



Following the Cloud

Lessons on Guidance from Desert University

Desert Lesson 4: Guidance is His Timing

Introduction

In Desert Lesson 4, we learn that following God means trusting His timing, not just His direction. Sometimes the cloud moves quickly, and sometimes it stays longer than we expect, but God is always preparing us in the waiting.

This lesson invites us to slow down, surrender our timelines, and believe that God's pace is part of His goodness.

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Numbers 9:17

17Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped.

Numbers 9:20-21

20Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few days; at the Lord's command they would encamp, and then at his command they would set out. 21Sometimes the cloud stayed only from evening till morning, and when it lifted in the morning, they set out. Whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud lifted, they set out.

Exodus 13:17-18

17When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." 18So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle.

Acts 2:1

1When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

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Message notes:

You can't stay so far back, so relaxed, so _____ that you miss where he's going.

There's this timing piece here with the cloud, with following God, that we are dependent on _____, not our own.

He takes the long road because He knows we need more time to _____.

God goes the ways that make the most _____. And He knows what you need in those seasons.

Just because He gives you a calling doesn't mean that He's commissioned it to _____ in that same time.

When you get a yellow light from the Lord, it's not an _____.

It's in the waiting that He _____ us.

It's not fun to do the waiting. But it's in those moments that we really become who God's _____ us to be and _____ us to be.

Additional notes:

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Discussion Questions:

1. The message emphasizes that time spent waiting on God is never wasted time if the cloud has not moved. How does this reframe the way you think about seasons in your life that have felt unproductive or stagnant?
2. Pastor Jasen shared the metaphor of slowing down in a national park to truly see its beauty as a picture of perceiving God's goodness. What might you be missing about God's goodness right now because you are moving too fast?
3. The disciples in Acts 1 and 2 were told to gather and wait together before the Holy Spirit came. This tells us a little bit about how Christ views the role of Christian community in seasons of waiting. When you're the one waiting, do you tend to pull people in or pull away?
4. The yellow light analogy reveals that seasons of divine slowdown are for our safety, not our inconvenience. In what areas of your life are you currently tempted to press the accelerator when God may be signaling you to slow down?
5. God's delays are described as not being His denials. How do you personally distinguish between a closed door from God and a season of preparation that requires patient waiting?

Ministry Time:

Pray for anyone who is in a current season of waiting and preparation. Ask for God to remind them of the love revealed in His slower pace, and encourage them to rest in the relationship with Him.

Pray for those who have a tendency to speed through divine yellow lights. Ask forgiveness for the times when they've tried to run ahead or drive God forward. Invite the Holy Spirit to help them trust that the slowdowns are not punishment, but preparation for His blessing.