



The Sermon

Dr. Michael Staton

Genesis 6:9-22

"The Salvation of God"

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TRANSCRIPT

Open your Bible with me, if you would, to Genesis chapter 6. This is a part of Scripture that is well-known. But it's interesting to me as we prepare to read this passage; it's one of those texts that we often think about with cute Bible stories. It's a text that we talk to our children about, but maybe don't tell them the whole story, and we need to. It's a passage that we have cute figurines. But this is as serious of a passage as we could consider together. This is not, first, a passage about animals and a big boat, it is first a message about the danger of sin and the assurance of judgment, and the dire consequences of ignoring the warning to repent. This is not just about cute drawings and pictures of animals lining up two-by-two, this is about a God who is holy, about humanity who is sinful, about the good grace of God offered and the seriousness of hearing the warning that God gives. My fear is when we talk about Noah's ark that we drift back to second grade vacation Bible School and our minds kind of just settle for this cute, clean, tidy story. My friends, that's not what's in front of us this morning. This is a text that teaches a truth that is so utterly serious. It would demand nothing less than every ounce of our heart and our mind and our attention being fully engaged in nothing other than hearing the word and the message and the warning and the promise.

With that in mind, look with me in Genesis chapter 6. Let's back up to verse 8 where you left off last week, because it's important to understand verse 8 in light of what's coming here: "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man,

blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

"And now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 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. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.' Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him." Would you pray with me?

[Prayer] Lord, for most of us in this room and perhaps for most even watching on livestream this morning, this is a story with which we are quite familiar. As we think of Genesis 6 we have a picture come into our mind of a big boat, an old man, and cute lines of animals walking into the ark. And yet what we have just read has words like "corruption" and "destroy" and "death." We understand, Lord, that whatever is happening in this passage is something that is of such a magnitude that we dare not miss the message You have for us. Give us eyes to see, give us ears to hear, give us hearts to understand, and we pray by Your grace, a will to obey. It's in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen. [End]

Well, this is one of the most serious events recorded in all of Scripture. I wonder if we take it seriously. Do we really believe that this account happened as the Bible said. Now I need you to understand with me this morning that if you're wondering, "Should we really take this as history? Should we really believe this happened? Should we really hold to a literal event described in Genesis 6?" you need to understand that those who the Lord used to record Scripture did. Isaiah refers to this, Ezekiel in chapter 14 refers to this, 1 Chronicles refers to this. Luke records the name of Noah, Peter twice records the name of Noah, the writer of Hebrews took this as literal, and Christ Himself will refer to this.

If you don't believe that this event took place you are simply at odds with the entirety of Scripture, which brings to bear on our hearts today, if we believe the Bible we must consider this text very carefully. In fact, if you were just to open your Bible, if you were able to just read from Genesis to Revelation in one setting you might be surprised how many times you come across this account and across the name of Noah. Sadly, we often get hung up on the parts of this account that are difficult to know. But admittedly, there are some things in Genesis 6 where it's hard to know with exact precision the answer to every single question we have. And sadly, we sometimes get hung up on those elements and miss the very clear revealed truth of the word of God here. Sometimes we read this and we just want to deal with the issue of exactly what did the ark look like and exactly how many animals were there; and that's fine to discuss. But don't miss this very clear teaching from the get-go: God will judge sin.

God's grace is made available, and no unbeliever will escape the wrath of God. Of this we know, that God will judge sin. He in grace offers us salvation, and any unbeliever who does not know the Lord will receive the wrath of God. In fact, the truth of the matter is that if you assigned me to teach Noah's ark to a group of children, if I were going to be faithful to teach the whole story, I'd shutter a bit, because once you get past the old man with a giraffe and trying to figure out, "Were the dinosaurs there?" and, "How big were they?" and, "How did this all fit?" once you get past the cute little storyboard pictures, the message here is quite intense, and it's blood earnest. 11:03, and it teaches us about the sovereignty of God and the holiness of God and the awfulness of our sin, and we must come to Genesis

6 with a level of seriousness and sobriety if we're going to understand all that the Lord has for us here.

