

### XXXIII. I Peter in Biblical Perspective

#### *The Elect in Exile*

#### “The Apostle Peter on Baptism and Christian Suffering”

I Peter 3:18–22

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We will be looking at I Peter 3 in this section on Christian suffering. We are looking at the suffering of Christ in this matter of Christian suffering and we have some interesting subjects to carry through with. Peter now points us to the Christ who suffered for you and in whom you now suffer. I Peter 3:18–22 says *[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, [19] in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, [20] 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. [21] Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [22] who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

My wife said to me yesterday, ‘How's the sermon/study coming?’ I said ‘This one is a challenge.’ She said ‘Good! Have you read II Peter recently?’ ‘Not real recently.’ ‘I love I Peter but would you pray about doing II Peter?’ It's amazing how the Spirit moves through the voice of my wife, Cindy, in my life and I'm not saying that I'm going there next but I do want to mention a passage from there in this study, in light of where I am today.

II Peter 3:15–16 says *[15] And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, [16] as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.* That is an interesting comment Peter makes here.

In other words, some of the things Paul writes about are really hard to understand and either people on purpose or because they are untaught, unable or not gifted by the Lord, will take those things and distort them which will end up being destructive in the lives of the other people. When I hear Peter making this comment about Paul's writings that are hard to understand and then I read I Peter 3:18–22 I say ‘Peter that's the pot calling the kettle black’ because Peter writes some things that are hard to understand. What is he talking about when he says spirits in prison, in the days of Noah and baptism now saves you?

The whole Bible is full of warnings where you don't look at your external obedience as the foundation of your salvation. It is what Christ has done that saves you, not what you do, even those things that He has commanded you to do don't save you for obedience is the expression of your salvation, not the contributor to your salvation. So why does Peter say it this way about baptism? Didn't Paul say he came to preach the Gospel, not baptize so why would he say that if baptism saves you? Paul knows that baptism is in the Great Commission but he also knows that baptism like any other external act in Christianity is downstream from Gospel

preaching and your call is to depend wholly on Christ alone for your salvation. Obedience is always an expression of your authenticity of your salvation not in any way a contributor to it.

If Peter was teaching this study one, there would probably be more people reading it. Two, it would probably be a better study than the one I'm going to give you. Three he would make sure you would understand what he is writing here to these churches in Turkey. He wants you to understand who you are in Christ and you are elect exiles. Elect is who you are by God's grace in Christ because of Christ's love for you. In these two opening chapters of I Peter we have already covered 13 Gospel blessings that Christ has secured for you by His relentless love and His undeserved grace.

Then Peter explains exiles as what you are by God's grace for Christ because of your love for Christ. You love Him because He first loved you and Jesus says 'if you love Me you will keep My commandments' (John 14:15). Then Peter gives us five Gospel commands that we have already covered up to I Peter 3:13. Then Peter moves to something that is inevitable and that is if you by God's grace out of love to Christ are serious to stay on mission, on message and in ministry you will be assured of suffering for Christ. He calls it Christian suffering. It is not the suffering we face in a broken world like everyone else, i.e. sickness, death of a loved one, loss of job, etc. He is speaking of Christians suffering for being a Christian – suffering for Christ's sake, for righteousness sake.

I am paraphrasing what one of my mentors named Al Martin said; every true Christian who by God's grace is intentionally living for God's glory will at some time to some degree suffer for Christ's sake. Most of us will not suffer persecution unto death for Christ but you may lose your job, in order to be faithful to Christ. You may be mocked or marginalized socially. Peter told us early to always be ready to give an account for the hope that is within you and we do this gently, reasonably but faithfully, consistently, courageously and compassionately. If you do this you will suffer in some way.

I just got some information from Open Doors Ministries which keeps us informed about the persecuted church. In their recent survey for 2018 and average of 11 Christians a day lost their lives. It wasn't their livelihood that was targeted it was their life. So why should I suffer, how should I suffer and Peter answers this by bringing us to focus on the sufferings of Christ. That's why this last paragraph in I Peter 3 is written.

