



First Baptist Church At The Villages

INSPIRING FAITHFULNESS • NOAH • Genesis 6:1-16 • FOR USE BY GROUPS 6/03 -06/08/2019

Main Point

The story of Noah and the ark is a picture of God's protection of a believer in a world that is sinking into sin and destruction.

Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is the worst natural disaster you have seen or experienced? What was it like going through that time?

What happened after the disaster? Where did people look for help and comfort?

We learn a lot about ourselves when we experience such traumatic events. The way we react to the destruction of our property or city shows what and who we value. During such times, many turn to God while others run from Him. In the story of Noah and the flood we see a story not about man nor his animals. Instead we see a story about God's judgment and salvation.

Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

God warned Noah of the coming flood, instructing him to build an ark to save his family and animal life. God promised to establish His covenant with Noah, but Noah's devotion to the Lord no doubt met ridicule. Yet by faith Noah obeyed, built the ark, and thereby escaped judgment.

| Have a volunteer read Genesis 6:1-8.

How is our culture similar to Noah's? Different? Do you think our culture is more corrupt than it used to be? Why or why not?

In your life, the lives of your children, or in today's culture, what consequences have you seen of choosing to disobey God?

What did it cost Noah to follow God? Does following Jesus always have a cost associated with it? Why or why not?

While all of mankind lived in wickedness and rebellion against God, Noah was found to be righteous and walking with God.

| Have a volunteer read Genesis 6:9-16.

Genesis 6 begins by detailing the wicked state of all mankind, yet even in this desolation, hope arrives in verse 9 as Noah, a righteous man committed to the Lord, is introduced. Noah followed God's leadership and sought to live for Him.

How would you respond if someone in your neighborhood began building an ark in their backyard because God reportedly told them to do so?

Has God ever asked you to do something you didn't completely understand or that you knew people would mock? How did you respond to the amount of trust that had to be invested?

What excuses do people use to avoid doing what God has commanded them to do? Are any of these excuses valid before God? Why?

In a world that had turned its back on God, Noah's commitment to God stood out. From the very beginning of his story, we read about Noah's exceptional life as someone who exhibited righteousness, blamelessness, and who walked with God in sharp contrast to the people of his generation. Noah's desire to follow God did not mean he was perfect. Noah sinned like all people, but he refused to involve himself in the horrible sin of those around him.

When have you seen someone refuse to get caught up in the inappropriate behavior of others?

What do you have to believe about God to actively set yourself apart from the world around you?

Think about the lives of great Christians you know. What distinguishes their walks with God?

Surrounded by people willingly trapped in sin, Noah followed God's leadership and sought to live for Him. This choice requires a close, personal walk with God. Our relationship with Him involves spending time with Him, listening to Him, learning about His love and perspective, following His leadership, and depending on Him.

How do you think Noah felt as God revealed His plan of destruction?

What do verses 11-13 teach us about the seriousness of sin? How would your life look different if you took your sin as seriously as God does?

How do you see evidence of both God's judgment and His mercy in these verses?

Noah undoubtedly had noticed the disintegration of the world. Though Noah maintained a personal relationship with God, obeyed Him, and lived for Him, humanity continued to move further away from Him. God exhibits His grace by providing many opportunities to repent before He punishes, but punishment does come. God does not tolerate rebellion and disobedience forever (see 2 Pet. 3:8-9). God's grace and call to repentance does not mean God will not punish sin.

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

As followers of Christ, how should our obedience mirror Noah's?

How does walking with God lead to trust and obedience? Similarly, how do obedience and trust lead to walking with God?

Like the rainbow in the sky set as a reminder of God's covenant, what are other daily reminders of God's covenant?

Who can you seek out today and share the good news of what Jesus has done for him/her? Is there a way God's work in your own story can help that person understand salvation?

Pray

Close by reminding your group that just as God worked through Noah in a fallen world, He can use us if we follow Him in obedience. Thank God for His grace and mercy and His desire to walk with His children.

Commentary

| Genesis 6:1-22.

6:1 Although the stated reason for God's judgment against the earth is encroaching moral perversion (6:5), there is an implication in the passage that the marriage between the sons of God and the daughters of men (v. 2) contributed in some way to this moral decline. This is suggested (1) by the punishment oracle of v. 3, (2) by the parallel use of "saw" in vv. 2 and 5, which describe the behavior of the sons of God toward the

daughters of men (v. 2), and (3) by God's response to sin (v. 5). Essentially, v. 1 reports what was depicted in chaps. 4–5 concerning the expansion of human life and achievement, but it also puts to the fore the connection between population growth and the divine pattern for marriage.

6:2 The identity of the sons of God and the daughters of men is the major interpretive obstacle. Historically, three opinions have won a significant following for identifying the sons of God: (1) angels, (2) human judges or rulers, and (3) the descendants of Seth. Church Fathers, such as Augustine, as well as the Reformers (Luther, Calvin) interpreted the sons of God as a reference to “godly men,” that is, the righteous lineage of Seth. Although this view has its share of difficulties, we find that it is the most attractive.

6:3 The consequence of their actions is the divine restriction of human life. In withdrawing his spirit, the Lord no longer graciously preserves their life span.

6:4 The identity of the Nephilim and their relationship, if any, to the marriages (v. 2) is perplexing. The word occurs but once more, in Num 13:33, where it refers to an indigenous population inhabiting Canaan. It is most attractive to consider the Nephilim as normal human men. These are of the warrior class, men of ignoble reputation whose violent exploits are remembered (cf. 6:11–13) and whose names strike fear in the hearts of their hearers. They are identified as men of renown, not divine or semidivine figures. Despite their notorious achievements they are no more than men, subject to the same judgment as any (v. 3). As warriors of renown they seek reputation by their wicked deeds in the way the people of Babel will seek fame through their building enterprise (cf. 11:4).

6:5-8. These verses are an exposé on the degeneracy of the human heart. Collectively, society has decayed beyond recovery in God's estimation. The progression in this small cluster of verses is arresting: “The Lord saw.... The Lord grieved.... The Lord said.” He himself brings sanctions against all humanity, including the most vulnerable (animals). The threat of extinction is not only inclusive of all living things, but also is geographically all-encompassing.

6:9-10. In a world of increasing sin, God found a person named Noah whose commitment to Him stood out. Noah was righteous, a description given to no other person up to this point in the Bible. Noah and his wife had three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The list of Noah's sons provides a link between the end of the list of Seth's descendants (Gen. 5:32) and the Table of Nations (10:1). After the flood, humanity had another opportunity to begin again through Noah's sons. Before the flood ever arrived, God in His mercy had determined to provide this opportunity.

6:11-13. God's world had become the complete opposite of what He created and intended. God intended the earth to be filled with people and animals (Gen. 1:24,28). Instead, corruption and violence filled the earth. God told Noah of His plans to destroy the earth and its inhabitants. God also explained to Noah why the earth was about to face destruction. Sin had corrupted the world, perverting humanity and causing nature to suffer. The world no longer existed as God intended, so God would destroy the earth and its inhabitants and undo

His creation. Since humanity insisted on corrupting itself through disobedience to Him, God would make the corruption complete by destroying the earth and its living creatures.

6:14-16. God had decided to destroy the world due to its sin. He instructed Noah to construct an ark, indicating He intended to deliver Noah and provide a new beginning for the world. Unlike most ships through the ages, the ark had no curved bow or rudder. God did not intend Noah to sail the vessel. He intended the boat only to be a container in which Noah, his family, and animals could survive the flood.