

Genesis in Biblical Perspective
The Gospel of Christ from Genesis
A Flood, An Ark, and a Savior – Genesis 7

This is the word of God. Genesis 7.

1 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. **6** 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. **8** Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, **9** two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. **10** And after seven days the waters 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 that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. **12** And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. **13** On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, **14** they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. **15** They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. **16** And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in. **17** The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. **18** The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. **19** 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. **24** And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

The grass withers. The flower fades. This is the Word of God. It abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

There are multiple promises in the Word of God. You could probably name them. You can go through many of them. They are great promises of God's Word. They are all yes and Amen in Jesus Christ. Last Sunday I was in the Nairobi Pentecostal Church and I would have gotten an "Amen" out of that one. Let me say it

again. There are many promises in the Word of God. They are all yes and Amen in Jesus Christ. "Amen." Presbyterians say "Amen" you just have to tell them when and where, that's all.

So God's Word is true in Jesus Christ. Let me just mention two promises that relate to this historical narrative, this section of the three studies we're doing on the historical narrative of Noah, the ark, and the flood. Here are two promises to put in your mind. The Bible says, "It is appointed unto men once to die and then the judgment (Hebrews 9:27). The judgment of God is absolutely inescapable. "The soul that sinneth shall surely die" (Ezekiel 18:4). The judgment of God is inescapable. There is no doubt about that. The second thing is that all who have turned from their sins and put their trust in God's Arc of Redemption, His Son Jesus Christ, the salvation by grace is equally sure and will triumph. Those two facts are absolutely sure. God's grace is greater than our sin. The Judgment of God is absolutely sure. It's inescapable. And God's triumph over sin is inescapable through judgment, but there is another way. It is the Way, the Truth, and the Life in Jesus Christ, and all who put their trust in Him, their salvation is true. Their salvation is sure. Their salvation is absolutely promised in Jesus Christ.

Now I want to come to this text of Scripture to begin to look at it. It's a historical narrative. In other words, this passage has taken great pains to understand this is no myth. This is no fairy tale. This is not a nice, little bedtime story about Noah, the ark, a flood and a bunch of animals. This is absolutely an historically true narrative. Very seldom in the Bible is such detail given like so many names given. It's very clear. There are dates. There are things that you can check. One reason I'm taking time on this is many of you come up to me and say, "Now, Pastor, have you read the Gilgamesh epic about a boat and a flood? And by the way did you know there are other things..." It is a fact that there is hardly a single people group that does not have a flood story where there is an individual, his family, a boat; that is true. The Gilgamesh epic, it's all over the place.

Our own American Indians, they brought one into this area. They probably came across here about 15 to 20 thousand years ago, across the Bearing Straights out of Asia. The North American Indians have stories about a flood. It's in all of their oral traditions, and a deliverance through a boat. The South American Indians, they all have them. If you go to China, the very character, I learned this from our missionary today, for ark in the Chinese vocabulary is made up of three characters that are for boat, eight, and a man. Does that sound familiar? Who's the man? Noah. The eight would refer to what? The family which is seven plus Noah makes eight. Boat. Isn't it amazing to see all of these things?

Now there's two ways to look at this. You go to your college class and the college class will say, "See. Now, Noah and his flood is just another nice, little fairy tale. All people groups have these nice, little fair tales." No, no. There's a big difference. The big difference is all of these others have absolute absurdities in them. The most logical of all of them is the Gilgamesh epic, but it has the ark being made in a week, and if you check the dimensions out, it actually ends up as a cube. Did you ever try to float a cube? No, all of the rest of them are absurd. They have absurdities in them. They have perversions in them. But there's always this little element that keeps coming back. In other words, this really happened. What has happened is in the false religions and

oral traditions of humanity, it's kind of come down with oral traditions and continued to have been confused and confused. But God's Word has saved for you an accurate, true account, historical narrative of what really happened. While the supernatural is in it, absurdity and ridiculousness is not in it. I mean this thing is really a boat. Check the dimensions. It looks like a coffin, but it's a boat. It'll float. It's an amazing thing to see how God's Word has put this in there.