I Peter 3:18 says [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 this one verse alone we see Christ's death, burial and resurrection. This paragraph from the Apostle Peter is a forerunner, a content, over one hundred years later that would be put in the Apostles' Creed which says;

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.*

*He **suffered** under Pontius Pilate,  
was **crucified, died, and was buried;**  
**he descended to hell.***

***The third day he rose again from the dead.**  
**He ascended to heaven***

***and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.***

*From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic\* church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.*

*\*that is, the true Christian church of all times and all places*

Christ's suffering on one hand is unique for it was different than ours. My suffering doesn't atone for anyone else. I can be a martyr but I can't be a redeemer. His suffering was unique in that it was to bring us to God – the Righteous for the unrighteous. So Peter is pointing us to His crucifixion and sufferings of Christ are the foundation, formation (model) and the motivation (why) for Christian suffering. Paul says in Philippians 1:29, [29] *For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake.* Paul counts it joy to suffer for Christ (II Timothy 4:8). Christ suffers, not a martyr's death, but an atoning death and it is sufficient, full and freely offered to us.

The way He suffers becomes a formation for us because it teaches us how our suffering brings us to Himself. Stephen was the first recorded martyr's death in the Bible after the ascension of Christ. Stephen used the suffering as a platform. Suffering is not something happening beyond God's sovereign control for it's God's sovereign blessing in our life. Matthew 5:11–12 says [11] *Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.* [12] *Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

I want to give you two reasons suffering is a blessing from God. One is it is perfecting you. It is the occasion for you to sanctify Christ as holy in your hearts and for you to draw close to Him. That is when we grow – we grow in adversity. Secondly, it provides for you a platform for you to tell others about Jesus, to give an account for the hope that is within you (I Peter 3:15). When this time comes you look at Christ's suffering and learn from it, just like Stephen did. Stephen preached a sermon in Acts 7 from the book of Exodus from the life of Moses to those who claimed Moses was the one who brought them out of bondage. He uses Moses to point them to the One greater than Moses and that's Jesus. Then he suffers like Jesus as the stones are pelting down upon him for he repeats the words of Jesus saying, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do' (Acts 7:60).

Christ's suffering also gives us our motivation to suffer for if He suffered to bring me to God then I can suffer to bring others to God and I can suffer for the God who came to bring me to Himself. We see all this in the Apostles' Creed as well. The resurrection is so important that all the Apostles based all the authenticity and integrity of the Gospel on the resurrection of Christ.

Paul says in I Corinthians 15:13–19, [13] *But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.* [14] *And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.* [15] *We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.* [16] *For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.* [17] *And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.* [18] *Then those also who*

*have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. [19] If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.*

The same Holy Spirit that brought Jesus forth is the Holy Spirit that Jesus sent hundreds of years earlier to Noah. Noah is preaching for 100 years while the ark is being prepared, it was actually Jesus through the Holy Spirit that was preaching. This is why preaching is so important. It is because God has ordained to speak through preaching and My sheep know My voice and they follow Me (John 10:27). I Corinthians 1:21 says *[21] For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.* Faith comes by hearing the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17). When Christ's Word is preached it is no longer the person speaking it but Christ begins to speak to the hearts of His people. It is this Spirit that speaks through all those before and after who preach the Word and this same Spirit was with Jesus when He was on this earth.

Here is the rest of that paragraph, I Peter 3:19–22 which says *[19] in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, [20] 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. [21] Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [22] who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

So Jesus has been crucified to save us. He was risen shouting the victory of the atoning work on the cross and is now ascended into heaven in which he rules and reigns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Then He tells us in Matthew 28:18–20, *[18] And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* He rules and reigns in ascended glory and now calls us to go for Him and that, that same Spirit will be with us to the end of the age. That is why we can have this lifestyle of evangelism and discipleship in serving our Lord.

Do you see how this is so encouraging? This is so encouraging because Jesus went to the cross to do a work to save me. At the right time He went to the cross, at the right time the ascended Savior called me to Himself and the ascended Savior is at work in my life. In another part of town someone had started a building project but didn't finish it. None of you will ever be in that condition. Philippians 1:6 says *[6] And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.* You will never be an abandoned project. He will finish His work in you, because of Him who is working in you. There is nothing that can stand against Him. He is unstoppable and relentless to finish His work in your life. That means at the Judgment Seat when the Lamb's book of life is read you have no reason to dread. He is finishing His work in you all because of His glory.

