

The Hall of Faith: Noah

Hebrews 11:7

February 5, 2023, Pastor Jeremy Cagle

Well, good morning, everyone. Before we begin our sermon this morning, I just wanted to share something from my heart with you as a pastor. And that is, it's a very simple thing, but I really like talking to you. I haven't had a chance to tell you that in a while, but I really enjoy our conversations we have on Sunday mornings, throughout the week, when you call on the phone, and you just share what the Lord's doing in your life. And the reason that is, is because that's why you get into the ministry. I was talking with a pastor friend of mine, and we were just sharing how you don't get into ministry for the title, and you don't do it for the ego, and you don't do it for the money. You do it to see people's lives changed by the power of the gospel; you do it to see the Holy Spirit work in their lives and turn them out of a life of sin and to a life of godliness. That's the whole reason you enter the pastoral work. And I say that because a number of you have really encouraged me recently, because you told me you've gotten saved. In the last couple of months or years, the Lord has done a work in your life and brought you from darkness to light and converted you. And can we just say amen to that? I mean, anytime you see that, that's a wonderful thing. That's why you come to church too, isn't it?

In light of that, I would encourage you strongly, if that's happened in your life in the recent months or years, to consider being baptized. The Bible tells us to go into all the world, make disciples, baptizing them. And that means when you become a disciple you are baptized. You do that to tell your church family of what the Lord has done in your life. Many of you have told your friends, you've told your physical family, biological family, and that's wonderful, but you need to tell the church as well. And you do that in the waters of baptism. As you go down into the water, it demonstrates your life has died in Christ. As you come up out of the water, it demonstrates that your life has risen in Christ. And if that's something you're interested in, we are doing a class after church this morning in the Fireside Room in the gym, to just talk about that if you have questions about it, if it's something that's just on your mind, please come join us over there for that. When you come to the class, it doesn't mean that you have to be baptized, it's just to talk about it, and have an interaction with that. That'll be directly after the service in the fireside room next door.

And with that said this morning, we are continuing our studies in the book of Hebrews. As we do that, we're coming to Hebrews 11, or the Great Hall of Faith. We've been talking about this for the last couple of weeks, but this is where the author goes through a list of people from the Old Testament to show you how they were saved and converted and born again, like many of you have experienced recently. And that was by their faith in God. It wasn't by works, wasn't by efforts, it wasn't by the law. In the Old Testament, they were redeemed like you and I by trusting in the power of God. In order to demonstrate that the author goes through a series of several saints from Abel all the way down to David. And the name we're coming to this morning is Noah, as we just heard very powerfully in the children's lesson. We do have church insurance, by the way, if some of you are wondering about that. But this is Noah, the

man who built the ark. When we first started studying Hebrews 11, we looked at Abel, the man who saw death, because he tasted it to the fullest when he was murdered by his brother Cain. Then we looked at Enoch, the one who escaped death, because he walked with God and he was no more. And now we're going to study the life of a man who saw death again, but on a scale that few could imagine because he watched the whole earth around him perish in the flood. So it was just death upon death in his eyes. And to introduce him, I want you to turn with me to the book of Genesis. So if you've already gone to Hebrews 11, just keep your finger there, we will go there in a moment. But turn to Genesis 6, because this is where we learn about the story of the man called Noah. If you look in Genesis 6:1, it says,

Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves whomever they chose. Then the LORD said, "My spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

And then if you go down to verse five, it says,

The Lord saw the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The LORD was sorry that He made man on the earth and He was grieved in his heart. 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 made them." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

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

Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with the violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them from the earth. Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood.

And we'll stop the reading there, but the idea is that that is what will save you from the flood. This is what will deliver Noah and his family from this upcoming disaster, and that was the boat made of wood, which is the first boat ever mentioned in the Bible, by the way. It's sort of an interesting thing to think about. It's the first sailing vessel of any kind described in its pages. And it was unique in all of history, because it was designed to do one thing and one thing only, and that was to escape the judgment of God. To my mind, there's no other ship that was said to do that but this one.

