

Genesis 6 & 7 *Get in the Ark* 10/1/17

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³ And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth."¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. ¹⁶ Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. ¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. ²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. ²¹ Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them." ²² Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

(Pastor prays)

For several weeks we have been paying close and careful attention to the building drama in Genesis 6. In verses 1-4 God's boundaries for so many things were crossed, and in verse 5 Moses gives us the clearest picture of human depravity in the entire Bible. Then, in verses 6-7 we see a poignant picture of how God hates sin even to the point of judgment – a blotting out of mankind. Verses 8-9 are a nice aside, because in those two verses we see the grace of God in judgment, that although the path of destruction is wide, there is a narrow way of grace pictured in the man named Noah, a path of grace that the New Testament tells us is found in Jesus.

Today I want to take you to the story of Noah and the Ark, but I want to do it a little differently than normal. I don't want us to focus today on the dimensions and capacity of the ark itself or even so much the engineering marvel that it is. The "Ark Encounter"

in Kentucky and the sister organization, the Creation Museum by Ken Ham is a great resource for that.

What I prefer to do is what every Christian sermon should do, point you to God who is holy, Man who is sinful and the grace that saves in Christ. To do that, I want to frame this story using language that Jesus used as He finished the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7, because I believe this story of Noah and his family represents the narrow gate, and the mass of humanity that is wiped out represents the wide gate. I want those of you on the narrow and hard path to be encouraged and strengthened in the grace of God, and I want those of you who are not in Christ, taking the wide gate, to think of your condition and situation and realize that you are standing under the Hoover Dam of God's judgment and the dam is straining to hold back the flood of God's fury. Every second you live and are not in the ark that is Christ, you are in danger.

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14. *Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.*

Grace Is a Great Saving Security

Lost is the 'New Normal'

You feel it if you are here and you are between the ages of 16-35 or so. It's always been that way, but now it is normal. It used to be that the remnants of cultural Christians were at least a facade of acknowledging God. Now, being a practical atheist is the new normal. Or, better said, the new God is the great "mush God" that people love so much because He requires so little. You can live how you want and believe how you want and the great "mush God" will never be offended.

There's nothing new under the sun. Notice how Moses describes the teeming mass of humanity before the flood. Let's read it in Chapter 6 verses 11 & 12. *Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.* Do you see it there? The new normal – corruption and violence. And we have become so desensitized. Cable news has ruined us and we either become emotionally callous or we

develop a sort of spiritual post-traumatic stress disorder and find it hard to function. It's the broad path, the godless path, the path that everybody else is on. It's the passive path. It's the "normal life" path. It's what Jesus was talking about when He talked about the "day of judgment" in Matthew 24:37-39. *For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark,³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*

It's the pursuit of life and the common things we get caught up in. It's the wasted time and blown money and the getting *really good* at things that don't matter. It's being distracted in this life by the transient so that you don't see and think about the eternal. The terrible thing about the broad way is that, if you get on it long enough, it feels normal. It feels right and fulfilling and meaningful. When Jesus talked about the time before the flood, He talked about people eating and drinking and getting married and giving in marriage. That's not trivial. It's meaningful. The broad way of destruction feels right, good, liberating and purposeful and it distracts people right into Hell.

Let me read you a couple of verses. Genesis 6:13, *And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.* Genesis 6:17, *For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.* Genesis 7:4, *For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.* Genesis 7: 19-23 *And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.²⁰ The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep.²¹ And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind.²² Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died.²³ He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.*

The judgment of God, in the form of a worldwide flood, came suddenly and violently when people were just sort of doing their normal routine in life and never stopping to think about God or to wonder where they, or where you, stand in relation to God.

This is difficult for our modern sensibilities to bear up under. But if the ark is a picture of Christ, then the vast majority of people are *not* in the ark. They are in danger because the judgment of God is real, eternal, hopeless and, after death, it's irrevocable. But the hope we have is Jesus, the substitute. He took the judgment of God at the cross. He took it for sinners so that any sinner here who awakens to this truth, that if you repent of your sin and turn away from that and believe, will be saved. Lost is the new normal. Don't be *normal*.

Grace Is the Old Answer

Lost is the new normal but grace is the old answer.

And although grace is free and freeing, it does put us on a narrow and sometimes uncomfortable path. Take Noah in the story. Listen to what is says in chapter 6:14-15. *Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. And now verses 18-20. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. ²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive.*

The instructions are bizarre, difficult, non-sensical and hard to explain. Then in chapter 7 it becomes inconvenient. God tells Noah in Chapter 7:1-5, *Then the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. ² Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, ³ and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. ⁴ For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground."* ⁵ *And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.*

Noah did it. He's 600 years old. All those animals piled into this giant craft. He had to put a roof on it and a window. Can you imagine? All those animals, Noah and his wife, three sons and their wives – eight people in all. That's all who are going to make it.

Grace saves but grace can be lonely. It can feel strange. Being in Christ can be embarrassing. But grace gives a certain strength for obedience. Let me show you the reoccurring theme in Noah's life. In Genesis 6:22, *Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.* Genesis 7:5, *And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.* Genesis 7:16, *And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.*

Grace not only saves us. Grace gives us strength to obey. We don't obey out of sheer will power. I don't have will power enough not to eat a whole bag of ginger snaps. Let me show you what grace does. Two things.

Grace delivers us from judgment. Look at Genesis 7:6-7. *Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. 7 And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood.* See the wording, "escape": to be plucked out of danger and held in safety. That's what it means to be in Christ.

Grace keeps us in love. It keeps us, seals us, secures us. It says in chapter 7:16 that the Lord sealed them in. God did that. There is a reason we say, "the finished work of Christ." It is a work of God, a work of grace. Do you know John 10? You should know John 10, especially 10:27-30. Listen to what Jesus says here: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one.*"

In this story, Noah's ark is the saving and secure grace of God that points us to Christ, without whom you are like all the people who died in the flood. But in Christ, faith in His life, death on the cross and His resurrection saves you from the flood of God's judgment and secures you in the joy of God's love.

Come this morning and get into the ark that is Christ.

(Pastor prays)