In the New Testament God has ordained a sign and seal that points back to everything I just developed for you. The sign and seal of the New Covenant is baptism and this is the declaration that God has done His work to save His people who put their trust in Him alone for salvation. They willingly by faith take that sign and seal for themselves and their households in obedience to God. In the Old Testament the sign was circumcision and we don't practice that sign anymore because it was used to point to Jesus. Circumcision was a sign that included a shedding of blood pointing to the need of someone to shed blood. Jesus has shed His blood. He is our Circumcision. The new sign is a bloodless sign and baptism proclaims He has done the

work on the cross and is risen. In Christ this sign is a declaration that I am washed clean by the blood of the Lamb and by His redeeming work through His Holy Spirit in my life.

There was also an Old Covenant sign that pointed to Him and reminded them of Him called the Passover which was a meal they would eat. Again this was a bloody sign because a lamb had to be sacrificed but all of that pointed to Jesus who is the Lamb of God. Now we have a New Covenant sign that replaces the Passover called the Lord's Supper and it is bloodless because it points back to the body and blood of Christ. It is not pointing to something to be done but is pointing back to what has been done. So we have these signs and seals and the one Peter fixes on is baptism.

Then he makes this statement that baptism now saves you. I thought external acts of obedience didn't save us? I thought Jesus said it was by faith? So why is Peter saying this? I want to put it in context. As Peter speaks about Jesus his mind is drawn back to the flood because in the flood it was a universal judgment of God by sinners with water. Then in the flood God raised up someone who would serve Him and that one who found favor (grace) in the eyes of the Lord was Noah. Noah was instructed to do two things – build the ark and proclaim the truth. That is what he did for a hundred years. Noah built the ark as God designed it so that whoever was in it would be saved from the deluge of the flood.

Then he did something glorious. He built the ark and then specifically said 'Here's the door.' There is a way into that ark and then through the preaching of the Word Noah and his household enter into that ark. God Himself seals the door (Genesis 7:16). The waters come and the judgment waters do not immerse the ark for it's not a submarine. It floats on top as the rains come down and everyone else in judgment is immersed by the judgment of God. As Peter is inspired by the Holy Spirit in writing this epistle he sees that moment which is in his language corresponding to baptism.

What does baptism point to? It points to God's provision in the day of judgment but this day of judgment will not be by water but by fire. In that provision the ark of your salvation is Jesus. That Ark has a door and the Door is Jesus. This door takes you to the judgment of God and delivers you not in a washed heavens and earth but in a new heavens and earth and you are sealed by the hand of God, the Spirit of Christ who seals you into Christ Himself – the ark of safety.

How did Noah and his household get saved? They were saved through the instrumentality of the ark because God provided the ark with a door and a seal. How are you saved today? You are saved by God's grace through Christ who is the Door and who sends His Spirit to seal you. What sign has God given to signify these things to a watching world and for us to tell God we believe His promises? It is baptism. So Peter reaches for today's sign because of what it signifies and that is Christ is our Redeemer, the Ark of our redemption, Christ is the Door and Christ by His Spirit seals you in that.

So having said that here are six affirmations from Peter of Noah and the flood. The first affirmation is the Genesis account of a universal flood, ark and a universal judgment is a historic event. This is not philosophical or a fable that the Holy Spirit used to become truth to you. It is the truth. There was a flood, an ark and it took place in history in the days of Noah. I don't have the exact dates in the calendar for you but I do know the Genesis account is trustworthy in all that it affirms, because Peter affirms it as a historic event and he affirms the cross, resurrection and ascension as a historic event in this same text. If any of these are historic events then the others have to be historic events and Peter isn't the only one that affirms this. Jesus Himself affirms this in Matthew 24.

I do a ten minute podcast Monday through Friday called Today In Perspective looking at events from a Christian world and life view. We just had some news on global warming which has become climate change which has become extreme weather now. In the program I quoted some big name scientists and their warning is that if we don't do something about extreme global warming climate change then they predict there will be a universal flood in ten years. Also in that warning they say 'just like the flood we read in geology from 125,000 years ago.' A student who went to a public school who said 'I believe in the flood, the ark, and all that' they probably would think they were brain dead yet these scientists believe in the flood. They have the date wrong and the reason wrong but the evidence is there. Christianity is not non-scientific. Science just has to catch up with what God has already revealed. This is a historic event.

The second affirmation is the presence of Christ by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of God's Word is a reality. Right now I have preached the Gospel but I don't claim any extraordinary ability. In fact I pray each time for God to overcome any of my inabilities but I do know that your rejection of the preaching of the Word of God I don't take personally but it's not against me. It's against Him. If you are drawn to it then that's because of Him. Here we see Noah preached for a hundred years and the only ones who responded were his family. Here is an insight to a preacher. Preachers are passionately longing for men and women to hear the Gospel message to come to Christ but our greater passion is whether people come or not, Christ is exalted. We are willing to die and live that He be exalted.

