

Christians At Texas State Bible Study Genesis #12

The Line of Life with Noah (1)

THE LIFE AND WORK THAT CHANGED THE AGE

Scripture Reading: Genesis 6:5-14; Heb. 11:7; John 1:14, 16-17; Rev. 22:21

Gen. 6:5 And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. **6** And Jehovah repented that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him in His heart. **7** And Jehovah said, I will blot out the man whom I have created from the surface of the ground, from man to beast to creeping things to the birds of heaven; for I repent that I have made them. **8** But Noah found favor in the sight of Jehovah. **9** These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generations; and Noah walked with God. **10** And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. **11** And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. **12** And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. **13** And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and now I am about to destroy them with the earth. **14** Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark and shall cover it within and without with pitch.

Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, having been divinely instructed concerning things not yet seen *and* being moved by pious fear, prepared an ark for the salvation of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality. **16** For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.

Rev. 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

In this message we want to begin to see the line of life with Noah and, in particular, the life and work that changed the age. Noah's life and work changed the age; we also want to have a life and work that will change the present age from the age of grace, the age of the church, to the age of the kingdom. We trust that the Lord will apply the example of Noah's life and work to us that our life and work would change the age.

NOAH'S LIFE BEING A LIFE THAT CHANGED THE AGE

Noah's life was a life that changed the age (cf. Phil. 1:19-21a). We want to live such a life. Any other kind of life is a life of vanity. We want our lives to be full of meaning and to count for something in this universe. If we want our lives to count for something in this universe, then we need to live a life that changes the age. If we look at Noah's life, we shall see that it was not simply a matter of walking with God or of building the ark. The basic and crucial point is that God used Noah to change the age. The enemy had driven the situation to the bottom, and even God repented that He had made man. There seemed to be no hope. But Noah found grace. Noah's life was a life that changed the age.

Being a Life That Inherits the Godly Ways of the Forefathers

The life that changes the age is a life that inherits the godly ways of the forefathers. The young people especially should treasure the golden heritage we have today. Noah inherited from his forefathers a golden heritage that

included all the godly ways and life practices of those who had gone before him. Actually, his golden heritage is also part of the heritage of the Lord's present move. The Lord's move with Noah embodied all the moves that had preceded him. This is the same with church history. The Lord's present move on the earth includes all the foregoing moves throughout church history and all the foregoing portions of those who took the lead in God's move in the history of the church.

Noah inherited Adam's way of salvation, receiving the promise of Christ as the seed of the woman and the covering of Christ as the God-satisfying righteousness (Gen. 3:20-21; d. Isa. 12:3). We have also inherited the way of salvation. This way of salvation is by receiving the promise of Christ as the seed of the woman. Noah inherited this promise, and we also have inherited this promise. Christ as the seed of the woman bruised the head of the devil, destroying the devil on the cross, and was sown into us as the conquering seed of the woman. Now He is bruising Satan's head in us. Not only so, He is also growing in us as the seed of the woman, the all-inclusive seed that embodies all the riches of the Triune God. He is growing in us and bruising the serpent's head in us day by day. This is the promise and the reality that we have inherited.

Noah also inherited Abel's way of offering (4:4). Adam's way was the way to get himself saved, but Abel's was the way to please God by offering gifts to Him (Heb. 11:4). Can you imagine that a fallen man could please God? Abel was a fallen man who pleased Him. His way of pleasing God was that of offering the type of Christ to God. I can please God in the same way. Although I am a fallen man with a fallen nature, I can please God by offering Christ to Him as a gift. I am not boasting, but I can declare to you that I have pleased God very much in these recent days. I know that God has been pleased with me. Even this morning and this afternoon I was happy because my God was pleased. My God was happy, and I was happy too. What is the way to please God? It is the way of Abel, which is to offer Christ to God, not only as the sacrifice for our sins, but also as a gift for pleasing God. Whenever you give a person a gift, he will be happy. Likewise, whenever we bring Christ to God, He is very happy with our gift.

Noah inherited Enosh's way of calling on the name of Jehovah to enjoy all that He is (Gen. 4:26; Jer. 33:3; Rom. 10:12; 2 Tim. 2:22). Calling on the Lord is a wonderful secret. We can call our way into the kingdom. The name *Enosh* means "frail, mortal man." No matter how strong or big a brother looks, he is fragile. If you look at him the wrong way, he will break in half. We are frail, mortal men, but we have an indestructible, immortal treasure in us that is full of riches and that we can enjoy by calling, "O Lord Jesus." This is the secret to enjoying Christ. He is rich to all who call upon His name (Rom. 10:12-13). Thank the Lord that we can call on His name. Jeremiah 33:3 says, "Call unto Me, and I will answer you and tell you great and hidden things, which you do not know."

When we call on the Lord, we also get the person of that name. If I were to call out the name of a brother who is in the room, he would respond, and I would get his person. If I were to call "Abraham Lincoln," he would not respond because he is not here. However, when we call "Lord Jesus," He responds because He is in our spirit. He is rich to all who call upon Him. 2 Timothy 2:22 says, "But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." In this corrupt, evil generation we can flee youthful lusts. We are all fleeing youthful lusts and pursuing righteousness. We are pursuing Christ as righteousness, faith, love, and peace. I love the words *with those*. It is so good to be "with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." To call out of a pure heart means to call on the Lord only to get Him. These kinds of callers only want more of Him. They want to gain Him and be found in Him.

