

March 29th 2009 ‘Our Guide in the Wilderness’ by
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Pray

Background to the text:

Exodus narrative stops at chapter 19- and takes a big breath- God gives Moses the law and Israel camps at Sinai for two years to receive the law. From Exodus 19 through all Leviticus is this two year encampment at Sinai, a parentheses in the larger narrative of Israel’s exodus from slavery in Egypt. The narrative of Israel’s journey begins again in the book of Numbers, the fourth book of the bible, in chapter 9. Here we find Israel on the verge of heading out into the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula for many years. In preparation for this wilderness journey God gives Israel two commands – remember the Passover and go when God says to and stay put when God says to.

Numbers: Now, watch, me. play with the inflections.

Read Numbers 9 Vs22-23

Now. Timing. Time is God’s perfect wisdom.

We're a generation of wishers- moves us out of the present and keeps us either in the past or in the future

The present- today- often times between the thieves of yesterday and tomorrow our today is crucified. **In the wilderness Israel had to trust God- that God was moving at the right time, despite whatever inconvenience that meant for the people setting up or taking down camp.**

NOW- not later, not 'how come you didn't in the past'- now

Today is all we have and now is the only time we have to experience God- right now.

Read Numbers 9 Vs15-18

Watch. Look to me. Like Jim preached last week- our eyes are on you because we don't know what to do- you're in charge. We're good at setting goals, getting things done, success. We're not good at being dependent. And when you're in the wilderness, your life depends on depending on your guide.

Our guide was our map and we didn't follow it. Hiking in the backcountry with my family hiking from high alpine lake to lake over 5 days. Miss the trail- back track- April with her hood- we're going backwards! We don't go backwards-

we go forwards!- set the tent up now- gorgeous lake, lots of fish.

Watching what God is doing, looking to God- it takes careful study of God's Word, prayer, and a constant check to orient ourselves to our God.

Me. Our God is our Guide- God was teaching Israel to ask- us to ask- 'What is God up to? Where is God going? What is God doing?

And how can I join God? The first step to understand what God is up to is actually consulting God; spend time with him!

Read Bishop Tutu- pg 100

The second step to understand what God is up to is to understand what Jesus is up to- for all things were created by Jesus, through Jesus, and for Jesus. Jesus is the centerpiece of our faith and our walk with God.

Jesus and the last supper- celebrating the Passover and giving final instructions before the wilderness- the obey my commands and don't worry- I'm going to make my home with you, in you, through the very

Spirit that led Israel in the desert and into the promised land.

Read john 14:15,17,23

NOW WATCH ME changed- I will abide with you- Meno- tabernacle with you- will you receive me?

For what purpose?

Read John 17:25ff

The Love of God

Christ broken and poured out for us- love

Edge of the wilderness

celebrating what God has done-Passover-
now watch me, remain in me

when you don't remain, God still there

Kate giving God to her doubts

Give doubts to God

God I don't know if I even believe in you

You weren't there when I was hurt

Jesus shows up- tears

Says I'm beloved