Just to give you some background on the story, what we just read, if you remember the timeline of where this occurs, Genesis 1 tells us how God created Adam and Eve and they were sinless; they were perfect. Then Genesis 3 tells us how they fell into sin; they gave into temptation. And now Genesis 6 tells us how far they really did fall, or how far their descendants fell, and that was to the point that God decided to destroy them in a flood, every one of them. All of them. No one was spared except one man and his family. The sin had become so bad that God couldn't take it anymore. In fact, if you look in verse five, it says that the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and every intent of the thought of his heart was evil, and He was sorry He made them. That's a long way to go from the Garden of Eden, isn't it? That's a long way to plummet from Genesis one, because it means a sin had spread to every facet of creation. In just a few chapters of the Bible, it had taken hold of every corner of society, because it had gone into the recesses of the human heart. When it mentions the inclinations of the heart here, what that means is that nobody had to tell man to sin, he just sinned. And nobody had to force him to do wicked things, it just happened naturally. That was the direction of his soul. As I told you before, a lot of people say sin is a product of man's environment. So if you were to change a person's surroundings, it would make him act better, and he'll do what's right. But they forget that Adam and Eve fell in a perfect environment. And then here you are, many years later, in a world that was probably better than ours in some regards, and they did this because the human heart is desperately sick and who can understand it. So as a result, the Lord says, "I will blot out man whom I've created." The word "blot out," you know, just like you would take a message on a chalkboard and wipe it off. Or like you would take something on a computer screen and hit delete. God was going to do that with the whole human race because this was His world, and they're ruining it. And this was His creation, and they're treating it like this. And so He was going to punish them. Creation scientists tell us that the floodwaters were so powerful, they would have gouged new valleys and helped reshape mountains. And they were so strong, they would have caused parts of the earth's crust to maybe even shift and move. So the world that you stepped into when the flood was over, was totally different from the world you just experienced. Because this is what the flood was designed to do: it was going to remove every last vestige of these people from the planet, so nobody would hardly remember them. When you read Genesis 5 and you study the lives of the antediluvian people, men like Seth, and Kenan, and Methuselah, and Enoch, you know almost nothing about them. Why? Because God's judgment was so perfect. It was so complete that it just hit delete.

Before it did that, the Lord told one man to build an ark. Because he was blameless, he walked with God, he was totally different from all these other people. And the word for "ark" here it's the Hebrew word *Teba*. It means an ark or a giant sailing vessel of some kind, and just show you how big it was, verse 15 gives you the dimensions. And when you convert those numbers into feet, it makes the ark out to be something like 500 feet long, 75 feet across, and 50 feet high. The Answers in Genesis website says that that comes to about four stories tall, 96,000 square feet in diameter, and long enough to put three NASA Space Shuttles side by side on top. In comparison to that, the Titanic was 144,000 square feet and 17 stories tall, so it was bigger than that, but this was still a very large boat. Some have said it

was probably one of the largest wooden vessels ever made. And the reason it was so big as we just heard in the children's lesson is so it could hold two of every kind of animal in there, or species of animal. If you look in verse 19, it describes that this way, and it says, "And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. And when it says two of every kind, that means two of every species. So Noah was not commanded to literally bring two of every animal on the ark, but two of every dog species and cat species and bird species so they would survive the flood. Because the Lord wasn't just going to save people, He was going to save everything that He made, including the animals. They were part of His creation too. And I would just say there, just summing it up, that's quite a story, isn't it?

It's remarkable to think that God would take one man to do all of this, because in order to build the ark, Noah had to cut the wood, trim the wood, and haul it to the place of construction. He had to lift it in place, and hold it in place, and nail it in place - all by hand. It was all done without the use of modern technology, his sons probably helped him do this, which sounds amazing. But the one thing you need to remember about Noah's work is that it would not have been amazing to his neighbor's. Remember they're wicked, and every intent of the thoughts of their heart was evil. So all the people around him would have laughed at him as he built it. But the point is that Noah did it anyway, despite the ridicule, because he was a man of faith. I'll tell you why this is in a moment, but some have said that it would have taken Noah 120 years or something like that to build the ark. And they could have taunted him the whole time, but it didn't matter because he trusted in God, which takes us to the book of Hebrews. So if you want to go there with me in your Bibles. I tell you all that by way of background because the author of the book of Hebrews refers to Noah next in the Hall of Faith when he says this in verse seven. He's talked about a number of people so far, he has quite a few to talk about next, but he says this about Noah,

By faith, Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark.

