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[00:00:00] We're in Genesis Chapter seven today. And your homework for later is to read Chapter six, Chapter seven, Chapter eight and Chapter nine. And just that's that's the whole story of Noah. Today, we're going to start number is twenty three. I do have a handful of verses to read, and so the scripture says this and verse twenty three. So he he is speaking of God. He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground both man and cattle creeping thing and bird of the year. They were destroyed from the Earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive and the waters prevailed on the Earth. One hundred and fifty days, then God remembered Noah would just really encourage you to circle that phrase and every living thing and all the animals that were with him in the Ark and God made a wind pass over the Earth and the water subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained and the waters receded continually from the Earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days, the waters decreased. Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventh day of the month on the mountains of air, and the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month. On the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen. So it came to pass at the end of the 40 days that Noah opened the window of the ark, which he had made. Then he sent out a raven which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up on the Earth. He also sent out from himself a dove to see if the waters had receded from the base of the ground.

[00:01:33] But the Dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him for the waters were on the face of the whole Earth. So he put out his hand and took her and drew her into the ark to himself. And he waited yet another seven days and again he sent the dove out from the ark. Then the dove came to him in the evening and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth, and no one knew that the waters had receded. So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which had not returned again, to which did not return to him again any more. You guys with me still OK and it came to pass in the six hundred and first year in the first month, the first day of the month that the waters were dried up from the Earth and Noah remove the covering of the ark and looked and indeed the surface of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, the Earth was dried. Then God spoke to Noah, saying, Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons wives with you bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you, birds and cattle, and every creeping thing that creeps on the Earth. So the creeps came out of the ark so that they may have found on the Earth and be and be fruitful and multiply. So Noah is obedient to God rights, and all went out in his sons and his wife and his sons, wives with him. Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird and whatever creeps on the Earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

[00:03:03] Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took of every clean animal of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar and the Lord smell the soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground for man's sake. Although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done, and then I want you to go over to verse 11 and Chapter nine. Thus, I establish God's speaking. Thus, I established my covenant with you. Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood. Never again shall there be a flood to destroy the Earth. And God said, This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you for four perpetual generations. I set my rainbow in the cloud and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between me and the Earth. Let's pray together and father, we thank you so much for every quality, every divine quality, every divine attribute, every characteristic that you bear God like a light shining off the facets of a beautiful gem. You are all together beautiful to behold. And God, that not only includes your mercy and your grace and your love, but it also includes your justice. We prayed today, God, that there would be a deeper, fuller understanding that we would have of your justice and God, that we would not only be reminded today, but that we would experience the purpose of your justice, which is always to lead us to your mercy in Jesus name. We pray. Amen. You can have a seat. Well, I said to you last week that, you know, I do I do lament that sometimes we have an incomplete picture of what happened in Noah's life.

[00:04:56] And, you know, kind of like a rose colored letter, how do you say it? A rose colored lenses we see. Noah and the story through rose colored lenses, you know, we have the the tendency to look at that period of building the ark like it? Hey, you know, Noah, I want you to build a boat. And so, you know, Noah built a boat and took six days. Super easy. All the lumber was there. Home Depot never shut down. You know, there were no supply chain issues, so all the nails were available. Simple tasks for Noah. And then we have this picture that, you know, the animals start to come and there, Noah. He's standing there like Captain Stubing. You know, checking all the you guys know what I'm talking about. I say captain steering. I'm just curious if you have no idea who Captain Stubing is, raise your hand right now. Man, I am old. I am so depressed. Well, I'm not going to tell you who he is, and so and so you know there is Noah. He's got his, he has got his, you know, clipboard out and he's checking them off, right? Giraffes, hippopotamus, hippopotamuses, you know, you plurals that, you know, creeping things and they all go on the boat. God beckons. Nobody go inside the door shut. And you know, it's like it's saying our time. The rain starts to fall. Nice little miss. Maybe a little kind of a heavy storm. Everything you know, the boat begins to rise really gently and then it's one hundred and fifty day is a Carnival Cruise Line, right? I mean, you got this picture where, I mean, you always see a picture of Noah's Ark with Noah. And you know, he's he's he's got a strip of bald baldness and then his hair is out of the side and he's hanging with the giraffes and probably having the barbecue.