As we walk through this passage together let me give you four headings as we do. First, we'll look at the man here: Noah. Noah was pure. Make a note: "Noah was pure." Not perfect, but he was pure. We'll look at his life and his character. When you're looking at the man Noah it describes him as a righteous man. That's what it says in verse 9: "Noah was a righteous man." But understand this is coming right after verse 8, that, "Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." That means he found grace from the Lord. It's the first time this term for "grace" is used here in the scripture Genesis 6:8, "He found grace in the eyes of the Lord," and that is what enabled him to be a righteous man.

When verse 9 says, "These are the generations of Noah," this is a radar to let you know that we are making a transition here in the study of the book of Genesis. This is a new emphasis, and it's going to be now on the life of Noah and all that takes place. When it says that, "he was a righteous man," it's saying that this is how God saw him. This is what grace has done in his life. In fact, it's the first time in Scripture that the word for "righteous" is used, right here in Genesis 6, speaking of Noah.

He was righteous and He preached righteousness. Listen to 2 Peter 2:5, "If He did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly." Noah was righteous and he preached righteousness. He preached a standard of holiness. He preached on the importance of obeying the Word of God and believing in the Word of God. And what we know from the passage is that, "The entire earth" - verse 11 - "was corrupt, and it was filled with violence." Now if you take an earth that is filled with violence and filled with corruption, how do you think they're going to take a preacher of righteousness? If you're filled with mankind who are filled with so much sin and wickedness and corruption that everywhere you go on the known planet is filled with violence, those kinds of people do not want to hear a man speak about righteousness and right living.

Understand that Noah's message, his sermon would have been utterly despised and thoroughly rejected by all who would not only see his life, but hear anything that he would have to say. In fact, as I read Genesis 6, one of the first thoughts that comes to my mind is, "How in the world did Noah survive for a century to build the ark?" If you live in a society filled with violence, filled with bloodshed, filled with proud, evil, wicked men, and up against that backdrop of darkness and sin there is one man here who is seen as a righteous, blameless man, you know that the crowds hated him.

I think it's only the hand of God that even kept Noah alive. In fact, Martin Luther would say of this very situation that, "God surely had to perform more than one miracle just to keep him alive." And it's against this background of wickedness and corruption and violence that he preaches righteousness, and it says in verse 9, "He was blameless in his generation." This is in his dealings with people. He's not perfect. You're going to see after the flood that Noah himself is far from perfect. But the language here, "being righteous and blameless," means that he was well-rounded in his character.

We could say that he was a wholesome man, he was a pure man, not sinless, not perfect, but he had found grace from the Lord, and it produced a righteousness in him. And in his dealings with the Lord and his dealings with people, this scripture records, "He was righteous and blameless." And you need to understand and remember that the day in which Noah lived is so filled with sin and wickedness that it's going to bring about a worldwide flood, which means Noah lived at a time in human history as filled with sin and decay and corruption as the world's ever known; and yet in the midst of that world, Noah lived a righteous, blameless life.

So hear me close, friends, I know for those of you who are in school, it is a difficult day to stand for Christ. I know for those of you in college, it is a difficult world to be known as a Christian. And for those of you that are raising children and those of you who run businesses, this is a hard day to make a public stand for the things of God. I know that's true. But just understand, if Noah can live in a generation so filled with violence and so filled with corruption and so filled with sin that it's going to bring about a

worldwide flood as the wrath of God is poured out, if in that world in that day Noah can be a beacon of righteousness, then in this day so can you. So many times I fear in our culture today that we convince ourselves that, well, we have to kind of go easy on our Christianity or we have to go quiet on our beliefs because the world is so difficult and so fierce and so strongly against us that we can't really let people know who we are, we've got to just kind of blend in with the world.

My friends, Noah does not blend in. If Noah blends in with the world, he perishes in the flood. But God was gracious, and God has saved him out of the world as a believer, just like He has you. And because of that, you and I today are to live as Philippians 2:15 says, that, "We are to be blameless and innocent children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." If Noah can be blameless in his world, by God's grace believers in this day can shine like lights in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation.

And it says very simply in verse 9, this short sentence, "Noah walked with God." He's spent about a century building this ark because of the coming judgment. And I think the more that Noah thought of the coming judgment, the more that Noah wanted to obey and build the ark. And the more that he built the ark, the more that he took the brunt of the laughter and the scoffing of the people. But as he thought about the coming judgment, he knew he wanted to obey God. He thought about the grace that God had poured out to him, which made him want to obey. And when he thinks about the coming judgment, it makes him willing to stand out and endure whatever persecution may come his way, because he believed in the promise of God, and he knew that the judgment was real, and he was resting in what only God could provide. And I think about believers in our world today, and you just see example after example after example lining up of people who are far more interested in the favor of the world than they are the pleasure of God.