And that's one of the statements you read in a chapter like this, and you don't think much about it, but you should, because it means that Noah prepared an ark when the flood wasn't seen yet. He did it long before the catastrophe had taken place because he had faith. The reason he acted that way is because he believed in God, that's it. Because the Lord told him to build an ark, so he built an ark. And God said the flood was coming, so he believed the flood was coming; that's all he needed to know. Verse seven says he did it for the salvation of his household. In other words, this was the purpose of the ark, and that was salvation. The reason he built it was to deliver his loved ones from the judgment to come, which makes this story a beautiful picture of the gospel. Because just like Noah sailed over the waters of judgment, so you can do the same thing today if you put your trust in Jesus Christ.

And it says, "by which he became an heir of righteousness." And that means this is what Noah's faith did for him as well: it made him right with God the same way Abel's did, but it all goes back to judgment. And the reason Noah did all of this is because the world was about to be condemned, and he

didn't want to be part of it, so he put his hope in God. I would say we can relate to this story, can't we? Because our world is about to be condemned at some point, isn't it? It's heading for judgment like Noah's was. If you don't believe me, just go home today and read the newspaper. And tell me if there's any sin in that paper that wasn't committed in Noah's day. Tell me if there's any evil thing that's being done, described in the Chilliwack Progress that wasn't happening in Genesis 6, I can't think of one. They lied, and we lie. They stole and we steal. They killed people; we kill people. The only difference is that we do it with the use of modern technology, and it *looks* more respectable, but it's not. We talked about this in the men's Bible study yesterday, but Canada is such a nice place, and it can often make you think that Canada is a righteous place, this isn't a righteous place. And the truth is God is not going to put up with it forever. One day, He's going to put a stop to it like He did with them. And the lesson of Noah's life is that you don't have to go through that. The Lord can save you from the judgment to come if you follow his example of faith. That's what we're going to talk about this morning by looking at three characteristics of Noah's faith. And so if you're taking notes, this is our outline today, but in Hebrews 11:7, we're gonna look at three characteristics of Noah's faith. And then afterwards, like we've done before, I want to do a review of what we've learned.

The first one is that by faith Noah prepared an ark. These are all just going to come straight from the text here. But the first characteristic of Noah's faith in the passage is the most important one because this is what the story is about. By faith he prepared an ark, which means that by faith, Noah built the ship before the floodwaters had even come. You can't build a ship when the floodwaters aren't there, can you? That doesn't make sense. And you can't put the boat together when the rain's coming down and the waters are rising, you have to do it ahead of time. But the only way to do that is to keep your eyes on God. Do what Noah did.

If you look in verse seven again, if you notice, this verse starts off with a very familiar phrase that we see a lot in Hebrews 11. And that's the phrase "by faith." It's repeated more than 20 times in here to serve as an introduction to all these people, because every time a new name appears in the chapter, it begins with the phrase "by faith." So it says, "by faith, Abel," and then it tells you a little bit about Abel. and "by faith, Enoch," and it tells you about Enoch. And after saying that, we come to this third man when it says, "by faith, Noah." It says, "by faith Noah" together with all these other men in the line of redemption history.

Just to give you some information, a little bit about who he was, when you do a survey of the Bible, you find Noah was the ninth generation of sons to be born after Adam. And that's interesting, because it means he came from Adam's bloodline. So there was a direct connection between him and the first man in history because the story of Noah is placed in the Bible to form a bridge between creation and everything that happens after the flood. He's kind of the middleman in that. And not only that, but Genesis 7:6 says he was 600 years old at the time of the flood, which means he was born a few years after Adam died. Because like a lot of those men in Genesis five, he had a long life. And so his world would have overlapped with people like Seth, and Enoch, and Kenan and Methuselah. The book of 2

Peter also says Noah was a preacher, just like Enoch was last week. No, Enoch was a prophet. Noah was a preacher, which is not how we often look at him because we see him as a carpenter and a builder of the ark, but apparently, he was more than that, because he told people of the judgment that was to come. He built, he preached, put the ark together and he told them the word of God. I told you last time, some people have wondered what this would look like because we don't know how many people lived on the earth at this time. But if men like Adam and Seth and Mahalalel, lived to be over 900, as Genesis five says, and they kept having children, the earth would have been very populated. There would have been a lot of people there, and so Noah's work was a very daunting task. You're preaching to a large amount of people that don't believe, and as he did that, verse seven says, he built this ark, which is the most memorable thing about him. We've all known the story of Noah and the ark.