The third affirmation is though the Spirit of God was ever present no one repented and believed but Noah and his household. It was an external and internal calling. Noah preaches, tells them of the ark and they laughed at him. They didn't believe or confess their sins and they did not heed the warning therefore they perished under the judgment of water in that day. They were immersed in the judgment waters as they had rejected the message that had come. Side note – do you believe in Jesus today? Do you believe there is a judgment to come? Do you believe Jesus will deliver you on that day because of His atoning sacrifice and His resurrection? If you do the only reason is because God not only brought the Word externally to you but internally as His Spirit opened your heart so that you had eyes to see and ears to hear. That is why we can't wait to get to a Lord's Day to praise God from whom all blessings flow. He gave us the ability and desire to hear Him.

The fourth affirmation is all who rejected God's call to repent and believe perished under Divine judgment – then and now. There won't be a judgment of water but there is another universal judgment coming. That is why Peter uses this because this was a universal judgment whereas the other judgments we read about with people like Israel and those of Sodom and Gomorrah were not universal. The flood is a picture of the universal judgment to come, but that judgment will be for eternity and by fire. The only thing that can deliver you from that day is Jesus Christ. The fact is that God will by no means leave the guilty unpunished (Exodus 34:7). If you say 'no' to His remedy then you will be under His judgment. I can't tell you how that strikes dread in my heart for you if you don't know Him.

I plead with you to come to Christ. God is holy. The soul that sins will surely die (Ezekiel 18:20). Hebrews 9:27 says *[27] it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.* That God has loved you, sinners, and sent His Son to the cross so that you can have everlasting life. Please tell me why you would rather die, but if you would come to Him, oh how I would love to pray with you to receive the gift of everlasting life.

The fifth affirmation is those who were delivered by God's grace were saved through God's provision and by His hand. That temporal provision in the days of Noah was the ark, the

door and the seal. Now, the eternal provision that is provided by God is Christ who is the Door, the Ark and who seals you into His gracious salvation forever more.

The final affirmation is the saving grace of God for Noah and his household is compared to Christian baptism, the sign and the seal of Christ in the New Covenant. The sign is identified with what it signifies and it's appropriate. There are two Old Testament accounts. One is the people of Israel who were baptized into Moses as they went through the Red Sea (I Corinthians 10:2). Now Noah and his household being saved is called a baptism that is corresponding to the New Testament baptism and its signification. These are very appropriate Old Testament examples because they're consistent.

There are three kinds of baptisms in the Old Testament – blood, oil, and water – and all are done by pouring and sprinkling. Immersion was the sign of judgment. Who was immersed in the Red Sea? It was the Egyptians. Who was immersed in the flood? It was the unbelievers. As the rain is sprinkling down, pouring down on the earth, the believer and his household is on top of the water, immersed like a submarine, through the baptism and that becomes a signal event to remind us of the sign of baptism in the New Testament. The sign is identified with what it signifies.

You can have the sign (be baptized) and not have what it signifies (the saving grace of Christ). You can have what it signifies (be saved) but not have the sign (be baptized). Do you remember Simon the Magician in Acts 8? He was baptized (Acts 8:13) but Peter says to him in Acts 8:20–23, [20] *But Peter said to him, “May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! [21] You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. [22] Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. [23] For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.”* Simon the magician had the sign but he didn't have what it signified.

The thief on the cross next to Jesus is an example of having what it signifies but not having the sign because he did not get water baptism after he received Jesus into his life. Luke 23:39–43 says [39] *One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” [40] **But the other rebuked him**, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? [41] And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” [42] And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” [43] And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, **today you will be with me in paradise.**”* After that thief died on the cross he went to be with Jesus in paradise/heaven.

Here in I Peter, he is treating the integrity of the sign and what it signifies. We do it all the time. You read the Old Testament and the Old Covenant sign for these people was circumcision and they were called ‘the circumcised.’ Were all those circumcised in the Old Testament saved? No and there were people who were saved who weren't yet circumcised. Abraham was saved long before he was circumcised. As you come to the New Testament circumcision is fulfilled in Christ and He gives us baptism. And you can be baptized and not be saved and saved and not yet baptized, but you still treat the sign with what it signifies with integrity.