Now, why would God take the time to reserve and preserve for us a historically accurate, true account of this event back in history and tell us what it means, not only in history, but in the history of redemption, and what the Redeemer's going to do? There are a couple of things I want us to see out of Genesis 7 today but we have one more to go as well. Now, clearly, there are names. There are dates. There are people. There are dimensions. There is the ark. In our last study, the ark is 450 feet long. It's 45 feet high, with another 18 inches for a window that probably went all the way down the top of the roof. That would be another 18 inches with a slope on it. It is 75 feet wide. It's the only boat this big that's sea-worthy that's ever been made all the way down into the 1900s, when a boat by the name of the Great Eastern was developed that looks almost like this one. If you want to get an idea of what this looks like, next time you go to the coast, go to where a port is, and look at the gigantic barges that go out to go across the oceans. The ark would have looked very much like that. The Great Eastern, of course, was used to lay out the transatlantic cable at the beginning of this century. That boat would have been the only boat comparable to this ever since the ark was made. But once it was made, someone made the note, "Boy, this is very much like the dimensions."

People are always wondering, "Can they get all these animals in there?" Yes, you can get all the animals in there. That's no problem. Do your studies and you could fit about 35 to 45 thousand animals. You take the dimensions of this boat, and it's got about 1,580,000 cubic feet of space. It has three floors with multiple compartments that are in it. The dimensions, the detail is absolutely astounding. To look at the timing, the people that are involved, the days and everything, even to the amount of time, which is basically a year and eleven days from the time that Noah goes into the ark, the seven days, the rain, the forty days and forty night, the 150 days, the abating and all of that, there is about one year and eleven days involved in this. There are things that are very specific that you don't put into myths and fairy tales and legends. You can go back and check these things out and work out all the details that are there. It's a historical narrative.

Now let's look back at Genesis 7:1-5. I want to divide this text up for you just a little bit as we look at it. Genesis 7:1-5 ends the way Chapter 6 ended. So go back to Genesis 6:22 which says, "*Noah did this; (the obedience of Noah to what?) he did all that God commanded him.*" That's the best way to divide up this Chapter right here. How does Genesis 7:5 end? "*And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.*" Now, again, this man saved by grace, this man seeking to walk with God, blameless, righteous, all of the things that have been said about Noah, is reaffirmed right here in Genesis 7:1-5. It's reaffirmed that Noah was a righteous man. Noah was a righteous man, and Noah lived faithfully for God. Not perfectly, but Noah lived, because of transforming grace, and walked with God in his generation. In other words, he landed in his life and counted for the Living God. Certainly that encourages us.

The other thing I want you to see is in Genesis 7:1-5, God adds some instructions. Previously, in Genesis 6, He had said to him, "Noah, you're going to have two of every kind." So when you break down the species, then you're looking at probably Noah bringing in 35 to 45 thousand animals, caring for them in the context of the ark, and the necessary food to sustain them for this period of time. Now, it says in Genesis 7:2, "Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals." Some people look at that and say, "Now, see, this is another writer and he is contradictory to what was said in Genesis 6." No, this isn't in contradiction. This is in addition. In addition to the pairs, now He's adding to it. He is adding to it the fact that they're going to take 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, and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens, also, etcetera, etcetera. Now, why is that going to be there?

There will be a variety of reasons. Let me give you just two of them. One of the things that Noah's going to do when he gets off of the ark and re-enters into Covenant with the Lord is he's going to worship. That means he's going to do what? Sacrifice. If all you've got are the pairs, then you're about to wipe out a species. So what is God doing? He's giving the animals necessary for further worship. God's going to have a way for Noah to do reconnaissance and with what? Birds. You see, there are multiple reasons why God is adding to the population of the ark.

Then He says something else to him. Stop and think about this. We started in Genesis 6:9 when we started our study of this. When we started it we saw all of the people that are living there. We saw the demon possession of these political demagogues and tyrants that brought the idolatry of sex, the idolatry of violence into the society. We see God say, "I am now going to bring judgment. I'm going to wipe this evil away because I'm going to wipe out every living thing and all of humanity is there. And I'm going to wipe them out except for Noah and his household." As God is determined to do this, He says, "I'm going to bring a flood, and Noah, I'm going to have you build an ark." He tells him all of these things. So Noah has been at this for 120 years.

