

The Open and Shut Door

If you are around here very long you will see that on Sunday mornings, I have a hundred things going on ... from Sunday School, to Worship Music, as well as Preaching ...

... that is one of the wonderful privileges of pastoring a small church

... you get to try your hand at a lot of things

But, because of that sometimes I fail to communicate some things well.

So let me say this before I preach today ...

At the end of the sermon, if you are not saved, I am going to invite you to Come to Jesus and be saved ...

... Just as Jesus said it some 2000 years ago, “Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

... Justin will be up front to receive you and pray with you if, if you so desire ...

... Maybe you have been saved, but you have yet to be baptized, I want to encourage you to come up and just let Justin know you desire to be saved ... and we will set a time to do just that.

There is nothing more wonderful than someone coming to know Jesus as Lord and no celebration more glorious than the baptism of a believer....

The Open and Shut Door

Today I want to tell you the story of Noah and the great flood

... our story begins in Genesis 6:5 about 1650 years after Adam.

Over the years the people in the world had been getting increasingly more evil and wicked

... at this time there is a man named Noah who is around 600 years old.

Here we are told that *the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Gen. 6:5)*

Sin has become so prevalent that God is deeply grieved

... humanity had become so perverse that the destruction of humanity was inevitable.

Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. (Gen. 6:13)

God reveals this plan to 600 year old Noah for 2 reasons ...

First, because Noah is a righteous man and **second** because God intends for the human race to survive through Noah's family.

God tells Noah the earth is filled with so much violence the end of humanity is in sight ...

... and God tells Noah to build a great boat ... an ark.

... Noah, following God's meticulous instructions, Noah builds this ark and then, along with his family and many animals, they all get on this boat ...

... and then God shuts the door of the boat.

... Now keep in mind this boat is not docked at the river's edge

... As best we can tell there is no body of water large enough or nearby to accommodate this great vessel.

... You can imagine how ludicrous this must have appeared to everyone

... It took Noah 120 years to build this ark

... during that time, he tried to tell everyone that a great flood was coming to destroy the earth

- But nobody believed Noah
- In fact, the people had no concept of a flood ... it had never even rained before.

But after getting on the ark, it started to rain ... water started falling from the sky.

... great fountains of water started springing up from the earth ...

... Suddenly everyone outside the ark wanted to get inside the ark ... but it was too late ... the door was shut

... You might ask yourself “how could God do something like this, why wouldn’t he let those people on the ark?”

- ... first, I’ll remind you that God is the one sending the flood
- ... second, I’ll remind you that they had 120 years to decide to get on the ark
- ... God is not the problem here, sinful stubborn wicked humanity is

... So, it rains 40 days and 40 nights

... it is still another 150 days (after the rain stopped) before the water begins to recede.

... in this conflagration all living humans and animals outside the ark died.

But this flood isn’t just about destruction it’s also about a new beginning.

... and God has not forgotten Noah and his family bobbing up and down on top of the water above the world’s tallest mountains.

But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided. (Gen. 8:1)

This boat that Noah is not a cruise ship with windows all around to see out of ...

... In fact the only way to see anything was the one window that God had told Noah to put at the top of the boat.

... So, not being able to see exactly what was happening outside Noah sends out 2 birds to see if it is safe to leave the ark ...

First, he sends a raven and then a dove.

... The second time Moses sends a dove; it returns with an olive branch in its beak.

... The water has receded, plant life is now visible

It was then that God tells Noah to leave the ark with his family and all of the animals and begin the process of repopulating the earth.

The people from the ark offer a sacrifice thanking God for their salvation and rescue

... Although the evil in the human heart continues to flourish, God promises here that never again will he destroy the earth in a flood ... and seals that promise with a rainbow

Back in 2015 **Paul Kipnes** wrote a blog entitled *Everything I Need to Know, I Learned from Noah's Ark* and in that blog, he lists some possible lessons we might learn from the story of Noah

- Don't miss the boat.
- Listen to what God tells you. Your life might depend on it.
- No matter how bleak it looks, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.
- Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
- Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs, the Titanic by professionals.

Well, I think there is many more lessons we can learn from this wonderful story of Noah and the Ark, but I want to give you just 3 of them.

1. Righteousness is Revealed in Obedience (Gen. 6:5-7:5)

⁶ The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷ The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. (Gen. 6:6-8)

¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. (Gen. 6:11-12)

Here in the first part of the story we are looking at what is happening, and **we are seeing it from God's perspective**

... in this part we (the readers) are allowed to listen in on God's conversations and hear His judgements.

... it almost as if we are looking down over the whole earth so that we can see what God himself sees

- God is grieved in His heart over humanity's sins
- The whole earth is corrupt and filled with violence
- God intends to destroy the earth
- ... but God is going to rescue Noah because he found favor in the eyes of the Lord

How is it that the world has become so corrupt?

Because Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree ...

... and now humanity has the knowledge of good and evil and what it has done with that knowledge has been bad.

the evil of man was great upon the earth (6:5)

because of this God was “grieved” in His heart (6:6-7)

The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart

... notice that God (not man) is the subject of the verbs in this verse ...

... Moses writes it this way to show us that God is sharing in the grief and pain of humanity’s wickedness.

But Noah found “grace” in the eyes of the Lord ...

... Noah is an exception to the rest of humanity.

***** The main purpose of this story is not to show why God sent a flood but rather to show why God saved Noah.**

... God saved Noah because he “**walked with God**” and **did not “corrupt”** God’s way...

... YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT this is the kind of people that God delivers.

Noah found “grace” in the eyes of the Lord ...

God saw beforehand in Noah, what was later would be revealed in Noah’s work.