To be sure, there's something for us to see here in the character of Noah; not a perfect man, but a pure man, a wholesome man, a blameless man, a righteous man, who walked with God. And this man was given a mission:

his mission was to build the ark. And the Lord tells him, "This is how it's to be done." And just the physical work alone of building the ark would be daunting. I mean, full confession: if I went to the store and bought a grill, and you gave me a grill with step-by-step instructions, within about 15 minutes I'm out, I'm done. I'll go to McDonald's, I don't need to cook on the grill, it's too much - too many pieces; I can't handle it.

Noah is going to be at work for a century building this thing, building something that the world has never seen. I mean, I don't know about you, but you put a bicycle together and usually have like a bag of 15 leftover parts. He's going to build this giant box for a century, and he's going to have to dedicate a hundred years of his life to this work and to this calling. And can you imagine, not only the physical labor involved, but how many years and people making scoffing, laughing comments must he have to endure. I mean, how hard would it be year after year, after year, after year, and decade after decade of people going by and saying, "There's the fool Noah. Look what he's doing, he's wasting his life talking about some flood, talking about some wrath of God; he's going to build this giant box to survive." And year after year, and decade after decade, the laughing just increases, the jokes intensify, and it's not just that they would laugh at him, they would hate him.

How do we know? Because he was a preacher of righteousness, and the world was filled with corruption. Corrupt men do not want to hear about righteousness. He would be laughed at. But you have to believe far more than being laughed at. He would be threatened and persecuted; and he just keeps building day after day. He just keeps building. He's building a giant boat on dry ground in a world that has seen water but never seen a storm. What a foolish man. That's the way the world would see it anyway.

But this man had a message, and his message was righteousness. Second Peter 2:5 referred to him as a "herald of righteousness." He just kept preaching the simple message that God gave him over and over and over. In fact, if you read the Old and New Testament accounts that speak of Noah, it's really pretty clear that he just had a very short sermon, and that was the righteousness of God, which tells us, "God is holy, man is sinful, judgment

is coming, and you must repent." That's the message of righteousness. This is just day after day, after day, after day, for a hundred years, just a preacher of righteousness, "God is holy, you are sinful, judgment is coming, and you must repent," over and over and over.

And what is it that motivates him? Catch this part of the account here. The only thing Noah has to go on is the promise of God, that's it. It's just the promise of God. God has spoken to him, God has made a covenant with him, God has by some means revealed His plan to Noah and given Noah the message of righteousness, and that is the only thing Noah has to go on, just the word of God. Hebrews 11:7 records this of Noah. It says, "Noah warned people of things not yet seen," and because he did, the people scoffed at him because they hadn't seen what he had talked about.

"A flood's coming; what's a flood?" "Well, it's a big, giant storm." "What's a storm?" "Well, the waters are going to stack up and build up." "What are you talking about, Noah?" "Well, because God is holy." "What do you mean you believe in God? What do you mean judgment is coming?" And he warned them, Hebrews says, of things not yet seen. He's telling them what is about to come: "This storm is coming. This ark is a place of safety, it is a place of deliverance from the wrath of God that is about to be poured out upon planet earth," and the people just thought, "What an absolute foolish man."

"How do you know it's going to happen, Noah." He's only got one card: "The word of God has declared this." That's it. And when people say, "Well, who else said this? What do the meteorologists say? What do the scientists say? What do the sociologists say about this?" The only think he has to say is, "God has spoken."

If only the church in our day would be as convinced that the word of God is certain, sure, and true as Noah's day, this world would be turned upside-down. But we've got so many men who stand in pulpit who just frankly are not convinced that the word of God is sufficient, and it's producing churches that have a Bible and say, "What else do we have to confirm this?"



What else do we have from the world?" Let me tell you something: for Noah, all he needed was the word of God. I wonder for you, do you really believe the word of God is true? Noah did, and it sustained him for a hundred years of doing what God had called him to do.

The only anchor Noah had was the assurance of the word of God. And let me say it this way: Noah governed his life by the future promise of God. It guided everything he did for a hundred years. He turned everything in his life upside-down to make sure he was responding in obedience to one thing, and that is the future promise of God.