Then God says very explicitly, "Seven more days and then I am going to bring a deluge for 40 days and 40 nights to bring judgment upon every thing that breathes. I'm going to judge the earth from the earth and the heavens with water, and I'm going to put you in the ark. Not only are you going to put in the ark who I have said, now I'm adding to it this matter of clean and unclean animals." What does Noah do? Noah's a man who is saved by grace through faith. What's the evidence of faith? Obedience. Our obedience doesn't save us. Jesus saves us by grace, through faith. But what's the evidence of faith? Obedience. Noah did obey and he obeyed what? Noah obeyed "All that the Lord commanded him."

Now look at what happens next. Genesis 7:6 starts out, "*Noah was 600 years old...*" So Noah has now made it from 480 when he started the project, to 600 years of age. He has his wife, his three sons, and their wives. Genesis 7:6-16 says, **6** *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. 8 Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, 9 two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, (Notice that God brought them in.) as God had commanded Noah. 10 And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.* (Look at all these

details.) **11** *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. 12 And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. 13 On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, 14 they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. 15 They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. 16 And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him* (There's that phrase again). *And the LORD shut him in.* Remember that. "The Lord shut the door."

In this part we find Noah in this seven days where God has announced in seven days the 40 days and 40 nights of rain are coming. The deluge is coming. By the way, Noah, it's not only going to be a deluge from the heavens, it is going to be a bursting forth, like geysers, of water, a bursting forth of the fountains of the deep. I'm going to cover every thing and wipe out all living breathe except what I've put in the ark. Noah becomes like Adam. Remember the last time you had animals coming to a man, who was it? It was Adam. What did Adam do? He named them. Now God does the same thing. He brings the animals but this time not to Adam but to Noah and this time not to name, but to preserve them. Those selected. So the sovereign God has raised up Noah. The sovereign God has raised up Noah's household. The sovereign God is working Grace there and now the sovereign God has a sea worthy ark built over 120 years. Now during seven days, God brings in all of the animals. He adds instructions of clean and unclean animals that are to be added to the two by two that are being brought in. He then brings in Noah, his wife, Shem, Ham, Japheth and their wives, and they enter into the ark on the seventh day. They work for six days. They do all that God calls them to do in making it ready. God brings the animals. They put them in, and then, the seventh day Noah enters the ark and rests.

Sound familiar? Six, seventh, rest. As Noah enters into the ark, he waits. Can you imagine that? Waits for what? What's he waiting for? Rain? What's that? Forty days of something that, as far as I understand the Bible has never occurred. Up until this time, the world's been watered by rivers and a hydrological system called what? Mist. Now, there is a deluge of rain. I can imagine Noah and all the mockery and everything that's gone on. The Bible says Noah was a herald of righteousness for those 120 years. He bore witness for the Lord with his work. He bore witness for the Lord with his words. There he is worshiping the Lord, 120 years there, he and his family. All of those things are taking place. Now, in the last six days, Noah enters in and he sits and he begins to wait.

By the way, the rabbinical tradition in Jewish literature is that it's during these seven days, if you go back and do the math, everybody's dead during Noah's 600th year, even his parents, except for one person that's still alive. Who's that? Methuselah. Methuselah dies this year, prior to the flood. The Jewish tradition and rabbinic tradition is that he died during this seven days. That was one of the things that God was holding back until Methuselah dies. There is Abel. He died for serving the Lord. There is Enoch; he didn't die. He just went to be with the Lord. Then there is Methuselah and

everybody's wondering would he ever die? Then he died, and the tradition is it was during this seven days, but whether that happened or not, we don't know.

However during that seven days, everything's prepared. Noah enters into the ark, and now he'll wait. On the day that he entered into the ark, the rains began, for 40 days and 40 nights. Now, read what happens. Genesis 7:17-24 says, **17** *The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.* **18** *The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters.* **19** *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.* **24** *And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.*

Now, they enter in and after the seventh day, on that day the rain begins. It goes for 40 days and 40 nights. Now, the big question everybody asks which is really a recent question because of people feeling the necessity of matching up what science says can or cannot happen, that everybody's kind of wondering was this a universal flood or not? One position is that it was universal to the known world of Noah. The only problem with that is the words "ground and earth" don't allow that. Secondly, it's not just known humanity that's covered; it's every living thing throughout all the earth that's covered and it's the mountains of all the earth that's covered. Another position is that it was the known world to Noah or it was a flood wherever there were human beings, but notice the flood doesn't cover just all humanity, but all the earth, and all living things all over the earth. Another group would say, "Well, it was just a local matter." I cannot find anything else other than in the text. It's a universal flood that universally covers the whole earth.