Here is what I mean

As we read this story it looks a little bit like the creation account ...

... God speaks, an action is commanded, and the command is carried out according to God’s will

“God says, let there be light and there was light”

... God spoke and it just was.

... but here God speaks, and it is done because Noah obeys what God has commanded.

And what did God say ...

¹⁴ "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ "This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. ¹⁶ "You shall make a window for the ark ... (Gen. 6:14-16)

There is more details but I just read this part because I want you to see that God gave Noah some very detailed commands...

... and Noah followed God's instructions.

... the mistake we make is thinking that God has recorded all of these details so that we would know what the ark looked like....

... that's not it at all ... what spiritual purpose would that serve?

... God gives us this detail for us to see what God commanded and what Noah obeyed.

... the reason for all the detail in the task God gives Noah is so that we can see that Noah obeyed God with "all his heart."

Then God gives another command

Then the LORD said to Noah, "Enter the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time. ² "You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; ³ also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth. (Gen. 7:1-3)

According to the Apostle Peter Noah preached for 120 years inviting everyone to come into the ark of safety ...

... but in the end only Noah and his family went through the open door.

You also see that there are clean and unclean animals on the ark ... and those animals served multiple purposes.

The animals were there to “restart” the animal population on the earth

They were also there for food

... and (although Noah may not have known it then) there were animals on the ark that were going to be needed for the sacrifice when they exited the ark ...

... What so cool about this is that even before the judgement came to the earth the sacrifice was already provided for.

Noah obeyed God.

Then in Noah and now in us ... Righteousness is Revealed in Obedience

2. Another Word for Faith is Patience

In this part of the story where we see the rain, the flood and the rising waters (unlike the first part) **we are no longer seeing what God seeing things from God’s perspective**

... now we are only seeing what the people in the story themselves see.

So, Noah and his family and the animals are now in the ark.

¹⁰ It came about after the seven days, that the water of the flood came upon the earth. ¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. (Gen. 7:10-11)

And as this story unfolds, we see God’s righteous people protected and the wicked punished.

... the reader is forced to decide for themselves which side they are on

... we are either IN THE ARK or OUTSIDE IN THE FLOOD

But why can’t God just save everyone?

- First because God is holy, He cannot allow His glory to be profaned.
- Second, because God is just, He cannot allow evil and violence to go unpunished

But look further at what is happening.

¹⁷ Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. ¹⁸ The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. ¹⁹ The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. ²⁰ The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. ²¹ All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; ²² of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. ²³ Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. (Gen. 7:17-23)

God who provided the open door has shut that door and all who were outside perished.

I know it may not look like it now, but one day all sin will be punished, and God will make all things right and new ...

However, the most glorious fact in this part of the story is not that the wicked who perished but faithful who were saved!

- Noah and his family were building for 120 years
- During the flood they were stuck on the ark for another full year ...

Noah and his family had endured and remained faithful to God, despite abuse, hate, and ridicule ...

... and now 121 years after the first command to build we find the ark resting safely over the highest mountains ...

... but still, although they were “safe” inside the ark, their rescue was not complete

... it wasn't done until they were back on dry land.

Those inside the ark are “safe” but their rescue is not complete ... the story isn’t finished until they are back on dry land.

This is what the last verse of chapter 7 says:

²⁴ The water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days. (Gen. 7:24)

I’m sure at some point someone asked, “**When is this ever going to be over?**”

Righteousness is revealed in obedience

Another Word for Faith is Patience

This extended prolonged picture that demands so much patience from Noah and his family is in fact a picture that foreshadows the 2nd coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Listen to what the Apostle Peter wrote:

⁷ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. ⁸ But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. (2 Pet. 3:7-9)

3. The Path to Restoration leads Through a Sacrifice

Now that the flood is over and there is dry land we are again allowed to see the story from **God’s perspective and hear His point of view** as we did at the first.

¹⁵ Then God spoke to Noah, saying, ¹⁶ "Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. ... ²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. (Gen. 8:15, 20-21)

Although there was evidence of dry land Noah had to wait for God's command before leaving the ark.

... and when they leave the ark, before they can enjoy the land, they must first offer a sacrifice.

REMEMBER THIS: The one who requires a sacrifice is also the one who provided a sacrifice.

- 1. Just as God's plan for the ark saved Noah ... Christ was sent from heaven as God's plan for our salvation.
- 2. There was only one ark provided and it only had one door.

... God never said, "Make four or five arks and let the people choose the one they like best." And

... There was only one ark! Only one door! Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6).

- 3. The ark saved everyone who entered and the same is true of Christ. Jesus said, ³⁷ *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."* (Jn. 6:37)
- 4. The ark was a place of total security. No matter how high the waters rose ... they were safe.

Let the winds howl and the waves crash. Let the rain fall for 40 days and 40 nights. It did not matter.

The ark was so strong that it preserved everyone and everything inside.

My faith has found a resting place, Not in device nor creed. I trust the Ever-living One, His wounds for me shall plead

Enough for me that Jesus saves, This ends my fear and doubt, A sinful soul I come to Him, He'll never cast me out

I need no other argument, I need no other plea, It is enough that Jesus died, And that He died for me

... those who come to Christ find not only that they are saved, they find they are forever safe and secure.

... and there is one last thing

- 5. Once God shut the door, no one else could enter.

This is a sobering thought.

While the door was open, anyone could enter and be saved from the flood but once the door was shut, it would not be opened again.

Today is the day of grace.

The door of salvation is open to all who care to enter.

Whosoever will may freely come.

God takes no delight in the death of the wicked and he delays judgment waiting for all to repentance (II Peter 3:9).

But the day of grace will not last forever ... today is the day of salvation ... today the door is open

Would You Come to Christ Today?