Do you see, believer, that that is the way that we are to live today? Christ has said, "I'm coming again," and you need to be ready. Are you living today according to the future promise of God, or are you just busy with life, fitting in some Bible reading when you can, going to church when you can? I mean, after all, you're at church on Labor Day weekend. I mean, either you're the super-committed or the poor who can't afford to go on vacation. Either way, I need to pray for you. But are you really governing everything about your life according to the promise of God?

For so many believers, when one coworker mocks us, we go silent. When one family member tells us they disagree with our faith, we never bring it up again. When we just have one person laugh at us, that's enough to make us think, "I just need to go underground." And here's Noah, day after day, year after year, decade after decade, preaching righteousness, building his ark on nothing more than the foundation that this is what God has said. What if we lived with such an unwavering commitment?

Noah was pure. Number Two: "Corruption was pervasive. Corruption was pervasive." We see it all over the text, verse 11: "The earth was corrupt, it was filled with violence. God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all the flesh had corrupted their way on the earth." Verse 13: "I've determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence. Behold, I will destroy them." Corruption was pervasive. The word "corrupt" here can be translated to mean "destroy." In fact, in Jeremiah 2:30, this

same word is used here to describe a ravenous lion. That's what corruption is, it's just out to destroy, and it just destroys its victim.

And do you notice in verse 11, "The earth was filled with violence. The earth was filled with violence." In other words, you can't get away from it. You can't move out of town and get away from it, because everywhere there's humanity there's violence and corruption; you can't escape it. Whoever it is that would pass by and see Noah building his boat would not be people merely who were willing to scoff, they were people whose heart was filled with violence; and if they would be allowed would want nothing more than execute their violence against the preacher of righteousness. It's the grace of God that opens Noah's eyes to the truth, and it's the grace of God that sustains him.

Verse 12: "God saw the earth and it was corrupt." It's worth nothing that even though humanity at this point has completely forgotten God, yet God has not forgotten humanity's sin. And we live in a day today that wants to pretend there is no God. Mark my words, my friend, the Lord has not forgotten the wicked. Every word, every deed stored up, and if not covered by the grace of Jesus Christ, the wrath of God will be poured out upon the wicked. They can pretend He does not exist. And has well been written in years past, you may temporarily ignore God. You cannot permanently avoid Him. He saw the earth, and He saw their sin. We don't know exactly how God spoke to Noah, we just know that He communicated His word to him, and Noah believed it, verse 13: "I will destroy the earth," which tells us God takes sin seriously.

Noah was pure, corruption was pervasive. Thirdly: "Salvation was provided." Verses 14 to 22 he's told how to build the ark. First, He says, "Here's how to build it. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood." This is – if you read the description, he's just building a giant box. It's not a boat so much as it is a giant box. It's designed for capacity, not for speed. It needs to float, not cut through the water. It's not trying to get somewhere, it's just rising up above the wrath of the flood.

The term for "gopher wood" here is not one that we can be completely clear. You can read all kinds of historians and scholars that try to conjecture what that may be; frankly, we just don't know for sure exactly what that is referring to. But I will tell you, it's something worth noting here. The word translated here as "ark," it's a different word than you find in the Old Testament talking about the ark of the covenant. In fact, there's only two places you're going to see this word that we get in English for "ark." You're going to get it here in Genesis 6-9, and you're going to see it again in Exodus chapter 2, when Moses is put in the basket in the ark.

There's a connection here between Noah and Moses. It says of Moses' day that he is to be put in a basket, and you put the child in it, and the basket's going to have pitch on it; same thing you find here in Genesis 6. Noah and Moses are both delivered by God's grace through the ark. It's the box of safety because of the unique preservation of God. This ark in chapter 6 of Genesis is just built to float. Doesn't need sails, doesn't need a motor, didn't need to travel anywhere, it just needs to float. The only rudder the ark has is the hand of God, and that's all that it needs.

Verse 14 says, "Make rooms in the ark." This gives two things that are going on. One, of course, it separates the animals from each other as necessary. The other thing it does is provide some balance, so that if the water moves the ark on one side you don't have all the animals going over to one side, that would not be good; so you build rooms to separate them for safety, but also provides balance.

