues, and purples are painted across the sky better than any artist can render them. As the sun rises higher in the sky the colors brighten and change to a golden hue that is awe inspiring. The beauty of the sky is doubled as it is reflected on the still surface of the water. The soft ripples moving across the water add motion to the reflection of the sky.

The quiet stirring of the wildlife as the sunlight begins to waken them is something that inspires awe in even the hardest of men. It's like you're allowed to look into a world that you don't belong in. It's intriguing to think that this happens every morning regardless of who is there to witness it. If I wasn't out there to fish, if I was taking the opportunity to sleep in, or if I was getting ready for another day at the office, I would miss the beauty of God's creation as it wakes early in the morning. How can I not thank Him for the wonder of His creation and for including me within it when I'm confronted with such unbridled beauty?

Likewise, I gain much more satisfaction from the environment that I am in while I'm out deer hunting than I get from the actual hunt. The reality of the cool, briskness of the silent morning is sobering as I make my way through the woods to the place where I will sit and wait for deer to come to me. As I sit with my back up against a tree, waiting for the sun to come up, I can't help but thank Him for the seasons that He has created. What a balance of warmth and cold, of new life and the end of an aging life. In the dim light of dawn I can begin to see the shape of the trees around me. The thick woods only allow me to see 50 to 60 feet in any one direction. I begin to study the trees closer to me. I study the way that they gently sway in the breeze, as if they are communicating with each other, telling each other of the stranger in their midst. As I sit and ponder the trees before me a single thought comes to mind every time. The Lord knows the age of each of those trees, He knows the number of their branches, their leaves, and how many more days they will be standing. He knows about them as intimately as he knows about me. [Pause.] No, He cares for me much more than He cares about those trees. He made me in His likeness and He sent His Son to die on a tree for me. HE didn't do that for any other living thing that He created. I know that He loves me more than He cares for those trees.

Beneath the canopy of the trees is yet more evidence of our loving creator. The brightly colored leaves that have recently fallen from the trees above now canvas the ground in a multi-colored carpet. Through the winter the same leaves that brought life to the trees through the process of photo-synthesis will decompose and continue to provide life to the same trees as nutrients absorbed through their roots. If He has taken that good of care of those trees, how much greater care He must take of me.

Later in the season I enjoy walking through the snow to the place I sit and wait for the deer to find me. The small animals of the woods, not realizing that there is a stranger in their midst, go about their business as if it was a typical day. I am able to see the scurrying of the squirrels, the antics of the chipmunks, and the busy activity of the birds as they fly from tree to tree. If I'm lucky I can see some beaver, or fox, or coyote, and maybe even a bear move through the woods, going about their business as usual.

One of my favorite places to hunt is along the side of a small valley. I sit with my back against a tree so that anything coming over the hill behind me can't see me until they pass me, and I can also see the other side of the valley rise before me. This position usually gets me some good shots each time I'm out hunting, and it allows me to see a number of animals while I'm sitting there waiting for 'the big one' to come along.

A few years ago, while sitting against a tree in that valley, a small fawn came running over the hill and abruptly stopped just to the side of the tree I was sitting against. I saw the fawn, noticed that it was too small for me to shoot so I decided to observe the fawn instead. I sat as still as I could. I tried to breathe as slowly and as quietly as possible so that I didn't scare her away. I noticed that she was up-wind of me and I knew she wouldn't run away until she caught my scent. Deer, especially young ones, need to confirm danger with two of their senses. She had seen me, but she couldn't hear me, nor could she smell me. She was curious, but she wasn't afraid of me yet. I'm sure that she had never seen a human before because she just stood there looking at me, checking me out. Then she began to slowly move closer to me. I could see that her ears were standing straight up from her head to catch the slightest of sounds, they were rotating in every direction, searching for any sound that would signal danger. Finding none, she continued to move closer until she stood about two feet away from me. I could have reached up and touched her. We stood there for a few seconds, checking each other out, she searching for danger while I was examining her beauty. She must have caught my scent because suddenly she took off running, all four legs trying to gain purchase in the snow, and in the process, she completely covered me with the snow her heels kicked up. I sat there laughing, trying to remove the snow, thanking the Lord for the unique opportunity He had given me to experience His creation.

That was the closest I had ever come to a creature in the wild like that. I knew that I could have harmed the young deer, but I chose to enjoy the opportunity that I had been given to experience the wonder and joy of His creation.

You can experience the wonder and joy of His creation too. You don't have to become a hunter, although you may, you could just take the time to be out in His creation, observing, studying, meditating on His goodness, mercy, and His care for us. I encourage you to get out into the great outdoors and seek to discover the great things that He has done for you. If you happen to see me out hunting while you're out discovering, don't be afraid to stop by to chat. I won't shoot you.

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