

Celebrating God's Gifts: Sparing Mankind

Genesis 6:5-13

INTRODUCTION:

We are in a series entitled "Celebrating God's Gifts". Last week we examined the "Gift of Life".

Your life is a gift from God to YOU!

Too often we look at ourselves and feel inadequate to serve God.

- I'm too old.
- I'm too poor.
- I'm not smart enough.
- I'm not good looking enough.
- I'm not talented enough.
- I'm not... (**well... you fill in the blank**).

I understand that kind of thinking. I mean... some of us are old, weak, and intellectually challenged. But that thinking fails to take into account that our value **doesn't depend upon our strengths**. Our value depends upon our creator. Our worth is increased in direct relation to how much we allow God use us.

- And only **you** have **your** kind of abilities.
- Only **you** have **your** kind of skills.
- Only **you** have the potential that God has built into **you**.

You are exactly as God created you and prepared you to be for your good works! Let Him use YOU to accomplish His work. **JUST AS YOU ARE!**

This morning I would like to look at another gift from God. That gift is the LOVE and PATIENCE of God which has allowed mankind to even still exist today.

I am referring to the existence of LIFE itself! The gift of Sparing Mankind.

Do you realize that you and I were one man away from ever existing?

All Stand and Read Scripture

Genesis 6:5-13 (NASB)

⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 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.

⁹ These are *the records of* the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

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.

¹³ 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.

Prayer

BODY:

I. Mankind Jeopardized by His Corruption.

There are many things to be learned from this story of Noah and the Ark.

Mankind had become unbelievably evil... so much so that God was grieved and filled with pain and decided to send a flood to destroy all of mankind. BUT God found one man named Noah, and his family, who were worth saving.

God instructed Noah to build an ark and brought the animals to be saved to Noah. The floods came, the ark rose, and the whole earth was covered with water. Noah and his family stayed on board the ark for the better part of a year, and once they came off the boat God promised He'd never flood the earth again.

Now, the question for us this morning is this:

What does God want US to learn from this story?

Well first, God wants us to understand that Mankind had become unbelievably evil. You have to be really bad for God to get THIS discouraged with man.

God described it this way:

Genesis 6:11-13 (NASB)

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.

¹³ 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.

There was no kindness in these people. No compassion. Genesis 6:5 sums it up this way:

Genesis 6:5 (NASB)

⁵ Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

They couldn't even THINK clean thoughts. Unless they could hurt someone, or gain advantage over someone, they just weren't happy. Life was cheap and honor was despised.

It got so bad that after a while, people stopped thinking in terms of something being right and wrong and just tried to "get by" and "**fit in**". Ah, just to fit in.

(PAUSE)

II. Mankind Spared by One Righteous Man.

But there was one man who refused to fit in.

In a world that was unbelievably evil... this man was unquestionably righteous. His name was **Noah**.

Genesis 6:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

⁹ These are *the records of the generations of Noah*. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.

But what made Noah so righteous? What made him different than everybody else? The answer is found in verse 9 where we're told that: "**he walked with God**".

It meant that he spent the majority of his time with God.

He didn't just give God his weekends. Everywhere he walked, he took God along with him.

Every day of the week, Noah not only believed that God existed. He believed that God cared for him and was interested in every aspect of his life.

Every day of the week, Noah spent time praying to God. He wasn't just sporadically praying... he was talking to God all through the day.

And every day of the week Noah made a conscious decision to follow God. And he taught his family to live like that too.

He practiced being with God so much that once God chose him to build the ark we're repeatedly told that Noah "**...did ALL that God commanded him**" (Genesis 6:22; 7:5,9,16).

Now **THIS** is important! Noah did everything God told him to do... even when it seemed crazy to do it.

Hebrews 11:7 (NASB)

⁷ By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

If you're going to walk with God you've got to be willing to follow Him all the way. And if you do that people around you are going to tell you you're crazy.

Do you think people around Noah laughed at him and made fun of him?

(In Jest) "You are building a huge boat out in the middle of land! I don't see any storm clouds. I don't feel any drops of rain."

But continues to tell them that God is angry with them and he reminds them of their immorality and selfishness. The ark was a constant reminder of Noah's message of condemnation.

You know, when people find themselves being condemned they tend to do more than just laugh... they tend to get nasty.