Here is a modern example of this. There is a guy and girl sitting at a table having dinner who have been dating a long time. Mom and Dad at the dinner table are getting concerned so they say ‘Son, when are you going to put a ring on that girl's finger?’ Those are very uncomfortable moments. Are they saying that because they think her hand is beautiful and she

needs a ring on it? No. The ring is a public sign that they are engaged or married. When I do a marriage one of the questions I ask in the ceremony is ‘what sign did you bring to acknowledge the sincerity of your covenant vows?’ It is the ring. This ring is identified with what it signifies. Can you wear a wedding ring and not be married? Yes. Can you be married and not have a wedding ring? Yes. The parents were really saying ‘son, get married.’ The parents were talking about the sign of marriage.

Here is another example. Let’s say you are driving in a car with me and we come to a town called Sylacauga. You say to me ‘Harry, we’re in Sylacauga.’ I say ‘How do you know?’ You say ‘Look at the sign Harry.’ If there is the sign then we are in Sylacauga. The sign identifies Sylacauga. Now if I go dig up the sign that says Sylacauga and put it in my car, did I bring Sylacauga back to Birmingham? No. So even if the sign is not there you are still in Sylacauga.

But the sign is valuable. We treat it with sacredness. That is why we always work with you when it comes to baptize believers and their household, just like Noah and his household, to own Christ publically with that sign of baptism. It is sacred, meaningful and powerful and I’m not demeaning that. I’m trying to help you understand why Peter is using the sign as related to the thing it signifies but it’s not equal to what it signifies.

So here is my takeaway. It is not the New Covenant sign of baptism that saves us but what is signified by the sign...the sovereign and sealing saving grace of God through the suffering of Christ is sufficient. That is where my hope is and that is why Peter says In Peter 3:21, *not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.* What a glorious statement!

Can you imagine that moment in the ark where the dove didn’t come back, the doors opened and Noah and his family who had been delivered through the ark, walk out into a refurbished cleansed heaven and earth? If you come to Jesus one day, in Him, the Ark of your redemption, the Door of your salvation, God will open that door and you will walk out into a new heavens and a new earth forever and ever. Come on, let’s go! Let’s pray.

Prayer:

God, thank You so much for the time to be in this challenging passage and I thank You for my brothers and sisters who have walked through this text with me. Thank You for the glorious gift of our Savior, the Ark of salvation, the Door of our salvation and who seals us by His Spirit in Himself and He in us. Thank You for the sign of baptism and all its sacredness yet let us not treat it with either superficiality or superstition but help us fix our eyes on Jesus – what it signifies, who is signified – which is His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension that washes and cleanses us as the Spirit of God pours out upon us and the blood of Jesus sprinkles us clean. Glory be to God! If you have not yet come to Christ, again I ask you to come to Him. We would love to pray with you so please call us at (205) 776-5200. Come to Him your Savior, come to Him your Redeemer for in Him you have life evermore. Your crucified, risen, ascended and coming Lord and Savior is in whose Name I pray, Amen.

Power Point

ELECT EXILES

- ELECT – *Who you are by God’s grace in Christ because of Christ’s love for you.*

13 Gospel Blessings



- EXILES – *What you are by God’s grace for Christ because of your love for Christ.*  
5 Gospel Commands

### CHRISTIAN SUFFERING

Every true Christian who by God’s grace is intentionally living for God’s glory will at some time, to some degree, in some manner, suffer for Christ’s sake.

### CHRISTIAN SUFFERING AND THE SUFFERING OF CHRIST

The Suffering of Christ is the Foundation, the Formation, and the Motivation for Christian Suffering.

- His Crucifixion
- His Resurrection
- His Ascension

### PETER’S AFFIRMATIONS OF NOAH AND THE FLOOD

1. The Genesis account of a Universal Flood, Ark and a Universal Judgment is an historic event.
2. The presence of Christ by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of God’s Word.
3. Though the Spirit of God was ever present, no one repented and believed but Noah and his household —external and internal calling.
4. All who rejected God’s call to repent and believe perished under Divine Judgment—then and now.
5. Those who were delivered by God’s grace were saved through God’s provision and by His hand.
6. The Saving Grace of God for Noah and his household is compared to Christian Baptism.

### LIFE TAKEAWAYS

*It is not the New Covenant sign of Baptism that saves us, but what is signified by the sign...  
The sovereign and sealing saving grace of God through the suffering of Christ is sufficient.*