But in the words of the passage, it says, "By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not seen, in reverence prepared an ark." Now, if you notice, there's a couple of things the author tells you about the way Noah built this ark here, for example, it says he did it after being warned by God. In other words, Noah didn't build the ark as a hobby. And he wasn't doing it for fun. And it wasn't some kind of craftsman's project where he goes down to Home Depot and says, "I wonder if I can do this." It wasn't like that at all. He built it as a warning of judgment. This whole thing was done out of a sense of foreboding, which made it a serious task. I mean, every time Noah went down to the shipyard or wherever he went to build it, he knew what he was doing. It was done with a great feeling of gravity.

And the passage also says Noah prepared it after being warned about things not seen, and this is where the issue of faith comes in. Because Noah had never seen a flood like this before; no one had. He had never seen the Lord destroy the whole earth with water, so he had to build it trusting it would happen someday. Some have said that it never rained at this point in history. If you've studied creation science, you might have heard that Genesis two says the Lord had not sent rain upon the earth, but a mist would rise and water the surface of the ground. The problem with that view, though, is that that verse is describing the Garden of Eden, and not necessarily what took place outside of that. So we don't know what took place outside of the garden; maybe it rained, maybe it didn't. But whatever the case is, it had never done this before. It's never done this since, by the way. This was a totally unique thing, so Noah really had to have confidence in God as he built.

After saying that, the author also says he prepared the ark for the salvation of his household, which means it was done to rescue his family. And that's noteworthy because Genesis 7:13 and 1 Peter 3 tell us that the only people that got on the ark was Noah's family, and there were eight of them. Now, if you think about that, the whole earth was full of people, and how many were saved? Eight. It was covered in humanity, and there's only his relatives were the ones that got on the ark; their names were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. That was his sons and then their wives. Other than that, everyone else perished. They all died, because they were the only ones who had faith to do it. Nobody else had it. In fact, when it says in verse seven, that in reverence, Noah prepared the ark, that gives you an idea of how he approached this, because he did it with a sense of awe and reverence and love for the Lord while everyone else scoffed.

This is important, because I want to tell you that so many people approach God the same way that folks in Genesis did. They just scoff. It's no reverence. You tell them about judgment, they scoff at it. You tell them about hell, they scoff at it. You tell them about the cross, they scoff at it. You tell them there's a way to be saved. They scoff at it. You tell them that there's a Bible with the Word of God that can show them how to have their sins forgiven, they scoff. It's just scoffing, scoffing, scoffing, scoffing because they would rather sin. And the reminder here in this story way back in the Bible is that scoffing is not going to go on forever. There's going to come a time when it stops. The Bible tells us one day God will destroy this present earth and create a new one. And on that day, He will punish all the wickedness by bringing down a series of cataclysmic events. And when He does, He will take all the scholars who have not repented and send them to hell. He will take the people that rejected Him and punish them in a fit of rage; He won't pardon them, He won't ignore them, He won't overlook the things that they've done, He will wipe them out like chalk on a chalkboard. And the reminder here is that if you want to avoid all that, you have to do what Noah did, and run to the one thing that can save you. Noah had an ark; you have a cross. You need to go to the Son of God who was crucified so that all those who look to Him might not perish but have everlasting life. You need to trust in the One who was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him and by His wounds, you were healed. You need to do it no matter what the world says about you. I mean, if Noah tells you anything it's that you trust in Christ whether people like it or not. And Jesus said the road is narrow. That means it was narrow then; it's narrow now. And He said only a few find it; and that means only a few found it in Noah's day, only a few people find it today. This is a frightening story. I mean, eight people saved in the entire earth. What's that? But you can't be saved if you follow the crowd. You're gonna have to step out in faith against that.