[00:06:44] I don't know if he barbecued, you know, the the people, the animals that were on the boat or how they'll work for Noah. And then, you know, the waters kind of subside and Noah gets out and it's just, you know, it's party time. He has a little altar of sacrifice that he builds a sacrifice that is made. And I'm just saying to you today that that's a really inadequate view of what happened with Noah and his family and the Earth. I just want to kind of fill in the pictures, fill in the picture a little bit. And, you know, I don't think that this is speculation because we know at the time of Noah. Some say that the population of the Earth was about seven hundred and fifty million people. And and you know, there are others who say that the population of the Earth was around six billion people. And so remember with me, that whole process, the journey, I mean for sure, was an amazing adventure that Noah was on. By the way, when you walk by faith and you trust in God and you follow him. Life is an amazing adventure. Before I put my trust and faith in Jesus Christ, I sincerely thought the most boring, miserable, possible life a person could have was to be a Christian. And then I got saved and I started walking with God. And I'm like, Man, this life is like no other life. I mean, really, this is an adventure. But the adventure was difficult. Mel was building the ark and, you know, it took a really long time and there were highs and there were lows. And and for sure, there are probably times where he really had to discipline himself to finish the job.

[00:08:18] The animals did come and they loaded up and God did seal the door. But it wasn't as if this real gentle rain was falling, and over the course of time the Ark just lifted off the ground. Or the Bible says that not only was there a torrential downpour, but the fountains of the deep were broken up and saw the tectonic plates were literally bursting. I mean, you can imagine if you've ever been on the ocean before, maybe you've gone whale watching. I remember the first time I went whale watching in San Francisco, you know, 30 minutes into the boat ride as we're heading out to the islands, you know, out three hours out into the ocean. I mean, the waters were turbulent and two thirds of the people on that boat had all gone to the back of the boat and were barfing off the back of the boat. And I'm just trying to mess your lunch up. First of all, but I'm just saying like, you know, for no known is family like, that's the way it was. They probably were really seasick. And then over one hundred and fifty days as they were waiting for the waters to subside. Not an easy sea. Not an easy picture. As you have animals that have drowned and you have people that have drowned their bodies floating on the surface of the water, decomposing. Listen, probably like I don't know what type of community no one was living in, but you can imagine as the flood. Came that there were probably people knocking on the outside of the arc, begging Noah, pleading with Noah. I'm just saying to you sometimes, you know, we have this rosy picture of what happened with Noah, and it strips the reality of the justice of God being poured out on a wayward world.

[00:10:02] I mean, it was catastrophic. It was absolutely destructive. It was one of the most intense expressions ever of God's justice. And you know, the truth is this we are oftentimes for the justice of God, but mostly with conditions. You know, we we're OK with God's justice when we think about an oppressive world leader who is wreaking havoc on societies and nations in a situation as far too big for us to be able to address on our own. And so we think, well, you know what, if they're not going to get it in this life, they're going to get in the next life or we think of those situations of victimization and exploitation that somehow in this life seem to go unmet with justice. And we reconcile that by thinking, Well, you know what? Justice will come in the life to come, and we're comfortable with that when we think about the justice of God, this and we're comfortable with that. You know, we we can concede that in fact, in some ways, I think from a societal sense, not just for the believer, but especially for the unbeliever. This is how we reconcile the injustice that we see in the world. But the Bible doesn't place these types of conditions on the justice of God. When we think about the justice of God, you need to understand today that he is absolutely altogether impartial in his execution of justice. That's where it gets uncomfortable. That's where it's hard for us to concede because when we think about God in, you know, very simple definition of justice is this people get what they deserve. How do you feel about that today, people getting what they deserve? And when we think about God distributing that in an impartial way, it's uncomfortable because listen, it localizes sin not outside of us, but within us.

