



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of August 27, 2017

WEPC small groups meet in homes across Richmond every week to participate in Jesus Christ's mission to Richmond, enjoy fellowship, study God's Word, pray together, and explore the fruit of the Gospel on our lives. Simply put, these groups are small enough to be the church to one another, and they serve as bridges between WEPC and the community where God has planted us. It is a place where the church can go deeper in the worship of God and further in Christ's mission.

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 1:17-19, 44-54 "Numbered"

¹⁷ Moses and Aaron took these men who had been named, ¹⁸ and on the first day of the second month, they assembled the whole congregation together, who registered themselves by clans, by fathers' houses, according to the number of names from twenty years old and upward, head by head, ¹⁹ as the LORD commanded Moses. So he listed them in the wilderness of Sinai...

⁴⁴ These are those who were listed, whom Moses and Aaron listed with the help of the chiefs of Israel, twelve men, each representing his fathers' house. ⁴⁵ So all those listed of the people of Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war in Israel— ⁴⁶ all those listed were 603,550.

⁴⁷ But the Levites were not listed along with them by their ancestral tribe. ⁴⁸ For the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁴⁹ "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not list, and

you shall not take a census of them among the people of Israel. ⁵⁰ But appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the testimony, and over all its furnishings, and over all that belongs to it. They are to carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings, and they shall take care of it and shall camp around the tabernacle. ⁵¹ When the tabernacle is to set out, the Levites shall take it down, and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up. And if any outsider comes near, he shall be put to death. ⁵² The people of Israel shall pitch their tents by their companies, each man in his own camp and each man by his own standard. ⁵³ But the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the testimony, so that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the people of Israel. And the Levites shall keep guard over the tabernacle of the testimony." ⁵⁴ Thus did the people of Israel; they did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses.

- Read Numbers 1:17-19 & 44-46. How did the LORD order the people of Israel? Why did He choose this method?
- Who was counted? How many were listed in the census? How many total people might this represent?
- This census served to remind Israel of the LORD's faithfulness to His promises. Read [Exodus 32:13](#). What did God promise to His people? What things might be on the hearts and minds of God's people as they remembered these promises during the census?
- This census served to remind Israel of the LORD's care for His people. How might the census encourage God's people that He cares for them? Read [Deuteronomy 7:6-10](#) as further reflection on God's heart for His people.
- Is there a recent time when you were reminded that God was faithful and that He cared for you?
- This census served to remind Israel that the LORD was preparing them for war. How might Israel be tempted as they anticipated the conquest of the Promised Land?

- How are you personally tempted whenever you enter into conflict?
- Read Numbers 1:47-54. Why were the Levites not counted in the census? What roles did that tribe serve?
- What was at the center of camp? Why?
- As we study Numbers, we will always be pointed to Jesus Christ. What is one way you were reminded of Jesus as you reflected on this passage?
- Each week in worship, we read a New Testament reading which complements the Old Testament sermon Text. This week's reading is from [1 Peter 2:4-6](#). Read that passage together to begin a time of prayer. Thank God for His faithfulness and care. Ask Him for courage to trust Jesus Christ and believe that He builds and loves His Church.

*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 1:5-54](#).

- What identifies a person or a group of people? What are the boundaries around groups of people that define them?
- Edge-bounded vs. center-focused.
- We count so that we can see who is in or out. There can be no hiding. There will be a final census one day. [Revelation 20:11-15](#) tells us of God's great census book where the names of the dead are written.
- In this text we have: Names
- In this list of names note the God-oriented elements:
 - El (9 times)
 - Shaddai ((3 times)
 - Shur (3 times)
 - Ab (2 times)
 - Ah (2 times)
- Family Genealogy: The list and order of descendants of Jacob with a small variation (Gad) by mother
 - Children of Leah (Gad is a son of Leah's handmaiden Zilpah)
 - Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulon
 - Children of Rachel
 - Ephraim and Manasseh (Joseph's boys), Benjamin
 - Child of Bilhah (Rachel's handmaiden)
 - Dan
 - Children of Zilpah (Leah's Handmaiden)
 - Asher and Gad
 - Child of Bilhah
 - Naphtali
- Why give us all these names? Does God need this so He can tell who is in or out?
- Because this is a particular story about a particular people. God made promises to these people. There would be a lot of them (we will get to Levi next week). None of the tribes has been left out. Even in the wilderness, the Lord sees and counts His people. Note not 600,000 or 603,000 but 603,550. In [Numbers 26](#), another census is taken and the number is 601,730. Only 2 names in the first census will be in the last one. We remember the ones who did not make it.