

Warm-up Questions

1. Have you ever been in a situation where the lights went out and you are surrounded by complete darkness? Describe the experience.
2. In this situation, did you know how long you would be in darkness? If not, what was the impact of that unknown waiting time?
3. How did you navigate your way around your surroundings?
4. How did you feel when light was restored?

Warm-up Activity

1. Choose one person in your group to close their eyes. (Be sure to choose a person who is comfortable with what you have in store for them!) Spin that person slightly so they lose a sense of direction and location. Have the person then find someone else in the group, as group members take turns giving directions. (Example: Turn slightly to your left. Take 2 steps forward.)
2. Have that person describe to the group their experience. How difficult would it have been to complete without instructions and directions?

Can You Relate?

In this week's Scripture, we see God's tangible presence through His protective covering over, care for, and guidance of His beloved people of Israel. He displayed His love and presence as He guided them by a pillar of cloud as they travelled the wilderness by day, and a fire that settled over the tabernacle at night, directing them to stop and camp. The people never knew how long they would travel, not how long they would camp. To remind the people of the Lord's constant presence and help, He commanded a system of trumpet blowing to either gather the leaders or congregation, to alert when war was imminent, and upon offering sacrifices.

1. Describe in detail a time when the LORD's love for you was clearly seen and what impact that had on your faith?
2. Have you ever felt abandoned by God – left alone to make a decision or navigate a difficult trial? Because God promises He will never leave nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5), can you now look back and see He was near and His clear direction, or does His involvement in this situation remain clouded? What impact did this situation have on your faith?
3. The Israelites never knew how long they would travel nor how long they would camp as they journeyed toward the coveted Promised Land. Have you ever experienced a time when God told you to wait and hold steady, even though you felt like what lay ahead needed your attention? How difficult was that wait? Or did you jump ahead of God? Can you share your experience?

Sermon Discussion Guide
My Beautifully Flawed Journey
Week 1: August 21st, 2022

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 matching the presence of God with the Israelites in this passage, how tangibly real is the presence of God in your life right now.
5. What is the greatest reminder to you of the Lord's presence in your life?

Live it Out

God's is here. Right now, He is here. While we don't experience the miracle of pillar of cloud and fire today, God remains present, active, and involved in every aspect of our lives.

Read Romans 8:14-15. What is the primary way through which God manifests His presence in our lives?

God, through the person of the Holy Spirit, resides in every believer. While the Israelites could daily, hourly, minute-by-minute look and see God's powerful presence, all we need do is cry 'Abba Father,' and know He is with us – that He hears us (Psalm 41:17), He knows us (Psalm 139:1) He holds us (Isaiah 49:16) He directs our steps just as He did for the ancient desert-wanderers (Psalm 37:23-24).

OR...

(If time permits, have people look up the passages and relay what God promises in each one about his presence in our lives):

Psalm 41:17

Psalm 139:1

Isaiah 49:16

Psalm 37:23-24

Others Passages:

What impact does this truth have on your faith in God today?

How will you put your faith to work concerning this truth?

Encourage your group to commit time to pray for one another, encourage one another, meet each other's needs, fellowship together and interceded for each other as the Lord leads. Encourage them to continue to meet and to return for the next scheduled gathering.