[00:11:59] It's not just that we can say, look at all those wicked people out there. The reality is this The justice of God teaches us that wickedness dwells within our own hearts. Not only that, but it levels the playing field and puts us all in the same moral dilemma. We all stand before God, guilty of our sin. And I think that's uncomfortable because, you know, we can make ourselves feel good about ourselves by putting down others, by emphasizing the sin in other people's lives, by focusing on how other people are wicked. And you know, that's just one way that we oftentimes accommodate sin and wickedness in our own lives. It strips us of our ability to save ourselves. You know, I mean, it strips us of our ability to save ourselves the justice of God. Can I say it again strips us of the ability to save ourselves? It teaches us it's never going to be our moral efforts. It teaches us that the Naturalis idea of just doing the right thing for the sake of, well, well-being is never going to be enough. It teaches us that no religious system or philosophical system is able to bridge the gap between ourselves and God because there is an issue in our lives that can only be resolved by God, executing as justice and leading us to his mercy. I think not to like not to pound this too deeply into the ground. I think also the justice of God cuts through our own moral ambiguity that we use to justify behaviors that are wrong. You know, and sometimes this is this is what we do, right? We have our own standard like we have our own standard. We know what God says in his word, but we kind of, you know, we accommodate things and make it up as we go along.

[00:13:49] And the truth is this the impartial justice of God does not permit us to do that. You know, Genesis Chapter seven, if this story ended in Genesis Chapter seven, it would be a really miserable story because it would just be the raw justice of God. And if if in fact, I want to keep things in balance, of course, if in fact, that's the only way we view the story of Noah, it's very shortsighted of us because the story of Noah gives to us an amazing picture. It's a beautiful picture of the marriage of God's justice and his mercy. And I want to say this about the justice of God, because sometimes, you know, sometimes as Christians, you know, we can be we can fall on two ends of the spectrum. We can either be so absolutely gracious that we never even express the message of God's justice, or we can be so absolutely focused on God's justice that we're never directing people to his mercy. But the justice of God, the purpose of it is to lead us to his mercy. The purpose of the justice of God is not to just leave people with this idea that what God loves to do is just execute his justice and destroy people who are in opposition to him. Because the Bible says and is equal if God takes no pleasure in the destruction of the wicked. And then right after that phrase, in that verse, he exhorts people to turn from their wickedness to him. No, the justice of God is purpose to lead people to his mercy. And in the New Testament context, specifically to his mercy through Jesus Christ. So listen, Noah completes the ark. The animals calm. God invites him in super important Genesis Chapter seven verse one, and I would encourage you to underline that to then, the Lord said to Noah, come into the ark.

[00:15:44] So he invites Noah to come. The rain falls the fountains of the deep break up. There is water on the face of the Earth for a hundred and fifty days. The water is subside. The ark rests on the top of Mount Ararat, and Noah comes out with his family. He builds an altar and then God establishes his covenant, and he gives the rainbow as a sign of his great mercy. As we look at this story and I just want to, I just want to say some things today about the justice of God. Can I do that with you this morning? Can I? Can I be your teacher here for a minute? Because because you know what I say to the church when I say, Hey, hey, God is merciful. Amen. God is a loving God. God is a gracious God. OK, now listen, if I say, Hey, God is just, I mean, I wa, I got I got you guys all wound up. All right. I wound you up. But if I just said God is just all by itself, you know, you probably would have a hesitancy in giving all of that praise because sometimes I just don't think we really consider the beauty of God's justice. And let me just say this to you, if you rejoice in the mercy of God, remember with me, you can't have mercy unless there is justice, because mercy is not getting what you deserve and justice is you getting what you deserve. And so God's mercy is when he chooses not to give us what we deserve. God is just God is just in fact, the Bible says that he is the god of justice, that he is the righteous judge, that he is the judge of all the Earth.

[00:17:26] The Bible says he is the judge of the living in the dead. That he is the judge of Israel. He not you. He is the judge. This was why Jesus said, Judge, not that you be not judged. He was for sure not saying, don't be discerning, but he was saying, don't put yourself in a position that that God only deserves to be in. God is the only one who has the right to render justice to the human heart. Do you know why? Do you know why? Do you know why? Because he's the only one that knows the human heart. So he is the one who has the right to judge. And all of his judged judgments are always just every single one. God always renders justice. Rightly, God has never rendered justice wrongly. So when you look at the scripture, you read this and you're like, Man, God, that's a little tough. I mean, global destruction. God, that's a little heavy. Or you read the story of Sodom and Gomorrah and you're thinking, Man, you know, talk about the pervasive justice of God. Or you read a story about Israel being used as a tool to execute the justice of God in wiping out a society that was totally against the purposes of God and living in a condition similar maybe to Sodom and Gomorrah or the Earth during the era of Noah's Flood. You look at those. Those moments where God is expression expressing his judgment and from a human perspective, you can think, man, that seems a little unfair to me, but God is never unfair. You know, there is coming a time where I believe during the tribulation period, we're going to be with God in heaven. Tonight, I'm going to talk about the rapture of the church in revelation chapter four.