Verse 14, "Cover it inside and out with pitch." It's an interesting word here. For time's sake, we'll just move pretty quickly. But the word "pitch" means to cover, to provide a covering, to provide an atonement, a covering for what's going on here. Exact same word used in Exodus 2 for Moses. They will be safe under the covering that God has provided.

In the garden, Adam and Eve's sin in Genesis 3, and they tried to cover themselves, cover their own shame; and God said, "I will not accept it." But God provided a covering for them. And now God will provide a covering for

Noah. And in Christ, God has provided a covering for you. The only safety you need is the covering of the promise of God.

"Here's how you're to build it," verse 15: "300 cubits long, 50 cubits in breadth, 30 cubits in height." If you read on, the language here, a cubit can have several different lengths that are associated with it. The shortest that you see referred to is about 18 inches. And so if you were to take this at its minimum, the ark is going to be about 450 feet long – it's a football field and-a-half. It's going to be 75 feet wide, it's going to be 45 feet high. This is a huge, huge box.

And it's interesting, because in the ancient world, no one would have known how to build this. In fact, history tells us it was just a couple centuries ago before a vessel of this size was built. How would he have ever known how to build that? How would he have ever known the dimensions necessary so it doesn't capsize? Well, because the Lord told him; that's it. This could have never happened apart from the revelation of God.

I read a bunch of different sources the last couple of weeks, and I don't know who takes the time to figure these things out, but you read these different sources and scholars that try to calculate how big a cubit is, and how big the square footage is, and how many train boxcars that would equate to, and how many sheep that would equate to, and it's a pretty common understanding of the description here that the ark could have held up to 125,000 sheep. Why sheep? Because that's a pretty average animal – some are bigger, some are smaller.

And scholars tell us that with the dimensions of the boat with the animals that would have been in it, no more than about 55 or 60 percent of the ark would have been filled up with animals; the rest for food and living quarters for Noah and for his family. There's three decks – a bottom deck, a middle, and an upper deck. Here's the point of the ark: it was built sturdy and stable and able to be seaworthy, a giant floating box. Doesn't need to go from here to there, just needs to rise to the top when the floodwaters hit.

Verse 16 says, "Make a roof of the ark and finish it to a cubit above." You can read some different understandings of according to the language of what that may refer to. But what I think that refers to is a small window that likely went all the way around the ark. It would have done two things. It would have provided some light to come in, which would have been extremely helpful, and it would have also provided for ventilation, which if you're cooped up with a bunch of animals for a long time is really a gift from God. That's how to build it.

Here's a bigger question: "Why are you building it?" Verse 17, here's why: "For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which the breath of life is found under heaven. That's why you're building it, because destruction's coming."

"Behold, I will bring a flood of waters." In fact, the language is insightful for us here. The term for "flood," the Hebrew term for "flood," this is not the word that would generally be used for rain or eventually used for just merely a storm, it's a technical term that refers to this flood. In fact, it's only this word for "flood" will only be found one other time in the Psalms, referring to Noah's day. And what is he to do? Believe and obey, believe and obey.

Verse 18: "I will establish My covenant with you." This is God establishing His covenant. Noah has found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and because of grace he believes and he obeys. In verses 18 and 19 tells him exactly what to do: "Come into the ark, bring the animals in here with you." The animals at this point don't need to be scattered all throughout the world. The climate before the flood is very, very different than the climate after the flood, so you don't need to have animals living in only certain parts of the world, and so they're not having to come from that far. And the Lord is the one causing the animals to come and do this. Why? Because of instinct. God has put into the animals that come into the ark the instinct somehow to know, I believe, that the storm is coming.

Just like today, you can watch certain animals, and you know they know before you do the storm is coming. Why? Because God put that into the animals. Why? Because they need to go from where they were to come into the ark. Noah's not going out there with giant live traps marking off his list, "Got that one. Got that one." God's causing them to come to the ark. God brings the animals, God brings the flood. This is all the handiwork of God.

And it says that, "Noah did all that God commanded him," verse 22. This is reaffirming Genesis 7:5, 9, and 16 43:30, which tell us Noah did not cut corners. Noah didn't say to himself, "This is just too much work; I'm going to build two levels, not three." Noah doesn't say, "You know what; I'm going to bring in most of the animals, but not all." He didn't say, "I'll make this 400 feet wide, 450 is just too much. After all, have you seen the price of lumber today?" He doesn't cut any corners like you and I do.

