

Hebrews 11:7, “Faith in the Storms, Noah”

6.16.19

How many of you have heard the phrase, “Faith without works is dead”? Do you know who said it? James, the half-brother of Jesus said it. What does that mean? “Faith without works is dead?” Was James meaning that works (our deeds) save us? No! James wasn’t implying that our works make us righteous before God; but instead, that “real, saving faith” is demonstrated by good works. Works are not the **cause** of salvation; works are the **evidence** of salvation.

We’ve said this many times, faith in Jesus...TRUE FAITH...ALWAYS results in good works. In fact, James was simply parroting what his brother said in the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus said, “You will know them by the fruit they bear.” Jesus also said, “If you love me, you’ll keep my commandments.” AND, we’ve seen this in our study over the last two weeks in Hebrews 11. Abel obeyed God and brought the sacrifice that he required. He obeyed by Faith. Enoch walked with God and he did that by faith...and he walked with God right into heaven.

So, it’s true...faith without works is dead because it reveals a heart that has never been transformed by God. You see, when you and I are saved...we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and we become a brand-new people...the old passes away and all things become new. And thus, our works characterize and give evidence of our obedience to God. In other words: “Unseen faith” will become seen by the works of our lives...giving evidence that we’ve been changed by Jesus.

Now you might be thinking, “Pastor Kevin we know all of this. This is Christianity 101.” I get that. But, here’s what we need to be reminded of. The first century Christians that Paul is writing to in this book we call “Hebrews” were literally learning from scratch. Most of these people were first or second generation believers at most. Meaning for some...they were the first people in their families to trust in Jesus. So, this was all new to them. Up to this point they had only known a religion that was marked by what someone else did for them...the priests and the Levites...they were the ones who had to make atonement for them. Not so anymore! Jesus came and changed all that!

And that’s Paul’s point for the first 10 chapters of Hebrews. Jesus came and died on the cross...and the veil in the Temple was torn...humanity, once again had access to God...they could come, once again, to God on their own by their own faith! And this is the reason for Hebrews chapter 11. We see 40 verses in this chapter where Paul is reminding those first century believers that the way to God is through Faith. That’s why Paul said in chapter 10 “the just shall live by faith.”

Today we get another example of Faith...one of my favorite examples...Noah...the man who built the ark...the man from whom all humanity traces back their ancestry to him and his three sons, some 4,400 years ago...for you see, when the flood came...exactly 1,656 years into human existence it all ended except for one man and his family. You know, it’s not a coincidence on this Father’s Day that we’re going to see a father who saved his entire family. Let’s see verse 7 together now.

Hebrews: 11:7

⁷By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

The word “unseen” there in verse 7 is a word we’ve seen before. We saw it in the first verse of this chapter. Remember...

Hebrews 11:1

¹ Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

“Not seen”... That’s faith...Faith is believing even when you can’t see it. Noah showed faith because he believed God about an event that was coming that he had never seen. He had never seen anything like a flood, because he had never seen it rain! You understand before the flood...it had never rained on the earth. You say, “Well, how did things grow?” MIST...

Genesis 2:5-6

⁵When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—

It’s funny to think about...but, God had the first ground soakers...



But he didn’t use hoses...the mist just sprang up from the ground prior to Noah’s Flood. That’s how everything received the water it needed.

Now, talk about faith...Noah had it. Noah had never seen rain...but, God warned him that it was going to rain...so much so...that God said, “Noah...I’m going to make it flood and you’re going to need to build a boat to escape it,” and you know what Noah did? He believed God. He took God at His word and he did so with reverential fear.

Hebrews 11:7a

⁷By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household.

Noah had a reverent fear of God. Church, I’m afraid many have lost a “reverent fear of God.” Today, God is seen man upstairs or some sort of grandpa in the sky...who’s just tickled pink when his children throw a few random prayers His way.

No! God IS GOD! He spoke the universe into existence! That’s how powerful and mighty He is! Listen carefully, we don’t come to God like we’re afraid of someone evil or the monster in the closet. No...we come to God like we would when we’re meeting someone like the President or dignitary or perhaps someone famous. Wouldn’t we all feel a bit differently this morning if Franklin Graham was sitting on the front row? There’s a respect and an honor that’s being spoken of here and Noah respected and honored God’s word, what God told him to do...and he acted on it!