You know, as I was studying for this sermon, I was reminded that in the church I grew up in, they used to show a lot of movies about the flood. I don't know if you guys had that in the churches you were in. But just about every time they did, there was always a part of the show where the rains would come down and people would start banging on the doors of the ark and yelling so they could get in, but it was too late. Because the doors were shut and once they were shut, they were shut for good. But the problem with that part of the movie is that you don't read about that in the book of Genesis. I couldn't find it because it seems like almost everybody died oblivious to it. The floodwaters came down, they started rising, and everyone's heart was so steeped in sin, they couldn't even see the one thing that could save them from the judgment. It's what our world is like. You don't want to get on board with that. You have to take the warning of the passage here.

And it brings us to another characteristic of Noah's faith, and that is that by faith he condemned the world. So, the first one is that by faith he prepared an ark. But the second characteristic of his faith in here is that by faith he condemned the world, which means that he rebuked it. His act of building the ark reminded every one of their sin. Now they may not have liked the warning, and they may not have listened to the warning, but the warning was there. This next point is interesting because to my knowledge, this is the only time someone's faith is said to do this in the chapter. Because usually when

someone is described in Hebrews 11, it's done in a positive light. So, for instance, when it describes Abel, it says Abel offered to God, in verse four, a better sacrifice than Cain. But it doesn't tell us that Abel condemned Cain. Although in a sense he did; it just doesn't say that. Then in verse five, it says, "By faith Enoch was taken up, so he would not see death." But it doesn't tell us how Enoch rebuked his generation. But it does that here with Noah because this is one of the things the ark did, and that was to remind everyone of judgment. Every time you walked by the ark, it showed you judgment. Every time you passed by it, it gave you a reminder of condemnation, because verse seven says, "By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not seen, in reverence prepared an ark... by which he condemned the world."

And the word "condemned" here, it's a Greek word, *katakrino*. It's a compound word from *kata* down and *krino* to judge. It means he brought judgment down upon their heads because he told them that what they were doing was wrong to the point that it was crushing them under the weight of it. It was intended to anyway. That's what he did for the people in his day.

And if you're wondering how Noah did this, specifically, I mean, one way he did it was by constructing the ark in front of them. As far as we could tell, Noah did not do that in private, the ark was too big for that, so it was done in a public place. And as he did, it reminded them of judgment. In fact, I told you earlier that the book of Genesis indicates it probably took Noah 120 years to do this. If you want to write this verse down in your Bibles, we just read it earlier. But Genesis 6:3 said, "The Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever... nevertheless his day shall be one hundred and years.'" And that doesn't mean that man's chronological days will be 120 years, because a lot of men lived longer than that after the flood. But it means that the days of man's life on the earth will be 120 years before the floodwaters come. That's how much time will pass before the judgment. And the implication that some have taken this to mean is that this is how long it took Noah to construct this big boat. So that as he did that, the people had every opportunity to walk by it and say, "What are you doing, Noah?" And they had a chance after chance after chance to pass by the structure being raised off the ground and say, "Why are you making that?" And it would have given him time to explain it to them, but they didn't listen. That's where the condemnation came into place.

Another way he condemned them was also by preaching. So he did it by building the ark. He did it by preaching as well. As I just told you, 2 Peter 2:5 called Noah a preacher, which means he gave sermon after sermon as he was building the ark; and lesson after lesson for presumably 120 years as well. That's a lot of preaching. And that's a whole lot of sermons to just have eight converts. Amen? Can you imagine how frustrating that would be? There's even a Jewish legend that says after Noah started building the ark, he made a bell that was five feet high. And he rang it five times a day in order to tell people the flood was coming. We don't know that he did that, but it gives you a picture of what it could have looked like. Because the idea here in the passage is not that Noah condemned people because he threw his hands up in the air and says, "I don't care about you guys." He condemned them because he

showed them the way to be saved and they wouldn't take it. He gave them a chance to believe and they said no.

