

Title: Thirsting for the Living Water: God's Pursuit of Every Heart

Sermon Summary: Drawing from 1 Kings 17-18, this sermon explores how God relentlessly pursues every human heart, working through circumstances, hardship, and faithful individuals to draw people back to Himself. Using the narratives of Elijah, Obadiah, the widow of Zarephath, and King Ahab, the pastor illustrates that God orchestrates trials not out of cruelty but out of deep, equal love for every person. The sermon challenges believers to move beyond a surface-level faith and to genuinely thirst for God as the source of living water, allowing that living water to flow outward to others. Communion is framed as a reminder that Christ left the comfort of heaven to secure eternal life for humanity, and that changed people are called to change the world around them.

Key Points:

- God loves every person equally, and no one is beyond His pursuit, regardless of how far they have strayed
- Trials and hardships are often God's means of drawing both believers and unbelievers closer to Himself, not expressions of punishment or abandonment
- Genuine faith is demonstrated through obedience and action, as seen in both Elijah's willingness to go where God sent him and Obadiah's courageous protection of 100 prophets at great personal risk
- Many believers remain spiritually immature, accepting only the part of God that offers forgiveness while failing to pursue a deeper, growing relationship with Him
- God works through ordinary, flawed people to reach others, and a transformed life is one of the most powerful witnesses available to a believer
- Americans in particular are prone to seeking God only in crisis, having grown comfortable enough with earthly provision that they rarely hunger and thirst for God
- The image of living water, rooted in Jeremiah and fulfilled in Christ, calls believers not just to receive God's presence but to let it flow outward to those around them

Scripture Reference:

- 1 Kings 17-18, covering Elijah's confrontation with Ahab, the drought, the widow of Zarephath, and the introduction of Obadiah
- Jeremiah 2:13, in which God identifies Himself as the spring of living water and rebukes Israel for forsaking Him in favor of broken cisterns that cannot hold water
- Jeremiah 17:13, which warns that those who forsake God, the spring of living water, will be written in the dust
- John 4:10, in which Jesus offers the woman at the well living water
- John 7:37-38, in which Jesus invites the thirsty to come to Him and promises that streams of living water will flow from within those who believe

Stories:

- Elijah declaring a drought to King Ahab and being sustained by ravens at a brook, illustrating God's provision for His faithful servants even in extreme circumstances
- Elijah and the widow of Zarephath, whose jar of meal and supply of oil did not run out, and whose son was later raised from the dead, leading her to declare that Elijah was truly a man of God
- Obadiah, the palace administrator under King Ahab, who secretly hid 100 prophets of God in two caves and supplied them with food and water at enormous personal risk while Jezebel was systematically killing God's prophets
- The encounter between Elijah and Obadiah in the field, where Obadiah pleads that delivering Elijah's message to Ahab will cost him his life, and Elijah assures him he will present himself to Ahab that very day
- The pastor's personal childhood memory of carrying heavy buckets of water to livestock, used to illustrate the extraordinary physical effort Obadiah must have expended daily to sustain 100 people in hiding with no modern resources