Now everybody's got their parts. People say, "Well, Mount Ararat, we understand that. But what about the Himalayas? What about Mount Everest? You mean 15 cubits upon those?" Well, there are two things. One, yes, if they were there, but the other thing is, please remember the earth has been rewritten in form with this event. The Bible tells us in this text, and in other texts, that you not only have this gigantic downpour for 40 days and 40 nights, grant it we don't know all of it, but if I read the text right, it seems as if, in the Creation, you have the waters on the earth, there is an atmosphere and then there are the waters above the earth. And it doesn't seem like just a mere cloud is up there, but an entire canopy of clouds. It seems to be described in the Hebrew cosmology. Now you put thick clouds all the way around the earth and you have A) a green house effect. Maybe that's why they keep finding all these subtropical plants in the Arctic Circles. You have a greenhouse effect around the whole world, and then when you have a rain, think of the deluge of emptying all of those waters above the earth. I mean just look at last night and what happened. I walked out and there's a ditch right in front of my yard from the rain that took place last night. What happens, not with a rain shower; what happens with a deluge that comes down? And it all pours down. Then what happens when God sets off the earthquakes, the

seismosis? The seismos takes place as He opens up the deep and it pours out like a geyser, the ocean waters that are beneath the earth. No wonder the Psalmist says, "In that day he made the mountains into valleys, and the valleys into mountains" (Psalm 104:5-10). My guess is most of the mountain ranges you see today were actually formed in the context of that day. The catastrophic work that God did with His supernatural power as He ripped open the bottoms and the fountains of the deep would begin to flush upward as a geyser and the deluge from this canopy began to pour down, taking 40 days and 40 nights of solid, not sprinkling, not pouring, but a deluge is what the Bible says, begin to pour down. Can you not imagine A) what it did to the face of the earth? And B) what it has done as God now brings that judgment upon the earth?

If you'll notice in this text, I tried to read it so you'd get it. There is a constant emphasis, "the waters prevailed," "prevailed," "prevailed," "rose mightily," "rose mightily," "increased on the face of the earth." "All flesh is blotted out. All humanity is blotted out. All of the living things are blotted out." Look at how many times the word "prevail," "increase," "rose" are used. Time and time again. "The waters are prevailing." "Are prevailing." "Are prevailing." But something else it also says is that they never prevailed over the ark. There was a prevailing ark that rose over the prevailing waters. Amen belongs there. A prevailing ark rose over the prevailing waters. In fact, the text says, "The higher the waters rose in judgment, the higher the ark went in salvation." Where the judgment of God upon sin is poured out, the grace of God over sin is greater and greater and greater and greater. And being a great sinner, I praise God for that. I've got an ark that keeps rising. When God's righteous judgment pours forth, it not only brings judgment upon all that stand in opposition against Him, but in the very moment of the judgment, the grace of God rises higher and higher and as the waters of judgment prevail and increase, the ark of redemption, salvation and deliverance goes higher and higher and higher.

So we have just completed an overview of the text and now I'd like to take a closer look at two thoughts from this text. This text clearly is not only showing you God's grace at work through Noah so you see a man of God, but more than that, this text is declaring something to us and the declaration is not missed by the New Testament writers. Jesus said in Matthew 24:37, "*For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*" As it was in the days of the judgment of the waters, so it will be in the day of the judgment by fire. As it was when God washed the world clean, and then deposited those whom He had saved by mercy and grace upon it, so it will be in the day of the judgment of fire, when the Bible says God will roll up the heavens and the earth, and He'll spread out a new heavens and a new earth and out of the ark of redemption in Jesus Christ, He will pour forth His people and they shall land (Matthew 24 and 25). This text is telling us the sure triumph of God's judgment by His holiness over sin. This text is declaring there is no escape from the judgment seat of God -no false religion, no sincerity, no mocking of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, no resolution of humanity against the Lord. Every single thing that man brings up, whether it's in arrogance and anger against the Lord, or whether it is in religious perversion of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and denying that Gospel for that which is not a Gospel. Whatever else men and women put their trust in, and either the denial or the rejection of the Living Savior, it is absolutely sure that "It is appointed unto men once to die, and then to judgment." All in opposition suffer the judgment of the Living God.

“The soul that sinneth shall surely die.” “The wages of sin is death.” What would that do to us, if we really believe that, to all of these people that are around us, whom we live next to, work next to?

