



Following the Cloud

Lessons on Guidance from Desert University

Desert Lesson 1: Guidance is Relationship

Introduction

In Desert Lesson 1, we begin learning what it means to follow the cloud—the visible sign of the Lord leading His people through the wilderness. This lesson reminds us that guidance is not first about getting the right answer, but about walking in relationship with Jesus, the One who goes before us.

As we enter Desert University, we are invited to surrender control, trust His leadership, and learn the freedom of simply following Him.

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Exodus 13:20-22

20After leaving Sukkoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. 21By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. 22Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

John 10:11a

11 "I am the good shepherd."

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Message notes:

They were on the edge of _____ .

A degree in desperate _____ on God.

Desert University specializes in teaching us about how to
_____ .

But in guidance, the Lord's far more interested in you getting to
_____ Him more than He is you making right choices.

Communication is important, but it's got to move past the
realm of exchanging of facts, of information; it's got to be
_____ .

God's commitment to be in front of us is his commitment to say,
"I know where I'm going and you _____ ."

He goes before you, which means you get _____ into
what He wants you to do.

You don't have to carry the of _____ guidance.

Additional notes:

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Discussion Questions:

1. Desert University is described as specializing in degrees of brokenness, humility, and desperate dependence on God. What has been your most significant enrollment in that kind of season?
2. In this video, Pastor Jamie draws a distinction between seeking God for answers versus seeking God for relationship. Which pattern do you find yourself falling into more often?
3. Exodus 13:21 describes the Lord going before Israel both by day and by night, meaning there was no moment when guidance was unavailable. How does the reality of God's continuous presence challenge the anxiety you feel in uncertain seasons?
4. Pastor Jamie confesses that he had to 'eat humble pie' and surrender his own plans when Pastor Kim sensed God leading them home. Recall a time when someone close to you perceived God's direction before you did. How did you handle that?
5. God sometimes lets us walk in our own decisions, but He never leaves us there. He's always looking for relationship. What steps can we take this week to help prioritize knowing God over simply getting answers from Him?

Ministry Time:

Before you pray for each other, spend a few minutes going around and simply talking out loud to Jesus about who He is, thanking Him, and telling Jesus that you want to know Him, not just His answers.

Pray for those who can identify one area of their life where they have been striving, forcing, or anxiously trying to make something happen.