



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of November 19, 2017

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a “worship discussion” guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Numbers 9:15-23 “Cloud & Fire”

- Generally speaking, how does God provide guidance for His people?
- Read Number 9:15-23. How did the cloud guidance system work for Israel?
- What did the cloud signify?
- At different times in Israel’s history, God lovingly provided His people with visible signs to confirm His Word. The manna from heaven to God’s people in the wilderness is one of those gifts ([Exodus 16](#)). Can you list other “visible signs”?
- The cloud certainly tested Israel’s dependence on God. The desert was truly unfamiliar and insecure territory. And sometimes they only had a single night’s rest (21). Other times they camped from few days (20) to a month or longer (22). Does trusting Jesus require waiting or moving for you today? In what way?
- The New Testament also uses the image of the cloud to describe the presence of God (i.e. Luke 9:34, Acts 1:9). However, believers in Jesus have something much better than a cloud! Each week in worship we read a companion New Testament reading to complement the sermon text. **This week’s New Testament reading came to us from [John 4:13-17](#)**. How do we now know God’s presence as His people? Why is this better than the cloud?
- There were times the army of Israel was busy and felt they were making progress. There were also confusing delays. Is there a way you are growing confused or weary from the waiting in your life? Confess it to God, asking Him for grace to trust Jesus, and power to wait on Him.
- One of last Sunday’s hymns was [Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior](#), a [desperate prayer](#) asking God for grace to know His presence. Read or sing the hymn together. Pray that our Savior would bless His Church with the comfort that comes from the assurance of His presence, and a hunger to know that God our guide and is near His people. Pray that many in Richmond would find Jesus to be the faithful Savior.

Questions about this week’s study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit www.wepc.org/archivedsermons

Sermon Notes

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Numbers 9:15-23](#).

- After having been at the foot of Mount Sinai for around a year, it is near the time to set out on the journey to the Promised Land.
- Do you ever wish God would treat you like he treats His people here?
- He shows up in two clouds and moves or settles so that they can get and stay where He wants them.
- Why does He do this? Why is this necessary?
- A mark of immaturity.
- Note the use of the word “sometimes” (20, 21).
- Presence and guidance are key to understanding what God is doing.
- How do we know Jesus is with His people and guiding them today?
- God is taking His people somewhere.
- Note the use of the word “walk” in the Bible.