Do away with the notions. So often, Pastors, we begin to fall into the notion of statistics and growth. We're talking about the souls of men and women, and where they're going to spend eternity. This text tells you, historically, God has laid it out for you. In the day of the judgment by water, not one escaped who was apart from the ark. Not one will escape. There is also a triumph of a final judgment. God will be glorified in His holiness at a final judgment. Not a world covered with water, but a lake of fire where the mind and the body never perish in everlasting torment.

The second thing this text tells us, though, is how grateful I am. This text tells us also, that while there is a sure triumph of God's holiness in judgment, there is also a sure triumph of God's salvation by grace. Salvation by grace is not some man-made, self-help religious endeavor. It is designed by God. See the ark? Who designed this ark? God designed it. Who called the man by grace who would build it and occupy it? God called him by grace to build it. There is a sovereign grace from a sovereign God who called Noah, who blessed Noah and his household. There is a sovereign grace from a sovereign God who designed this ark. He designed it down to the details of cubits and inches, and an 18-inch window that ran down it. He designed it to rooms and compartments and three levels. He designed it in terms of who would occupy it. He designed it in terms of who would occupy it that would be needed once it was resting upon Mount Ararat. It was God, Himself, that not only had all of this done by His sovereign grace, it was God, Himself, that called those into it who would go into it. He called the animals, as He would preserve them for this refurbished heavens and earth, as well as Noah and his household. It was God, Himself, who sovereignly, in His sovereign work reached out, made the man, called the man, enabled the man by grace, through faith, to obey Him. It was God, himself, that designed the ark. It was God, Himself, that filled the ark, not only with the man, but all of the animals that were put there. And it was God, Himself, who shut the door and the Day of Judgment came.

The door of the ark was shut by Noah and for the mocking, those who been married and giving in marriage, and just same business as usual, there is no such thing as a God, no such thing as a judgment, no such thing as rain, no necessity of a boat to deliver me. There's no necessity for deliverance by God. I don't need that. Soon, there was the ark rising above them, but the door was shut as the waters prevailed over them. But, oh, how I praise God for the surety of His triumphant grace. I love the way it says it in the text, “The flood continued. The waters increased.” What happened when the waters increased? “They bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. And only Noah was left with all who were in the ark.”

Now, you're ready to write your series, “Left Behind.” I want to see you next week. Can I give you just a little tickler for next week? I know we got a series on “Left Behind,” and the problem is the books got the wrong people left behind. According to this text, and the way it is used by Jesus, those left behind were not the unbelievers, with the believers taken away. No, no. Those left behind are the believers, in safety, deposited upon a refurbished heavens and earth. Those taken away are taken away in judgment. So it will be at the end of this age. The judgment of God will fall. The heavens and the earth will roll up like a scroll and those who are apart from Him will be

taken away in judgment. The people of God in the arc of redemption in Jesus Christ will be left behind for a new heavens, with a new body, and a new earth to sing glory, honor, and power to the Lamb. The triumph of God's grace is sure and complete. So, we'll not only see that believers are left behind secure in redemption, we will see that God's triumph is glorious and complete.

Now, what does that mean for me? What does that mean for me in my life? Let me just give you a couple of things in suggestion and to takeaway. Here's the first one. What about Noah as a believer? Do you know what the book of the Bible says in Hebrews 11? Did you know this great hall of faith chapter secures three people from the flood and before the flood? It's Abel, Enoch, and Noah. This is important. Three times, Noah has been called what? He has been called righteous. Let's understand where Noah's righteousness comes from. Hebrews 11:7 says Look at verse 7. *"By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear (worship) constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith."*

How did Noah get saved? It was by grace, through faith in Christ. What is Noah telling me? Harry, it's not what you do that gets you to Heaven, it's God's grace that brings you to the ark of redemption in Jesus Christ, shuts the door and seals you there, and will deposit you in a new heavens and a new earth. And your righteousness is not yours. Your righteousness is an alien righteousness that He gives you. "For He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God and the salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile, for in it the righteousness of God is revealed" (Romans 1:16, 17). It's not our righteousness. Noah's righteousness is like yours and mine. It's like filthy rags. It's God's righteousness that was given to him.