Let me just say it says a lot about God's character that He would do this, Amen? It says so much about His grace that He would warn people for this long before destroying them. I don't know about you guys, but I mean, I give my children one warning and that's it; then I lose my temper sometimes. I couldn't do it for 120 years. But this is what God did. When He brings judgment, He often gives us this opportunity to repent; and the reminder here is that if you don't repent, the blame is on your shoulders, not His. And if you don't turn from the judgment and turn to Christ, the fault is on your shoulder. I think a lot of people forget this because they want to blame God for their sin. And they want to say it's His fault they don't believe. But let me ask you, why is it God's fault? What's God done wrong? If you want grace, He's offered you grace. If you want mercy, He's given you mercy. If you want the gospel, He's provided that as well. If you want a way out of sin, there's a way out of sin. But if you don't take it, there's no one to blame but you. The problem is not that you can't believe; the problem is that the world doesn't want to believe. It's an act of the will. And this is so common today. You see it happen in young people who grew up in church, and they sit among us, and they graduate from high school, and what's the first thing they do? They bolt for the door. Don't want that God stuff anymore. You see it happen in an older lady who follows Christ for 30 years, only to leave Him during a time of trial for the same reason, because she liked the world more than Him. And the Bible says there's no excuse for that sort of thing; it's always condemned. It's one thing to sin without warning; it's another thing to do it like this. In fact, when you consider the age of some of these men in Genesis five, you realize some of them lived to be over 900 years old. And can you imagine how many warnings you would hear in 900 years? Imagine how many sermons you would have listened to, and they rejected it because this is how hard the human heart can be.

It brings us to another characteristic of his faith here. And that is that by faith he became an heir of righteousness. We're just getting these from the text as they appear in front of us; but a third characteristic of his faith, is that by faith Noah became an heir of righteousness. Which means that while the rest of the world was ignoring this warning, this is what Noah's faith did, it made him right with God. And that may seem to come out of nowhere after what we just talked about, but it doesn't. Because this is where the author takes all the we've seen about Noah in the verse, and he summarizes it. Because if you look in verse seven, this is the summary, it says,

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.

Now, what does that mean? This last phrase "became an heir of the righteousness." Well, if you notice, it doesn't say that Noah became an heir of righteousness. It says he became an air of *the* righteousness. Not of salvation, but of *the* salvation or the same one that was given to everyone else in Scripture. This

is the same righteousness that was given to Abel and Enoch and Abraham. This is the same salvation that was provided for Isaac and Jacob and Joseph. This is the same redemption that was given to you and me, and all these people that we're talking about. And the reason the author makes such a big deal of this at the end, is because Noah really lived at a very unique time in history. There's nothing like this in the Bible, not that I know of. He was saved through an ark, saved from a flood, delivered in a miraculous way; so you might be tempted to look at him and think that his salvation was different than everybody else's. But it's not. God saved Noah the same way He does with everyone, and that's by faith. Verse seven says he was not born an heir of the righteousness, he became one. In other words, Noah was not converted because he was Adam's descendent or his physical bloodline. It was because through faith, he was adopted in, just like you and me.

This phrase "became an heir," it's an unusual one for us today because we don't have this process where someone becomes an heir. But in the ancient world, the Romans had a practice, whereby when a child was born into a household, they would place the kid at the father's feet, and if he didn't want it, he would step over it. And they would toss it out or sell it into slavery, they were very brutal times. They couldn't abort babies back then, so they would have a baby and just leave it by the roadside for people to pick up. But if the father did want the child, he would reach down and pick it up. And from the moment that happened, that child became an heir of the family with all the rights thereof. He would have an inheritance; he would have the father's name. And the author says this is what happened to Noah through faith. God bent down and picked him up, so he would become a child of God.

If you think about it with the story of Noah, it makes a lot of sense because there really wasn't anything else he could turn to but faith in his lifetime. There's no other reason that would keep him building and building and building the ark for 120 years. I can't think of one. You know, when I read the story, I don't know about you, but I often wonder what it would be like to be Noah's friend at this time, and have a conversation with him. Because you can imagine the conversation would go something like this:

"What you doing Noah?"
"Building an ark?"
"Why?"
"God told me to."
"Why?"
"Because of the flood."
"When's the flood coming?"
"I don't know. 120 years?"
"On what day?"
"I don't know"
"Who's going to be on it"
"Don't know."
"Where's it going to take you?"

“I don't know.”

“Will the trip be bumpy or smooth?”

“I don't know.”

“Will it be comfortable or hard?”

“I don't know.”

“Think you'll like it?”

“I don't know.”

“Well, what do you know, Noah?

“I know God. I understand His character. And I believe He will take care of me.”

You see, that's the mindset of a man who became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith. That's what it means to be saved this way. It doesn't mean you have all the answers. It doesn't mean you know all the things that are going to happen. It means you know one thing and one thing only, and that is that the Lord will take care of you, Amen? And that's all you need to know.

