



## A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of September 17, 2017

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a “worship discussion” guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

### Numbers 3:11-51 “Redemption”

In Sunday’s sermon, we heard how Numbers 3 shows us how God values remembering, work & substitution. We’ll read each section of the sermon text, and reflect on a few questions together.

The Importance of Memory-- Read [Numbers 3:11-13](#). One of the reasons God chose the Levites was to have a *passive* witness. They were not chosen because they were so great. One of their ministries was to *just be chosen* and be a perpetual reminder that God spared Israel and delivered them from bondage.

- What does someone who was simply chosen by God because *God chose them* teach us about God?
- Each Sunday we read a companion New Testament reading to complement the Old Testament reading and act as a guide to prayer. Last week we read [Colossians 1:11-14](#), Paul’s prayer that hits many of the same themes as the witness of the Levites. What blessings do those who trust Jesus enjoy?
- God calls us to remember His faithfulness. How have you seen Jesus be faithful recently?

The Value of Work-- Read [Numbers 3:14-39](#). This passage describes how the Levites were charged with guarding, caring for and carrying all the implements and parts of the tabernacle.

- We see that God calls His people to work. What is your work and calling?
- We see that God gives us difficult or small jobs. How are you challenged or tempted in your work?
- We see that God uses workers to bless the community. How are others blessed through your work?

The Value of Substitution-- Read [Numbers 3:40-51](#). In this passage, the price of redemption will either be paid through a tax or by the substitution of a Levite. The Lord is showing us an ancient truth—sinful people can only be purchased and atoned for by means of a perfect substitute. This was to prepare God’s people to see Jesus as our Substitute.

- Is it precious to you that Jesus was crucified in your place? Why, or why not?
- The church had the opportunity to sing this theme together in Joseph Hart’s great hymn, [Dearly We’re Bought](#). Read or sing that hymn together

Read [Colossians 1:11-14](#) as a guide to prayer. Remember how you’ve been redeemed and ask God for grace to fulfill your calling to His glory.

Questions about this week’s study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, [kevin@wepc.org](mailto:kevin@wepc.org)  
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit [www.wepc.org/archivedsermons](http://www.wepc.org/archivedsermons)

## Sermon Notes

This week, Steve Shelby preached on [Numbers 3:11-51](#).

Today we will see a number of themes emerge from this passage

1. The importance of memory
2. The value of substitution
3. The value of work

### The Importance of Memory & Substitution

- We can overlook the importance of the exodus to the Old Testament people of God. So, the very choosing of the firstborn to belong to the Lord was a way of remembering what God had done. God required first-born as an offering, yes- but also as a remembrance of what He had done.
- God chose the Levites to act as the first-born for all of Israel. In all of their dealing with God the principles of memory and substitution were at work.
- All of this points to the necessity of our needing to be redeemed and the fact that God sees to it that the redemption price is paid for everyone.

### Finally, the Value of Work

- Not only is there a census or counting of the tribe and clans of Levi, but jobs and responsibilities are assigned.
  - Gershon guarded and took care of the tent, the hangings and the cords
  - Kohath guarded and took care of the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, vessels and screens
  - Merari guarded the frames, bars, pillars, bases and 'all their accessories for the tabernacle and for the court.
- Chapter 4 lays out with more specificity what each clan was to do.
- Just look at one example: "The clans of the sons of Kohath were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle, with Elizaphan the son of Uzziel as chief of the fathers' house of the clans of the Kohathites. And their guard duty involved the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels of the sanctuary with which the priests minister, and the screen; all the service connected with these. And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the chiefs of the Levites, and to have oversight of those who kept guard over the sanctuary. To Merari belonged the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the Mushites: these are the clans of Merari." ([Numbers 3:29-33](#))
- They were charged with guarding, caring for and carrying all these implements and parts of the tabernacle.
- What makes this worthwhile at all? God identifies them as His ("the Levites shall be mine", v.12).
- What made this work meaningful and valuable was because they belonged to God. Their ownership by God made what they did valuable. They were valuable (first), and that made their work valuable.
- Work matters.
- Because God calls His people to labor.
- "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work.'" ([John 4:34](#))