When someone by grace, through faith lays hold of Christ, what's the evidence? It's obedience. Four times it's told us, "Noah did." That's not what his doing that got him saved. It's God's grace, through faith. But when someone has been saved by grace, through faith obedience is the desire of their heart. Noah did. In worship, Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him. Noah did what? He walked with God. He was called by God. He worked for God. He worshipped God. Noah had a hunger for God's Word. Do you and I have a hunger for God's Word? Noah did. Not only does Noah have a hunger to know how to build an ark and what he's supposed to do, but look at it. Noah had a Sabbath. Noah knew what clean and unclean was. Noah knew how to worship. Noah wanted to worship. Noah would sacrifice whatever it was, and however God communicated. All of these things about how Noah was to live before him, Noah knew it because you can't do that which is honoring to the Lord until you know that which is honoring to the Lord. If we don't have a hunger for the sound Word of God and sound doctrine then we won't have sound lives. He had a hunger for God's Word. Not just to know facts, but to do all that the Lord had commanded him. So he's not a hearer of the Word only, but a doer of the Word. It all says he does it in what? He does it in reverent fear. Do you know the key to evangelism, the key to a community that loves the Lord and loves each other, the key to faithfulness to the Lord? It all begins with worship. It all begins with worship, not only when we assemble, but the way that we live. Noah shouts this to me. What does it mean to be saved by grace, through

faith? A righteousness given to me that I inherit Christ, and then a life transformed by the same grace that has saved me.

Secondly, what about Noah? What does this say about Jesus? Noah's pointing you to Christ. Noah's pointing you to Christ because Noah goes into the ark. He builds the ark and everyone in it comes forth. There's no accident in the Bible. What's the perfect number? What's the perfect number in the Bible? Who's in the ark? It is seven plus one - all those who God had given to him, Noah. Who will be in the new heavens and the new earth in the ark of salvation, which is Jesus Christ, our Lord? It'll be all who belong to Him. "Father, perfectly, not one whom you've given me will I lose. I'll raise them up, all under the One" (John 6:39). Not Noah, but Jesus. All delivered, not through an ark of gopher wood, but through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Noah shouts, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful grace." Noah shouts out to us, "The One Christ will have His perfect number saved by His grace, and lose not one." As Noah and all of his household were secured in safety, so will all who are to be in Jesus Christ.

This is my last thought. Recently somebody on the team asked me to check this, and I checked it and she was right. Every time God brought a judgment and He revealed it to a man, He gave that man an opportunity to call people to repentance. While Noah preached righteousness, Noah was given no mandate to call anyone to repentance. His preaching only confirmed the depravity of all that were around him. Interestingly, the first judgment points to the last judgment by fire. Noah knew the day and the means of deliverance, but he was given no authorization to offer it to anyone. Noah was given the Day of Judgment. He knew the day, as well as the means of deliverance, but there was no opening of the door to any besides those but Noah and his household. There's coming another day. I don't know the date. No man knows the date or the hour (Matthew 24:36). But I do know this. God hasn't shut the door. The door is still open and until He shuts the door, you and I have the enormous privilege to gather men and women in from every tribe and nation. We have this enormous privilege to gather them in. In the last two weeks, we sent a mission team to Peru. I look forward to the report. We went to Kenya and Uganda. I can't wait to tell you. I can't wait to tell you how exciting it was to see church leaders say, "Could you, at Briarwood, pray about sending someone over here?" These 10 strategies, they've got us so excited. We saw scores of people in evangelism. I lost my voice over there. We wrote back and asked you to pray for me 'cause I'm sitting down, having the enormous privilege to share the Gospel with 1,000 teenagers. Not sitting in some nice room with the stadium seating and the air condition. We're in a dust bowl under a tent with a deluge of water pouring down upon us and then heat suffocating us. And this makeshift microphone that went out, and all the dust in the tent rose up. Now I have to preach to 1,000 kids with no microphone. So I just went right up on my voice. I went that much louder, strained, almost lost it, but praise the Lord, I had some Pentecostals praying for me afterwards, so I was able to finish the next week, as well as 150 of you back here. Then, when it was over, I was just wrung out. I turned to walk away, and the guy that was with me stepped up and he grabbed the microphone and he said, "Y'all just heard that Jesus Christ will deliver you. Who wants to be delivered and forgiven of their sin?" Over 85 young people, almost a tenth of that crowd, came forward for Christ, just a hunger in their eyes, and the shouting and the singing. The last thing I did before I left

is I went and spoke to a group to celebrate, as well as prepare. Not only is abortion still illegal in Kenya, praise the Lord, but recently there, a prayer group of 1,000 people got together to pray for the government.

