



This week, we launched our brand-new sermon series called, “Faith FORward Future.” Pastor Bruce started by saying that, “Faith more often than not is sometimes a little blind. Sometimes it’s about going backwards before we go forward. The future is for the most part is unknown. Yet the object of our faith is God who sees everything when we cannot (cf. Heb. 11:1). (You can watch the sermon clip of the intro from 1-2:20)

The focus of the message was on Elijah, who was an unconventional character with an unconventional faith story (cf. 1 Kings 17:1-9 (Pastor Bruce read this text from 3:28 to 4:26); 18:16-40). Considering his experience, Pastor Bruce asked, “How do we have faith moving forward for the future with that kind of reality?”

Pastor Bruce also noted that, “God has a way of doing things at the most unexpected times, and in the most unprecedented ways, with the most unconventional people to build our faith.”

A couple of take-aways (video clip from 5:45 to 13:20) that we see from this story is as follows:

1. The God who gives, also takes away.

In the story, God sent Elijah to a brook in the middle of a drought, but what began as a blessing ended up drying up. We learned a couple of key things from this experience. We learned that, “When God blesses us it often means he is doing it to build our faith for something bigger” and “The God who gives water can also withhold water – but he has a bigger plan.”

2. The end of a blessing was a direct result of an answered prayer.

Prayer is vital in our walk with God. Elijah was living in the middle of his own answered prayer. From this we learned that, “The end of one blessing doesn’t cancel out God’s plan for us, rather it aligns us with God’s bigger plan,” and that, “God allows the end of one blessing in our lives as it is necessary for the big picture.”

Wrapping up the message, Pastor Bruce revealed three key truths that we can take and apply to our lives (available to watch from 13:59-15:49). These are:

1. Dry brooks teach us that there is a bigger picture.
2. Dry brooks teach us to trust God blindly.
3. A dry brook is God’s presence, not neglect.

Take some time to discuss these questions with your Small Group, with your spouse, with your family, and/or friends:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What stood out to you from today's message?**
- 2 What makes Elijah's Faith unconventional? What are other examples of unconventional stories of faith in the Bible? What do these stories tell us about God? About us?**
- 3 Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." We know that God sees everything when we cannot. What does that do for our faith when our future is unknown?**
- 4 What are some examples of "dry brooks?" Have you ever faced a dry brook in your life?**

**FAITH
FORWARD
FUTURE**

As we continue in this series, please keep be prayerful about where God is leading us, and where God is leading you personally, as well. Why not take some time right now to pray in your small group about Bethesda's future and our role in moving forward by faith.

God has a plan and a purpose for Bethesda and for all who call Bethesda home. We will move forward into the future He has planned for us as we walk by faith and not by sight.