

In the Beginning, God

October Bible Study

Read: Genesis 6 and 7

Pray: For pliable and teachable hearts; that as we spend time with dear old Noah, that we will be encouraged and inspired by his life and his faith.

Who is God?

The momentum of Genesis is building - can you feel it? We're only 6 chapters in and already there's an unmistakable depravity and wickedness! The sinfulness of man was exceptional and spreading faster than wildfires.

But then we meet Noah and in just a couple verses, there's suddenly a bright spark that shimmers with brilliance against the backdrop of this incredibly bleak situation. Noah is the opposite of everything else we know about his generation. He stood out, and he stood alone.

Genesis 6.3 'Then the Lord said, "My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."'

1. How does this demonstrate God's patience?
2. How does it feel to know God is patient with you?
3. What about others? Or those who deserve punishment?

Who are we?

Long before Noah could see the benefits of his faith he kept chasing after God. He built an ark - not a dingy! His faithfulness could literally be seen for miles. And, even while he was surrounded by wickedness, he continued to preach - with his *mouth* and his *actions*.

His relationship with the Lord was remarkable - not because of anything Noah did, said, gave or made - but because he was the object of our Father's grace. That's almost impossible for us to wrap our heads around, but therein may lay the issue; it's not a matter for our heads, it's really a matter of our hearts.

Genesis 6.5 The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil.

1. Is it a challenge to believe the magnitude of the problem? And why do you feel that way?
2. How do you make sense of God's promise in Gen 3 that death and sin will not win, when 6.5 looks so dark?
3. Romans 3.10-23 says that *no one is good* - so how does Noah fit in? (This might feel hard to tease out but it's worth pondering!)

Where is Jesus?

Right here - in the middle of this dark, desperate and sad time - here is God, and he's pouring (not just rain!) his grace! He picks Noah. And if you're a child of God, you've found his favour too.

The ark was a picture of God's plan for salvation. It's a glimpse of the Son, who one day would bring salvation. The ark was entirely designed by God - just like his plan to one day save creation. There was one way in - like the one way we have through the Son. And it was a safe refuge - exactly what we find in Jesus' sacrifice.

Genesis 5.28-29 is the first mention of Noah. His dad, Lamech, prophesied that Noah would bring comfort. What's implied is the hope of a deliverer, just like God had promised to Adam. Don't all parents hope that their children will do great things? Maybe Lamech wondered if his son might be the one? Because, until Jesus, people lived with eagerness that their rescuer would come.

1. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, the same eyes that witnessed the total corruption, violence and evil in men's hearts: what's been your experience of finding God's grace?
2. Have a look at Hebrews 11.7 - how does this change how you read Genesis 6.8?
3. Noah built an ark, survived a flood - but couldn't escape the evil in his heart. How does Jesus' salvation offer a better story?