



LC STUDY GUIDE

Following A God Who is Always on the Move

The Passage: Joshua 3:1-17

For Life Community usage the week of 2/8/15

Tips for the LC Leader

- a. Use these questions as a guideline. You best understand your LC—so lead accordingly. Be flexible in the discussion while encouraging people to grow and follow God.
- b. This is the final part of our series *NEXT: Following a God Who's Always on the Move*, which draws us together around vision for bold ministry that flows from grace-based generosity.
- c. We recommend 45-60 minutes for this study, including a 10-15 minutes for application and group prayer.
- d. Complement the "content" questions (below) with "process" questions (what else? what more? what do you see/think?).
- e. Game Plan for this study: move briskly through the five different segments of Joshua 3 (use 1/3 of study time), then gathers key insights from whole (use 1/3 of study time) and wrap up with application and prayer (use 1/3 of study time).

Today's Big Idea: Both as individuals and as a church, the best way to live is by faithfully following a God who is always on the move and at work.

Possible Starter Question: What do you think of the signs in the middle of the road that say: State Law: Stop for Pedestrians? Does your town use them? Do they work? What is the dilemma that every walker faces?

Transition: In a funny and practical way, there are some similarities to today's passage 😊

Read Joshua 3 aloud: Explain that this is a series of 4 short speeches, where each one adds a little more, with a 5th paragraph about the activity. (You might enlist 5 people do the different chunks: 1-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-13, and 14-17.)

1. (vv 1-4) What do the officers say to prep the people? What intrigues you?
(*A cubit is a standard of measurement equal to about a foot and a half. Total distance is a little more than a half mile.*)
2. (vv 5-6) What does Joshua add in his comments to the people and the priests? What does *consecrate* mean and why do you think it is important?
3. (vv 7-8) What does the LORD convey to Joshua? Why do you think the LORD does this?
4. (vv 9-13) What does Joshua convey as he encourages and preps the Israelites? What's the big deal about the idea of setting "foot in the Jordan"?

5. (vv 14-17) What are some of the important aspects of these verses, as the crossing takes place?

(This occurred in what would have been April, the time when the 1st harvest occurs and when the Jordan is at its annual flood stage. While there are 3 other times in history, and as recently as 1927, when the Jordan River dammed up due to mudslides and earthquake, it is clear that the LORD of the supernatural is larger than the nature.)

6. (Insight gathering) Let's step back and gather some of the larger insights and lessons in Joshua 3:

- What do we see about God's character and activity? What's God's role?
- What do we observe about faithfully and purposefully living? What do we need to "know" and what do we need to "do"? What's our role?

(There is one further "know" worth considering in Joshua 4:24.)

7. (Application/Prayer) What are some of the ways we see (or would like to see) God moving in and through our church? ...our Life Community? ...our friendships or family?

Given the metaphor of this passage, "set foot" and "touched the water's edge," what are ways (or possible ways) that God want us to set foot and step out in our lives and in our world?

Pray together

- For one another to grow in our trust of God and readiness to step out in faith
- For our church's redemptive presence and influence here, near, and far

Joshua 3 (NIV)

¹ Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. ² After three days the officers went throughout the camp, ³ giving orders to the people: “When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. ⁴ Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about two thousand cubits between you and the ark; do not go near it.”

⁵ Joshua told the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.”

⁶ Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people.” So they took it up and went ahead of them.

⁷ And the Lord said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses. ⁸ Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: ‘When you reach the edge of the Jordan’s waters, go and stand in the river.’”

⁹ Joshua said to the Israelites, “Come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God. ¹⁰ This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites. ¹¹ See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go into the Jordan ahead of you. ¹² Now then, choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. ¹³ And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the Lord—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap.”

¹⁴ So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. ¹⁵ Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water’s edge, ¹⁶ the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (that is, the Dead Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷ The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.