That's how we do it, right? You're going to go build a project. You sketch it out, and the finished product is much smaller because it was harder than you thought, more expensive than you thought, the work is just too much. Not for Noah. Noah did all that God commanded him in a violent world filled with corruption, filled with scoffers. For a century he preaches the command to be righteous and to repent, and outside of his family not one responds. He doesn't change the message, he doesn't change the mission, he did all that God commanded. Surely that's helpful for us in our world today. In a world where we try to evaluate ministry success by the most worldly of standards, in a world where people change the message and change the mission because they're just not getting the results that they wanted to see. Noah cuts no corners and does all that God commanded and has nothing to show for it except a giant rectangular box.

"Noah, how's the last century of life been for you?" "It's been good." "What have you accomplished? I see you got a big box there." "Yeah, I'm ready for the storm." "What's a storm?" "Well, when all the rain pours down." "What are you talking about?" "Well, God told me to do this." "You must be a special kind of crazy, Noah. Congratulations on the last century of your life, a hundred years really well-spent. While you're talking and preaching

about your righteous and repentance, you might want to check your own mind, because you may have done a little crazy here, Noah."

But Noah did all that God commanded him. Noah did all that God commanded him in the midst of violence, in the midst of corruption, and with no visible response, he did all God commanded him, including – as you're going to see next week – Noah and his family get in the ark a week before it rains. Why would you do that? I'm not sure about this part of the text is about. But I'll tell you one thing I know about in Oklahoma: we know about storm shelters. And some people get kind of skittish. But with my wife Marcy, you don't go into the storm shelter unless the tornado is on your driveway. There's no such thing as, "Let's get there just in case." Marcy needs to see a vortex and be able to touch it, and then we might need to get in the shelter, because the shelter's gross.

"Who wants to be in a shelter? Who wants to be in a box? Who wants to be confined?" "Yeah, but the storm may come." "Yeah, but it may not." "We'll get in the shelter just in case." "Why? If the storm misses us, I don't want to spend ten minutes in the storm shelter."

Noah and his family will get there a week before it even starts to rain. Why? Because God told them to. Do you really believe and obey the promise and command of God? We take God's word like it's advice, like, "God, You're a pretty smart guy, I might consider that sometime. You told me to forgive my enemies; I may try that sometime. You told me to be generous and give things away; that's not bad advice, I'll consider that. You told me to be patient and forgiving and longsuffering, and I might try that at some point." That's the way that we so often take the word of God, just good advice from a smart guy who maybe knows what He's talking about, but maybe a little out-of-touch because of the world in which we live in. I mean, after all, this is a different day, right?

It's not a different day. Sin, corruption, violence is as old as humanity. Don't give yourself an excuse to disobey God because you've convinced yourself the world has somehow changed. If there's one thing Noah tells us,

it's the world has not changed. We are filled with sin, God is gracious, sin will be judged, and this world needs people to proclaim the message of righteousness. And Noah did all that God commanded.

And so, quickly, I give you just one fourth, brief, final thought here, and that is that here in the story of Noah and the ark, "The cross is pictured." I don't want to push this too far, but the New Testament picks up on this. The cross was the plan of God, the ark was the plan of God. In fact, you might make a note here, 1 Peter 3.

Let me read this to you real quick in the New Testament, 1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which He went and proclaimed the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body," - it's not water that saves us - "but an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Just as in the days of Noah, salvation came to the ark; so in the days of Christ, they come through His work; all of it about the promise of God.

On the ark you find a single door. The door, by the way, is laid on its side. Why? Because it becomes a ramp. That door lays down, and so the animals have a ramp to enter the ark. But just one door. As Christ said in John 10, "I am the door of the sheep. I am the door. If anyone enters through Me he will be saved." You see a picture of the cross here in the world's declaration of foolishness. First Corinthians 1:18 says, "The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it's the power of God." This is exactly what happened in Noah's day. The world scoffed at Him. "He spoke" - Hebrews 11 says - "of things not yet seen," and the people deemed him nothing more than a fool. And yet when the rains came down, all the foolish were outside, and only those who entered by the one door were saved.



Listen, you do not judge truth based on how the world responds, you base truth based on what God has said. Our world needs to hear that so much. Truth is not determined by a vote, truth is not determined by popularity, and truth is not determined by response; truth is determined by the very word of God.