Noah inherited Enoch's way of walking with God, which is to take God as our center and everything, living and doing all things according to God and with God (Gen. 5:22-24; Heb. 11:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:4,9, 14-16; 6:1). Genesis tells us that Noah walked with God, taking God as his center and everything, just as Enoch did. He did everything according to God, with God, in God, and by God. He did not do anything without God. Consequently, Noah made God very happy. God was pleased with Noah. Noah enjoyed God, and God enjoyed Noah. This was Noah's life.

In this message we will speak of working with God. However, in order to be God's co-workers, we first need to be God's co-walkers. Before we can work with God, we must walk with God. In 2 Corinthians 6, Paul declares that he and his co-workers are working together with God. The previous chapter, in which Paul says that they are ambassadors of Christ, shows us the qualifications of someone who is an ambassador and works

together with God. Such a person is one who walks with God. Chapter five shows us the characteristics of someone who walks with God so that he can work with God. Verse 4 shows us that a person who walks with God is swallowed up by the divine life. He does not live or do things according to his natural ability, but he does everything by the immortal life which is Christ Himself. He is swallowed up by life.

God Showing Noah the True Situation of the Corrupt Age

God showed Noah the true situation of the corrupt age in which he lived (Gen. 6:3, 5, 11, 13; Matt. 24:37-39; 2 Tim. 3:1-3). In Matthew 24 and Luke 17 the Lord says that even as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. As the age begins to close, and as we get closer and closer to the Lord's second coming, the world will become more and more like it was in the days of Noah. Thus, just as the Lord opened Noah's eyes, so He needs to open our eyes to see the corrupt age in which we live. If we truly saw the corrupt age in which we live, we would not want to be a part of it. We have two choices—we can live in the corrupt age, be a part of the corrupt age, and end up under water, or we can build the ark. We want to build the ark. We need to see that this world is doomed and finished. Why would anyone build up something that is doomed and that is going to be destroyed, burned up, and judged? Do we want to spend our lives on something that is doomed and that is going to be burned up?

What was the age in which Noah lived like? Genesis 6 tells us that at that time, man's entire tripartite being had become flesh. Then Jehovah said, "My Spirit will not strive with man forever, for he indeed is flesh" (v. 3). By that time, the element of sin within man had permeated man's entire tripartite being to the point that when God looked at man, He said, "This man in his entire being is flesh." God even repented that He had made man. In Genesis 1:26 God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion," and in verse 31 God saw that it was very good. But by Genesis 6 man had become so evil, wicked, loathsome, and satanified that it grieved God when He looked at man.

"But Noah Found Favor in the Sight of Jehovah"

"But Noah found favor [grace] in the sight of Jehovah" (Gen. 6:8). After describing an age that was so dark, when every imagination of man's heart was evil and man had been mingled with the evil spirits, the Bible says, "But Noah" No matter how low or bad the situation is and no matter how much Satan damages, destroys, or corrupts things, God always has a "but." At the bottom of the fall, the degradation, and the corruption, God still had one person—Noah. Today we need to be the corporate Noah. When we get up in the morning, we should look in the mirror and say, "But Noah found grace in the sight of Jehovah," substituting our name in place of Noah's. This will make a difference. Every day we should pray, "Lord, I pray that day by day I would find grace in Your sight until You return and I meet You."

The main purpose of the record of Genesis is not to show the fall, but to show how much God's grace can do for fallen people. Noah found grace in the sight of Jehovah, and we all have also found grace. Consider your situation. Two or ten years ago you were fallen, but now you are different. What happened? It is a miracle what grace can do in a fallen person to recover him and make him so useful that he becomes one who changes the age. In a sense, we are all miracles.

Grace is God Himself, the presence of God, enjoyed by us to be everything to us and to do everything in us, through us, and for us (John 1:14, 16-17; Rev. 22:21). Every day we should pray, "Lord, I want to enjoy You." How wonderful it is that we can enjoy the Lord! To enjoy the Lord is to have His very presence and His very person. It is to be in the index of His eyes. When we are enjoying Him, He is everything to us, and He does everything in us, through us, and for us. We may not even be aware of what He is doing. We are simply enjoying Him and He is doing everything in us, through us, and for us.

The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is with those who love Him (Eph. 6:24; John 21:15-17). Every day we need to love the Lord. Give yourself to love the Lord. One of the greatest secrets to enjoying the Lord is to tell Him, "Lord Jesus, I love You." I treasure the fact that I know that I can say, "Lord Jesus, I love You." We should say this at least ten times a day, perhaps even twenty or fifty times. We need to increase the number of times we say, "Lord Jesus, I love You." Grace is with those who love the Lord.

* Ministry portions from *Ministry Magazine* and *Life-Study of Genesis*. Verses from *Recovery Version of Bible*.