

Check out the service at www.fpcd.org.

We embark today on a journey. This journey is called “Crossings.” That name in itself tells us that we do not journey alone. We journey with God.

Journeys have a beginning. The biggest journey is called life—the journey from birth to death. But in your life journey, you also have invitations to other journeys. Some are determined for you. Let’s say your parent is in the military so your journey involves moving wherever your parent is stationed. Or, your journey may be colored by a significant event, like getting married or having a child, or the premature death of your spouse. Perhaps your parents are missionaries and you move to another country; or you cannot live with your parents and you are sent to live in a boarding school. Or perhaps you want to be a professional football player and life is sort of centered around that goal.

You get the idea. Journey: you are going someplace.

Part of our life journey is connecting with the One who created us. It is called your faith journey. It is different for every one of us. For the next few months we are talking about God’s journey with us. God initiates it because God initiated the world.

Perhaps you have been in Colorado this summer on top of a mountain and you look up and you can see the entire Milky Way and it takes your breath away. Or maybe you have been on the beach in the evening when the moon was full, its light dancing on the waters as the waves ripple in and you are mesmerized. I was in a small town in Missouri where city lights aren’t too bright and the sunset and stars coming out seem vividly bright, and you feel like you are connecting with the Creator. You feel close to God, as if God speaks and you are filled with awe.

God speaks. God speaks through nature and at unexpected times.

There are times that people report hearing the voice of God or seeing visions of God. The prophet, Isaiah, for example, went into the temple one day and suddenly he saw a vision of God sitting on a throne. And then Paul saw a vision of Jesus on the Damascus Road.

No one else saw the vision; just him. God speaks personally.

If God can create this whole world out of nothing (ex nihilo), if God created you, then God is perfectly capable of speaking to us so that we can hear.

People occasionally hear from God—they receive a call, or get a sense of guidance. It is common enough that even movies are about dreams that come through the voice of God. Take a look. VIDEO of Field of Dreams

Living by faith is often like the video. Build what? Who will come? It seems sort of like a blind journey. So let’s join a man named Abram as God extends to him an invitation to faith.

When Abram was LEAST EXPECTING IT, God spoke. He didn't say something simple like, "Hey dude. I see you are doing pretty well there. Learning to read and write (which they did in UR of the Chaldees, where there were libraries and schools), married, taking care of your nephew."

God didn't say, "I see you are living right, not hurting anyone, good job, carry on."

No, God said something radical:

"Leave your country, your family, and your father's home for a land that I will show you" (Gen 12:1).

Very sparse.

Perhaps he was in a field, like Ray, in the "Field of Dreams." Ray's message did not tell him what to build or who would come. It was only "He will come." The message was only revealed as Ray moved forward in faith.

Leave your country, your family, and your father's home for a land that I will show you.

Those words led Abram along a new path because his path was crossing with God's.

Faith is not being on your own path any longer.

What path in your past do you need to leave? Perhaps it was a path imposed on you by others, or a path that has damaged you, and you long for something new.

Perhaps you need a place to belong.

There don't seem to be any qualifications you have to have, or anything in particular you have to be.

God's invitation to Abram was simply leave the past, his heritage, all that was behind that identified him, for a new beginning. That's radical.

That's what Genesis means. We know about the first beginning, how it was good, but then the Fall, and death and violence entered the world, from the first family. What to do? God began a dream to recreate and restore His world. It would happen through a particular family, Abram and Sarai's family.

All we know about the country where they lived was it had an advanced culture where there were schools and libraries, and worshipped many gods. Abram could probably read and write.

We know something else about Abram and his wife Sarai. They had no children. They were barren. Thus, they had come to the end of the line. And, Abram's father had died. So he didn't really have a future. But God crossed Abram and Sarai's path and said, *leave all that past and I'll give you something.*

God gave him this FANTASTIC promise for a future.

If you had nothing, would the offer of a new future entice you? Another way of looking at this is you don't have to bring a thing to have a life of faith.

The offer is "Come as you are." In a few minutes we sing this song by David Crowder:

Come out of sadness
From wherever you've been
Come broken hearted
Let rescue begin
Come find your mercy
Oh sinner come kneel
Earth has no sorrow
That heaven can't heal

Don't you think that Abram and Sarai were sad because they had no children? But the offer is to leave that "country" and enter God's "country." God meant that literally. It is also a metaphor for heavenly territory.

The crossroad is the intersection of heaven—God, and earth—you.

It is the intersection of believing more than you see, of praying for miracles. God has not made the world with a huge wall between himself and us. God created the world with the intention of walking with you. But, in a sinful world, we tend to not see God. We tend to cut ourselves off from listening for God.

But we were made with a longing for God inside, so to ignore God is to cut out part of our hearts and minds. When we seek to live our lives for ourselves, we may have a lot of things, but we will not find peace.

But God's invitation is to take God's new path. Here's what God said:

I'll make you a great nation and bless you.
I'll make you famous; you'll be a blessing.
I'll bless those who bless you; those who curse you I'll curse.
All the families of the Earth will be blessed through you (Gen 12:3-4).

"So Abram left just as God said . . . Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot with him, along with all the possessions and people they had gotten in Haran, and set out for the land of Canaan and arrived safe and sound" (Gen 12:4-6).

God led him. It was an adventure. God kept reiterating the promise, like someone bubbling over with this gift. "I will give this land to your children." Abram built an altar . . . and prayed. . . . Abram kept moving, steadily making his way south, to the Negev" (v. 7-9).

We too must think about this. Whatever culture you are in, whether you are in school or defining your career, or at the height of your career or have retired, listen for the voice of God. Abram was 75. He tells us we are never too old to live with a sense of adventure and a sense of what God has next for us.

He's calling you over
He's pulling you close
With love He surrounds you
He's given you hope.

You can be made new. Have you accepted the invitation?

AMEN