Listen, I think I would have a bit of fear and trepidation for my family if God told me that He was going to wipe out the earth. You see, when God warned Noah that judgment was coming,

Noah believed God to the point that he took action! Listen, Faith has legs! Do you get that! Faith is not just saying you believe something... You want to know what I believe? I believe Noah showed the greatest act of faith in his life when he picked up his ax to go cut down the first tree. When he picked up that ax and went to the first tree and swung and sunk deep into the wood...that was the **SOUND OF FAITH...**

And you know what? Noah showed faith for decades. He worked and worked...and don't you know, every day people called him a fool. "Look at that guy...he says he's heard from God...and he's a building a boat...right in the middle of a desert...what a moron." And Noah kept swinging the ax. And think about this, (this might be new for some of you to consider), outside of Noah building the Ark, what else did he do in his life? Nothing that we know of. Think about it...he cut down trees and built a boat and that's basically it. He lived a mundane life. Have you ever thought of Noah's life like that?

Maybe you're here today and you've been thinking...I'm no Noah...I've never done anything great. Can you swing an ax? That's what Noah did. He swung and ax... Listen...my grandpa told me, "Son, if you get up every day and throw a pebble into a pile...eventually you'll have a mountain." Noah swung an ax and built a boat. **Hey, just do what God's called you do.** Change the diapers, load the truck, teach the class, make the spreadsheet, cut the grass... It's the accumulation of the little things in our lives...the steady...day-to-day obedience that makes the a monumental. Noah's life was characterized by one event...but that was only speck of time in his 950 years of living.

I think of my grandmother Clara (whom we named our Clara after)...

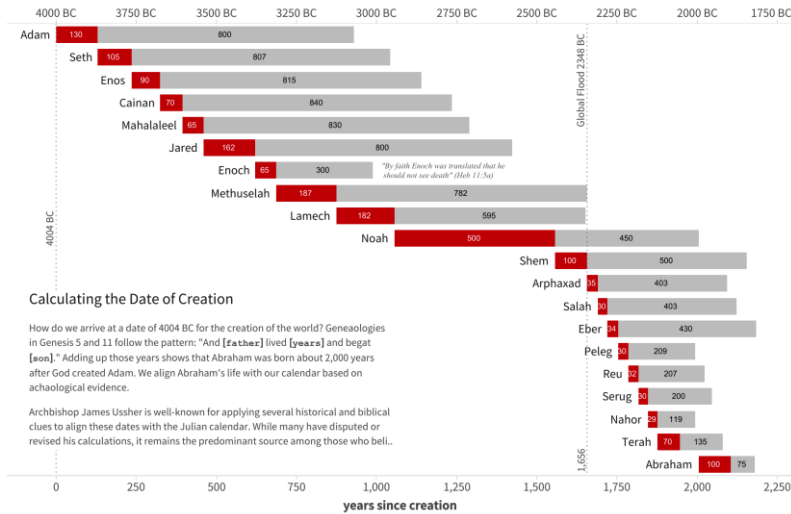


She never graduated high school, never learned to drive, was the mother of 8 children, (my mom being the youngest)...and she never saw the ocean until she was an adult...but, she did a monumental job pouring into her family and into her grandchildren...me and my sister. Kim and I road the school bus to grandma and grandpa's house and she fed mayonnaise sandwiches and gave us grape Kool-Aid and a piece of Wrigley's spearmint chewing gum. She sang us to sleep at naptime singing, "At The Cross," "Bringing in the Sheaves," and "Showers of Blessings." She was a Noah!

And that's what many of you are today. Please don't let Satan lie you and tell you that you aren't making a difference, because you are! Pick up that ax and keep swinging it every day.

Noah believed that judgment was coming... And he was like Enoch in that. Remember last week... ...Enoch warned the people judgment was coming. See the chart, Enoch...7th from Adam:

Genesis Timeline from Adam to Abraham



He's there right around 3,000 BC...Enoch...the great, great grandfather of Noah...Enoch warned of a future judgment. And some 500 years later, Noah was doing the same!