I think so many people struggle with this today because they want to make their faith so much harder than this. Because they refuse to believe in God until they have the answers first. And they don't want to trust in Him until they know that the ride will be bumpy or smooth or hard or easy. But the problem is God never promised you that. He just told you to get on the ark. He never told you what the ride is going to be like. He told you to trust in Christ, and you'll be delivered from the wrath to come, and that's it. That's what makes you right with Him. This allows you to come into His presence, pure and clean, because the Lord takes your unrighteousness and He nails it to the cross. And He takes the righteousness of Christ and imputes it to your account. But it all goes back to your faith. It's the humble heart that says, “Lord Jesus, I trust you. I don't know what You're gonna do in my life. I don't understand where You're going to take me. I don't know how all Your promises are going to come to bear in my circumstances, but I know you're worthy. And I believe you're good.”

Some of you are familiar with this story, but it was said Martin Luther was converted by studying this doctrine. Because he said that before he was saved, he hated the phrase, “the righteousness of God” because it always made him feel guilty. He couldn't live up to it. And then he read Romans 1:17, which said that the righteous shall live by faith and everything changed for him. Because that's when he realized that God's righteousness is not something I earned; it's something that I received as a gift through faith. And the author says it was that way for Noah; it's that way for you. Because when you trust in Christ, that is God's gift for you. You don't earn it. When you step onto the ark, that's God's gift for you; you don't earn that either. We take hold of these things, purely through faith.

It brings us to one more thing to talk about this morning. Just to review these other ones, the first characteristic of Noah's faith is that by faith he prepared an ark. And then secondly, by faith he condemned the world. Thirdly, by faith he became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith. And just like it was in these previous passages, that's where the story stops in this verse. Just like he did

with Abel and Enoch, the author doesn't go into more details about the life of Noah, because he moves on to talk about other things. As you're gonna see next time when we get into the life of Abraham, he's not going to do that. He'll give you more information about Abraham. And then when you get into life of Moses, it's the same thing as well. He'll spend seven verses talking about Moses, but for these first few people, he keeps it brief, which is why it's hard to finish the sermon here, because every time I study the life of Noah, there's just more to say. Which leads me to talk about one more thing, and that's some practical lessons from his life.

If you've been with us during the past few messages, after finishing these verses, we kind of go back over the material and talk about some practical applications. The first one is this. Let me just give you a handful of them. It doesn't take sin very long to take over the world, doesn't it? It doesn't take wickedness very long to spread and corrupt everything. I mean, what's the timeline? The Lord creates the earth in Genesis one, Adam and Eve fall in Genesis three, what happens in Genesis six? Sin takes over. It became so pervasive that God has to destroy it because every intent of the thought of man's heart is only evil continually; not occasionally, but continually, not sporadically, but over and over and over again, which is a tremendous decline. Because this is how sin operates, you given it an inch, and it takes a mile. It spreads through society like cancer. Just for a modern day example this, you can look at the nation of Canada, and see it wasn't that long ago that Canada was considered to be a Christian nation. Some of you remember that. At one time right before World War Two, historians tell us there were more professing Christians living here percentage wise than almost anywhere else in the world, including the United States. There were Christians everywhere, churches on every corner. Now, it's the opposite. Now Canada has become so secular, that some of our leaders have made it their ambition in life to do nothing but promote evil; in just one generation. That's how long it took. Because the way it happens is it's not like God is reaching into people's hearts and making them sin, on the contrary, He's saying to a nation like Canada, "If you like your sin so much, I'm going to let you have it. I'll just remove my hand of restraint and let you do whatever you want because your hearts are already sinful." When that happens, there's only one thing to blame for that. And then that's us. That's the people. We need to repent, and remember how serious this is.