And I'll tell you one other way that I think this pictures the cross: it's the exclusivity. Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life; nobody comes to the Father except through Me." Noah's ark gives us at least a foreshadowing, drives us to that revelation. You've got all these people who say, "Noah, you're a fool. Your message is ridiculous. Your sermon or righteousness has no converts. Your ministry's been a failure. You say that judgment's coming. We don't see any rain. Now you've locked yourself up in this big box and it's not even stormy outside."

And can you imagine once the heavens open up and the earth begins to flood, screams and the shrills of those who are outside, as one inch of rain gathers on the ground, two inches: "What's going on?" Three inches: "This is getting serious." Four inches: "I wonder if we ought to get in that big box." Five, six, seven inches: "It's happening." And it keeps going and going, and before the floodwaters get past their necks, don't you know they're outside of the ark, banging, "Let us in! Let us in!" It's too late, the door has closed, and only those who entered by the one door were found safe. "But didn't we say, 'Lord, Lord'? Didn't we prophesy in Your name? Didn't we do many works and wonders and claim it to be in Your name!" "But on that day it'll be too late, because I never knew you. You didn't enter by the narrow gate, you were on the broad path that led to destruction."

My dear friends, you don't measure your success based on the response of people, you carry out your mission based on the promise of God. Judgment is coming, and for most, by the time they realize it, it's too late. Hebrews 9, "It's appointed to man to die once, and then the judgment." That's why you keep serving and praying and giving and striving, because of the future promise of God.

In conclusion, you know what the name Noah means? It means rest, rest. Noah was given physically as demanding of a job as you'll read about. His life was a life among people filled with violence and corruption. Can you imagine what it would be like if you got out of a storm shelter to find out that everything with breath in it had perished, and only you and those that came out of your shelter survived? And yet he is a picture of rest.

And what of God in all this? I told you earlier that this technical term for the flood that we find in Genesis 6 is only used one other time in Scripture, it's in Psalm 29:10 that says, "The Lord sits enthroned over the flood." Not just the rain, the flood, Noah's flood. The Lord sits enthroned in that. And have you ever wondered if Noah was righteous and blameless, why didn't God just call him home? I mean, if He would have just called Noah home, it would have saved him a century of building and gathering wood, and having to endure all the jokes and the scoffing. Why didn't God just call him home? He's done that, right? You've covered that. We've read about that, Genesis 5:24, God just was there with Enoch, and Enoch walked with God, and God just called him home.

Why didn't God just call Noah home? I'll tell you why: because of Genesis 3:15. There must be a redeemer. Noah was a righteous man, but he was not a savior. For anyone to spend eternity with God in heaven we must have a perfect payment for our sin. And on that ark, all of the earth's future hope is huddled under one single roof. And do you notice that you can get rid of animals except the ones on the ark, and you can even have all the wicked in the world perish, you've got only eight people. And Noah was a good, righteous, blameless man, but he was not sinless. And you can get humanity down to eight people, and does sin go away? It does not. These eight believed, and they found grace in the eyes of God; but sin had not been done away with. The rest of the world that gets populated through this family eventually becomes us.

And with all due respect, I would say sin is alive and well, wouldn't you? No, because we need a final perfect Savior: the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 24, hear the words of Jesus: "As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 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, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away; so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

So I say to you, do not mistake God's patience for His indifference. Grace is available, but judgment is coming. Enter by the one door (Jesus) into the one ark of safety (salvation). When Christ returns, will you find your life to have built on something that will keep you secure, or will it sink? I urge you to repent and run to Christ. Repent, and enter by the one door, the One who is the way, the truth, and the life: the Lord Jesus - a Savior for all who believe, and the Judge of all mankind.

It's sunny today, but soon this world will hear the sound of thunder, and the rainbow around the throne will begin to fade in the sense of once again the judgment of God will fall: perfect, complete judgment, when all sins will be paid, either in hell by the unbeliever or heaven being covered by Christ, the door by which every one of us must enter.

[Prayer] Lord, we thank You for Your word this morning. We pray that Your Spirit would cause it to take root in our hearts, that we would not only hear it, but we would respond in obedience. Thank You that You have provided salvation in Your grace. May we live our life doing all You've commanded us to do, for the glory of Your Son, we ask in His name. Amen.