Now, there's a notion. Pray for people in government, those in authority. It sounds extremely Biblical to me. And they did, so you know what? For the first time in the history of Kenya, they had a unanimous budget last week and everybody was walking the streets, singing glory to the Lord. Then that same group passes a law. They passed a law that banned all advertising on alcohol and tobacco in their country. Do you know how many millions of dollars they just gave up from the United States when they did that? Now, I know some of you are going to say, "Oh, Harry, that's just a legalism, that banning." The state isn't supposed to preach the Gospel. But the state is supposed to protect its people. Even with the economic issues that were there, they were willing to say "no" to millions of dollars from over here on the tobacco and over the alcohol. They banned all of it. It's not allowed in any public advertising in newspapers, billboards. Nowhere will they allow it.

Then I had the privilege to speak to the prayer group that did that. As I was speaking to them my heart is broken. I feel like such an abject failure in the Gospel ministry. Right now, billions of dollars is trying to undo those legislative acts. Right now, billions of dollars has six people in their government structure trying to make abortion legal, to start killing the unborn children. Right now, there's billions of dollars in the name of a so-called first amendment guise that is trying to promote pornography in Kenya. Do you know where all of that's coming from? It's coming from right here. I have to confess to them, "Please pray for us." The Church must rise up into the battle. Enough of this therapy gospel, and I stood before 500 pastors and asked them to forgive me for this perversion of the gospel that's coming from our country, throughout the whole world, through Internet, television, and radio, this prosperity gospel - this notion that Jesus went to a cross, suffered, died, and bled so that I could be rich and wealthy.

He went to a cross and suffered and died and bled that I could be delivered from my sins. I'm forgiven and transformed by grace that I can serve Him as a soldier of the cross. That's why He went to the cross. That's what we need to take to our country, have done with lesser things. Yes, we will equip those who will go into government, and who will go into the corporate world, and make a difference for Jesus Christ, but it has to start with one, the one, the one, the one, the one. I see people on the edge of eternity and they must know the Gospel. There is a sure judgment. But there is a sure Savior. I know Him. You can know Him. There is a day the door will be shut, but today the door is open. "Come," says the Spirit. "Come," says the Bride. "Come, all of you that are weary and heavy-laden. And I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). This is the day before us. Lord, give us this country, or we would rather die. I don't know how much longer I've got left, but I want to have done with lesser things. I want to serve the King. I want this country to know the Gospel. I want this country to see and feel the Gospel, from the people of God. How I rejoice in you that gives so sacrificially, love so much that we send people out everywhere. Praise the Lord for that.

I sense we're on the verge. I sense just some of the things that are happening in and around Birmingham. The things I know of that maybe you don't know. I sense Satan always starts that when God is about to do something. He always wants to

devour what God is about to produce. May God begin to produce it, and may just as the day that flood rewrote the surface earth, may another seismic Gospel earthquake rewrite the face of this city, our state, and our nation. And then the people there, in Kenya and Africa, will not only thank the Lord for missionary teams you send, but a culture that's been vacuumed of its filth because people have known the sweetness and forgiveness that God's grace is greater than all of our sin. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we can spend together in worship and praise. Thank You for the privilege to ask You to do a work here and around the world. Oh, Lord, we keep turning the Gospel into business and therapy and self-centeredness when it calls us to the joy of the Lord and rejoicing in the denial of self and the exultation of Christ. Oh God, may, with the heart of John the Baptist, we proclaim, "Lord increase, we decrease." We will never be great, but may we do great things for our great God and Savior. And may this world, while I don't know whether we're in the 120 years, the seven days, or what, I just know the door is still open and the ark of redemption is still taking on board men, women, boys, girls and households. Oh God, give us the grace to rescue the perishing. Show Your mercy that not only would we be sealed in Christ, but we would draw many in, in this glorious day. I know not the hour of Your coming. I long for it, but I long to see many come to You first. Oh God, thank You for what You've done in and through these people. Oh God, may we stretch, enlarge, our hearts for You and the lost. Oh God, I pray this wanting and desiring deeply the love of Christ to fill our souls, in Jesus' name, Amen.