This brings you to another practical lesson you learned from Noah's life. And that is that God never lets people get away with sin. Just to go along with a previous point, but He always makes sure to hold people accountable for the sins they commit, which is why this is so important, because if you don't repent, judgment will come for you. I know there are a lot of people who don't believe that today. They think they can sin all they want to and God doesn't care, but He cares very much. You see it right here because man sins and what happens? Judgment comes. People break God's law, and what does God do? He brings a day of reckoning in order to remind you that that's the way things operate in His world. That day may not come today, it may not come tomorrow, it may be a long time while the ark is being built and that sort of thing, but it will come. In fact, when you read the story of the flood, it's very sobering on this point because it's a worldwide event. Because the sin was a worldwide problem. There's some skeptics who don't believe that. They think the flood was regional, but that's not what the Bible says. It

tells us that the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I've created from the face of the land." And that means all the land, every corner of it. And it says, "Behold, everything that is on the earth shall perish," that means perish completely. It's all going to drown in an act of violence. It said when the rains came, all flesh that was on the earth perished. Birds and cattle, beasts and men, all in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. But the reason it's so descriptive on that point is because this is how much God hates sin. He hates it enough to punish everything. And the reality is that if He did it once, He'll do it again. Like I said before, our world is no better than it was a Noah's day.

And another practical lesson from the life of Noah that corresponds with this one is that even though that day is coming, God always provides a way of salvation. Amen? You see that in the story. Even though He'll bring a day of judgment, He always brings a day of mercy. That's what the ark was. It was God's way to allow people to escape the terrors that were to come. He didn't have to do that. God could have let Noah's family perish in the flood and just start the human race over again, but that's not the way He does things. Not only does He judge people, but He likes to save them too. He saves them in Genesis; He saves them in the in the New Testament. The ancient Christians used to remind themselves of this by drawing pictures of Noah's ark on their tombstones. If you go to the city of Rome today, and you go under the streets down to the catacombs that are down below, you can see pictures of the ark on their burial grounds. Because they're saying that just like Noah was saved from that, I'll be saved from this. Just as he was delivered by the ark, I will be saved by the grace of God that's demonstrated in the Lord Jesus Christ. The ark was a picture of the gospel. Just like Noah sailed over the waters of wrath, you can do the same thing as well.

And there's just one more practical lesson to mention here. And that is that if you want to have all this, the lesson of Noah's life is that you have to receive it in faith. There's no other way. If you want to escape this wicked generation, you're going to have to trust in God even when the world around you doesn't. Even when this country gets worse and worse, and the people become more and more depraved, and you turn on the television and read the news, and all you see is sin, the only way for you to escape it is to say, "I don't want all this, I want something better." And it's found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In his commentary on Hebrews, John MacArthur tells a story of a man who was walking down the street trying to evangelize people with a cardboard sign that said "I'm a fool for Christ" on the front of it. And then on the back of it, it said "Whose fool are you?" And friends, those are your options. You can serve Christ or you can serve someone else. You can put your hope in Him or you can put it in other things. But there's only one thing that will save you from the wrath to come.

Next week, we're going to study the life of Abraham, the father of faith, which is always an interesting man to study. He's the only person in the list whose nickname bears the title, faith. Father of the faith. So please come back and join us for that, but for now, let's close in a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, we can learn so much from Noah's life because our world is just like his in many regards. When we study him, we often think things aren't that bad. You know, I have my comforts. I have a nice house, I have a nice car, I have a nice job. All these things are nice, nice, nice, nice, nice. And yet the sin is so rampant among us. It should break our heart. It should tear us up inside. But it should most importantly, remind us that a day of punishment is coming.

Lord, I pray for my friends here this morning that they would hear that with a serious sense of gravity. We get so flippant in our lives and so apathetic, we forget that there's greater things going on around us. There's a spiritual battle at place, there are forces of evil in the realms around us, and all they want to do is plunged this earth into sin. Lord, thank You that You've provided a way out of it. Thank You for Christ, who has come to bear that wrath for us. But Lord, I pray in light of that reminder, we have to believe.

So I pray for those who are here today that their hearts will be softened to Christ. Those who have believed, would they believe on Him even more, and cling to Him even tighter, remembering that He is their salvation? For those who have not believed, I pray that they would be sleepless as they leave this room. Would you prick their consciences? Open their hearts to receive the gospel.

And Lord, as we go out, we want to be a people that bear the name of Christ and follow Him. We want to be His fools, we want to be His slaves, we want to be His servants, so that He will be glorified, and this sick and dying world could see His light shining through us; and they could come to us like they should have come to Noah and hear the way of salvation. Would Christ be glorified from all we've heard. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.