

DISCUSSION GUIDE



September 7/10, 2017
Follow The Cloud Week 4
BIG IDEA: God is not just for you, He is with you.

GROUPS VISION

We believe life transformation happens when we engage with other people, with Jesus as our focus, and take next steps together. A next step is where we Ask, Listen, and Respond to take any action that advances our journey with Jesus.

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KEY VERSE

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
Hebrews 4:16

POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

Set aside time this week to quiet yourself and be aware that God is with you.

MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

You are as close to God as you want to be. (**Hebrews 4:16**) Jesus has already removed all distance and all separation between us and God. Salvation is God carrying us to Himself. (**Exodus 19:4 NKJV**) Jesus was forsaken so we will never have to be. Jesus' obedience (next steps) determines our identity; our obedience (next steps) determines our intimacy. Every next step takes us deeper into His heart.

1. **Life is all about relationship with God.** God wants to be with us, and He wants us to be with Him. (**Exodus 6:7**) It's relationship with God that reminds us that our identity has been transformed. (**2 Corinthians 6:18**) Following the cloud is never about getting somewhere; it is about experiencing our God. (**Exodus 33:15; Psalm 16:11; Acts 17:26; Mark 3:13-15**) Life is more about who you are with than what you are doing. (**Numbers 9:17, 22-23**) Everything we are looking for is found where He is. (**Psalm 84:10; Psalm 27:4**) Cloud followers want to be friends with God because God wants to be friends with them.
2. **Second-hand Jesus will never give you first-hand faith.** The Father wanted the Israelites to have relationship with them and hear His voice. (**Exodus 20:18-19**) We can't live without His voice. (**John 6:63**) If Jesus is our Lord, we can hear His voice. (**Matthew 12:34**) Not only can we, but we do hear His voice. (**John 10:4; Matthew 4:4**) How to hear His voice:
 - **Slow Down** - Quiet our noisy lives.
 - **Engage the Scriptures** - His voice will always align with Scripture.
 - **Seek Him** - Go out of our way to create space for Him.
 - **Pursue Godly Relationships** - Faith is contagious.
 - **Seek Confirmation** - Does it align with Scripture? Does godly counsel confirm it? Is there a sacred echo? Does it require faith? Is it leading you closer to Jesus?
3. **Next steps free us from the greatest bondage of all - ourselves.** Moses responded to God the way that we often do when we hear our next step. "Who am I?" (**Exodus 3:11**) He will give us assignments bigger than ourselves to expose the insecurities we didn't even realize we had, to help us become aware of Him. Freedom is realizing that God is with us. (**Exodus 3:12**)

DISCUSSION

1. The heart of the cloud follower says, "I won't go without you." Think about where you are heading. Did God invite you to go or did you just decide to go? (See point #1)
2. To follow the cloud is to hear God's voice. Your next step is discovered when you ask, listen, and respond to His voice. What can you do to position yourself to hear His voice? (See point #2)
3. When we are aware of Him, He shows us He is with us. Have you ever felt insecure in your next step only to see God prove to you that He was with you? Share what happened with the group. (See point #3)
4. **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?**
5. **What is your next step?**