That's what Jesus indicated we'd face if we took our faith seriously:

Matthew 5:10-12 (NASB)

¹⁰ "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Why would people persecute the followers of Jesus? Well, because our lives (if we live them right) are a constant reminder of their condemnation. As Paul told the Christians of his day:

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 (NASB)

¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. ¹⁵ For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; ¹⁶ to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life.

Our actions make unbelievers feel the wrongness of what they are doing and they are offended by it. That's what happens when we live our lives for God. **We offend people!**

ILLUSTRATION:

There is picture of the Ark. And written on the side of the picture were these words:

"Ah yes, the uplifting story where God massacres every living creature on the planet, including millions of men, women and every single living child. How charming. Because he loved them."

This message makes on wrong assumption. It assumes that those who died in the flood didn't deserve to suffer judgment. They were just innocent by-standers.

But these folks weren't innocent!!! They were so corrupt that God couldn't stand it.

ILLUSTRATION:

Have you ever gone into your kitchen, picked up a loaf of bread to make toast, reached inside and pulled out a piece of bread and noticed that the bread wasn't a normal color? There was green stuff growing on it. What do you do with it? Well, you throw the whole loaf away. It was decayed... moldy... not edible. If you're like me, you couldn't get that bag in the garbage fast enough.

That's how the earth looked to God in the days of Noah. It was moldy, decayed, and corrupt. The difference was that God was willing to look at every slice of bread to see if any was still clean. And God found Noah.

III. Mankind Saved by Repentance.

2 Peter 2:5 tells us that "Noah (was) a preacher of righteousness."

Noah was not just a ship builder... he was a preacher, a prophet, a declarer of judgment. He verbally told folks what was going to happen.

It's worth noting that God had NOT completely given up on these people. The ark would have had to have been a major tourist attraction. Folks would have come for 100s of miles to see this man building a huge boat out in the middle of no place. And whenever people came by... Noah would have the same message "Repent! Change! Seek God! There's a flood coming. If you don't repent you'll drown!"

And even when the ark was completed and Noah and the animals were on board... God waited. No doubt, the people outside the ark were scoffing at Noah, sitting in the ark in perfectly dry weather.

Genesis 7:10 tells us God waited 7 days: "...after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth."

(Pause) You mean to tell me that God might have spared those people in Noah's day? Well yeah!

Do you remember the story of Jonah and the whale? After spending time in the belly of a whale for disobeying God, Jonah went into the city of Nineveh and began to preach. He told the Ninevites that they had 40 days to repent or God would destroy them.

So, did God destroy Nineveh? NO!

The people were so frightened by God's message that they fasted and repented in sackcloth and ashes. And God spared their city.

But in the days of Noah nobody did that. Even with Noah preaching for so many years, and the ark standing as a testimony to God's intentions nobody changed. Nobody fasted. Nobody repented. They were too far gone, they were too corrupt, they were too jaded by their sins. And so they died.

And the fate of many at the end of time will be the same as in the days of Noah. There will be judgment... and there will be destruction. And people will have no excuse on that day.

2 Peter 3:9-10 (NASB)

⁹The 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.

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

CONCLUSION:

When you read the passages in the Bible that refer to the flood, all tell of man's sin and God's condemnation. Every single passage except one!

1 Peter 3:20-21 (NASB)

²⁰..., when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through *the water*.

²¹Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Every other passage spoke of judgment and condemnation, but this one speaks of hope and salvation.

The Ark was a shelter for the saved of Noah's day. It was built of wood and had only one door. And that one door was the ONLY way in and the only way out.

The Bible says Jesus has built a shelter for us as well. It's called the church. Not a building like the one we're meeting in, but the body of believers who meet here. That church is built upon the wood of the cross of Calvary. And that church has only ONE door. And that door is Jesus.

The lesson from the story and the flood is that there is a coming judgment. There will be a time when God's patience with us will run out. When that time comes will you be inside the shelter of God's protection or will you be on the outside and face His judgment? The choice is yours.

We have life because of God's love for us and His patience. He gave us this gift of life by sparing mankind because of one righteous man.

God has made it possible for us to find a "new life" in Him through one righteous man. Jesus, His son, who died on the cross that we can have forgiveness of sin. He **so** wishes that all would come to repentance and be saved through the waters of baptism.

God Be with You till We Meet Again

God be with you till we meet again, By His counsels guide uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you, God be with you till we meet again.

Till we meet...Till we meet, Till we meet at Jesus' feet;

Till we meet...Till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.