Church might I remind us...we must "lovingly warn others" (like Enoch and Noah) of coming, future judgment. Why? Because, one day Jesus is coming back and He will take His Church off this earth in the Rapture and then 7 years of Tribulation and then Judgment. Judgment will come with the Second Coming of Jesus, because at His coming will be the Great White Throne Judgment for unbelievers. And Jesus described that day, in His Olivet Discourse...right before His death... (Jesus believed in Noah...never forget that...)

Matthew 24:37-38

³⁷ For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark.

What happened when Noah went into the ark? Who shut the door? God did and the flood came and the people died. But, they had been warned for decades. Listen, God always warns...many, many times, He warns. He always warns, in His mercy, grace and compassion...He warns before He levies judgment. And remember, the judgment falls on those who refuse His offer of mercy, grace and compassion and instead choose the path of self-confident, obstinance.

Hey church, what happens to people who refuse to accept what Jesus did for them on the cross? What happens to them after they have been judged at the Great White Throne Judgment? They get the Lake of Fire, an eternity in Hell.

You know that fact bothers a lot of people today...even within Christendom...they don't like it...they refuse to believe in the doctrine of Hell. Indeed, there are those today...(and it's even taught in "so-called Christian seminaries,") that Hell doesn't, because they say God wouldn't allow that. Really?

Might I remind us all of what Jesus said:

Matthew 13:40-43

⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, ⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Noah heard and listened in his day...are you? Are you listening today? Have you given your life to Jesus? Jesus warned people about Hell, Jesus warned more about Hell than anyone else recorded in the Bible. Church, we all deserve hell, but Jesus provided the way out. But, to do that Jesus had to take my punishment...your punishment for sin. Justice had to be served.

Oh, I know some who say, "Well, if God were truly loving...He wouldn't have created Hell." Here's the truth...He didn't create it for us...He created for the devil and his angels...but, when Adam and Eve sinned it changed everything! Sin brought devastation to humanity. Hey...do you what the **shortest definition of sin is: two words: I WILL**. And listen, if you reject God's offer of pardon through His Son Jesus...well...one day at the GWTJ you will be saying, I will...as you slide into hell. I know that's a horrible thought...but, it's a warning!

Listen, for anyone here today who has yet to publicly confess the Lord Jesus, Hell is the culmination of telling God to "get out." Hell is what a person gets when they keep telling God to "Leave me alone," and finally God says, "Okay." And that's why the Bible describes Hell as eternal darkness: because God is light; and His absence is darkness...as you will be removed from His presence forever.

No, I know it's not popular...but the account of Noah and the saving of his family is the account of God's offering of deliverance from judgement. The apostle John said it this way:

1 John 4:9-10

⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Propitiation means: payment for our judgment. Oh, I know some who say that Hell is somehow a character-flaw of God. Well, it's not! Listen: Hell "Amen's" God's glory because in Hell, sin will be judged for the horrid, blasphemous wickedness that it is. Oh, it's a blessing that sin will be judged and destroyed for all eternity in Hell...removed from our presence forever! Hallelujah!

But, when you and I say there is a hell to shun and a heaven to gain...people might not like us. That's the second part of verse 7. See it...

Hebrews 11:7b

By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

"He condemned the world?" What does that mean? Simple. Noah proclaimed the truth...a flood is coming...get in this boat with me and my family... Think of how that might have looked?



Noah standing on a pile of logs imploring people to believe him...to believe God. You see, every time a tree fell...boom...the ground shook...that was a reminder... “Judgment is coming.”

You know it bothers people when they see that you and I trust God and not ourselves. Our faith is seen as foolishness by the unbelieving world. For the wicked...the ungodly...the rejectors of Jesus...they are absolutely and totally surprised when you and I don't follow their ways...and don't believe like them...AND eventually it gets nasty and they lash out...they get mad!

Noah's faith condemned the faithless world around him. I can only imagine how the people mocked him to the point they probably called him: insane. But, I'll tell you something: Noah turned out to be the only one who was sane. Listen, it is the essence of sanity to take God at His Word and it is the essence insanity of sin to dismiss what God says. BTW...what happened to these people?



The mockers...the naysayers...the unbelievers... This is what happened...



Judgment upon their unbelief.

