

At the Movies Week of August 10, 2025
Small Group Bible Study: 1st Samuel 3:1-10
Forrest Gump

If members of your group did not hear Pastor Doug's Sermon, encourage them to do so. You can find the sermons on the Woodside Home Page (typically posted on Mondays). I also included a one page summary of spiritual themes in Forrest Gump below.

Bible Study Discussion Questions

Read together 1st Samuel 3:1-10

1. What do you think – does each person have a destiny?
2. Do you make your own destiny or is it written for you?
3. Forrest says 'maybe it's both.' How would that work? What would that be like?
4. What are your thoughts about the difference between a Destiny and a Calling?
5. If God is speaking, what might get in the way of hearing Him?
6. What would help us hear Him more?
7. Have you ever felt God communicated with you? How did it happen? What was it like? What did you do?
8. How can you help yourself confirm that what you are hearing is from God?
9. What did the feather symbolize to you? Many believe it's a nudge for the audience to consider whether we believe our own "floating" is truly random, or if we trust there's a larger hand guiding the wind. Agree? Disagree? Share your thoughts on this.

Forrest Gump: A Spiritual Journey

Forrest Gump tells the life story of a man with a low IQ but an extraordinary heart. From his childhood in Alabama, through decades of historical events, Forrest's life is marked by chance encounters, remarkable achievements, and an unwavering devotion to his childhood friend and love, Jenny.

Forrest's simple-mindedness shields him from cynicism. His honesty, loyalty, and kindness echo Jesus' words in *Matthew 5:8*: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Forrest approaches people without judgment, showing that love and goodness don't depend on intellect or status but on the posture of the heart.

The feather that floats at the start and end of the film serves as a metaphor for divine providence — a reminder that life is shaped by forces beyond our control. Forrest never strives to manipulate his future; instead, he faithfully takes the next step, trusting life's direction. Like *Proverbs 3:5-6*, his story demonstrates the peace that comes from trusting God's guidance, even without understanding the "why" of every event. Through all life's twists, Forrest remains committed — to Jenny, to his mother, to his friends. His enduring loyalty mirrors the biblical call to "love one another deeply" (*1 Peter 4:8*). His constancy contrasts with the instability around him, showing the quiet strength of faithfulness

Forrest often stumbles into historic moments — meeting presidents, inspiring cultural trends, achieving sports fame — yet he never seeks glory. Spiritually, this reflects how God can use ordinary people in extraordinary ways when they walk in humility and obedience (*Micah 6:8*).

The film doesn't shy away from pain — Forrest loses loved ones, faces loneliness, and wrestles with questions of destiny. But like the feather drifting upward in the final scene, the story closes with a sense of peace and hope. Forrest learns to release the people he loves to God's care, embodying the truth of *Ecclesiastes 3*: "To everything there is a season."

Forrest Gump is more than a life story; it's a parable about trust, humility, and the beauty of letting God's wind carry us where we're meant to go. The film invites viewers to live with open hands, faithful hearts, and a quiet confidence that no matter how unpredictable life feels, there is a divine Author scripting every scene.