Can I ask you something? How does your life look to the unbeliever? Are you a Noah? It's not easy! Can people see that you are a person of righteousness? Noah was described as a preacher of righteousness. How 'bout you? Listen, if our lives offer no contrast to the world, then we're failing the world...and we're allowing our light to be hidden under a bowl...just like Jesus told us not to:

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way,

let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

And so here we are...right back to those “good works” that we talked about in the beginning. Righteous living is faith that is exhibited and evidenced by good works.

One final thought. Do you remember what Noah used to seal the ark?

Genesis 6:14

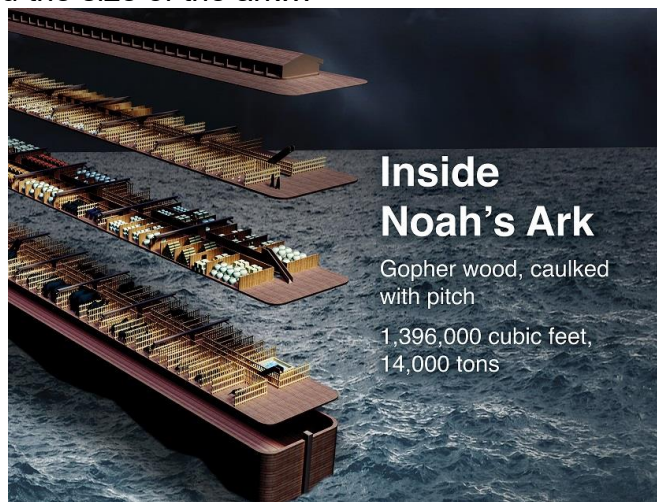
¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.

As I was studying this week, I read the Hebrew word for “pitch.” It’s the word: Kopher... Now get this: it means: “atonement, price of life, or ransom.” This word is also found in Leviticus 17:

Leviticus 17:11

¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make **atonement** for your souls, for it is the blood that makes **atonement** by the life.

Think of that. Noah put Kopher on the ark... Now...in our Wed. series recently... “Genesis is History,” I described to you the size of the ark...



the fact that it had 1.4 million cubic feet of space, three decks...plenty of room for all the “kinds” of animals...2 dogs give us all the domesticated dogs, and wolves, coyotes, hyenas, dingoes, jackals... But, here’s the greater point...the boat doesn’t work if it doesn’t float! It had to be sealed...it was pitched...so there would be no leaks. You don’t want any leaks...and **don’t you know** that Noah had to keep applying the pitch...because it would get old through the years and crack and split. Every day Noah was applying more pitch!

Hey Christian...we have to apply the pitch...every day, don’t we? Take up your cross daily...that cross represents the blood of Jesus blood and the blood of Jesus is the atonement...the pitch for our sin... Get it! His blood covers and seals us from judgment. That’s a fantastic thought! Just as the ark was sealed up and protected from the flood waters...because of the pitch...in Jesus we are sealed... **You see Church family, today, Jesus is the ark.** He is our way to safety, deliverance from judgment! Why? Because there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved.

So, the account of Noah demonstrates both judgment and salvation. God, our Heavenly Father, is a God of righteousness, who must punish sin, in order to be a good judge. But, most wonderfully,

He is a God, our Heavenly Father, our Good Good Father, who has provided a way of escape through Jesus!

I want to close by asking you to stand...don't gather up anything yet...we're not done. Today is Father's Day and we've seen the actions of Noah...a father, a daddy, a man who CONSTRUCTED AN ARK FOR THE SAVING OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. Yes, that ark had plenty of room for many people...and many could have been saved...but, Noah made sure that he rescued his family, didn't he? J. Vernon McGee said, "Every father is a preacher and his first congregation is his family."

Dads, I want to remind us that we've got a job to do. We've got to get our families to Jesus...the ark...

I want to ask the families to come forward toward the altar and I want you to gather up closely to the dads, if they are here. Now, here's the thing...there may be some families near you who have a father here...you pull them into your family and Dad...you oversee that...come together now...

Dad's like Noah...we've got to do that. It's the mundane work...swing the ax day by day...it's not glamorous or easy...but, it's got to be done. Maybe you need to recommit today to being like Noah for your family. We're going to pray now FOR the Dads and as I pray...I pray for myself that I may lead my home to Jesus.

If you are here and don't Jesus...you come talk to us after the service...we'll be waiting for you outside the guest information room.