[00:19:15] I would encourage you to come back. There are different views on when the rapture of the church happens. My particular point of view is that it happens before the Great Tribulation period. Those seven, those seven years where there will be an unmitigated expression of the wrath of God. I mean, it will be total global destruction as God prepares the Earth for the second coming of his son. I believe that God is going to spare us from that and we are going to be with him in heaven and we're going to be watching as the sealed judgments are poured out as the trumpet judgments are poured out, as the vile judgments are poured out and the scripture says that as we see these things happen, we're not going to be whispering in God's ear, Hey God. Take it easy take. I mean, come on God back up a little bit. You're supposed to be merciful. This is bad PR for you. God like this is not the way that you win friends and influence people. The Bible doesn't say that. The Bible says we will be saying to God Just aren't true. Are your ways? Oh Lord. Every single thing that you do is right, Tozer said. This, he said. Justice isn't something that God has. It is something that he is. And you need to reconcile that in your heart today. God is just like I said. The second point here is the expression of God's justice is always right. It's always right. You know, these were the reasons, according to Genesis Chapter six, that God drew a line in the sand. And I'm just speaking from a human perspective, he said. Enough is enough. The Earth was corrupt, the Bible says before God. It was filled with violence.

[00:20:52] Wickedness was great. The Bible says the thoughts and intent of the heart were continually set on evil. In Genesis Chapter six, there's difference of opinion on how to interpret this. But it would seem that that the justice of God was provoked because the godly line of Sabbath was marrying. There was intermarriage between that godly line and ungodly lines to the extent. I mean, just fathom how profound this is to the extent that the Bible says that God said he was sorry, he was grieved and he was going to destroy the Earth. Maybe your translation says sorry that God was sorry. On the other hand, maybe your translation says that God regretted that he made man or God repented, that he made man. And what does that mean? I want to just remind you today that God does not repent like we repent when we repent. We're acknowledging our sin and we're seeking forgiveness. There is no sin in God. There is no sin in God. And so even if your translation does say repent, it does not mean repent in the human sense. It for sure does not mean that God was taken by surprise. It for sure does. That does not mean that some 1500 years down the road from the Garden of Eden, that God was like, Man, how did it come to this? It for sure doesn't mean that somehow God had made a mistake. Like, I was like, Wow, I'm really bummed out. I never thought I was going to turn out like this. What a what a miserable thing. No, that's impossible. Because God never makes mistakes. Hey, you're not a mistake. Did did God make you? Are you fearfully and wonderfully made? Does the Bible say that he knit you together in the matrix of your mother's womb? Does God make mistakes? You are not a mistake.

[00:22:45] All right. So I think this is a human way of expressing the totality of grief in God's heart over the human condition. In fact, John Gill said it like this God's response to their wickedness is a wounded, heart filled with pain. But in addition to that, as we consider the condition of the Earth, that God was sorry, that God was grieved, that God ultimately did destroy. There are two things that we have to deal with. Number one is this God clearly, like beyond a shadow of a doubt, God clearly had a divine moral expectation. God clearly had a divine moral expectation. The Bible says that the Earth was corrupt before God and not corrupt before God. In the sense of position, geographic position. The Bible is saying that God is sovereign, that God is the sovereign ruler, that God is the one who is just and that the world before him was worthy of judgment. In fact, the Bible says that God look and be held, and that's not looking in the sense of gathering data that's looking in the sense of the judge of all of the Earth determining. That the time had come because moral expectations had been broken. Maybe today you're here and you're thinking, Well, you know what, I can do whatever I want, and it doesn't really matter. And most the time I'll get away with it. And you know, I enjoy the times when I do get away with it. I'm a little bummed when I don't get away with that in the in the end, it's not going to matter. It is going to matter. It is going to matter because there is a God who is sitting on a throne who sees every single thing that we do.

[00:24:24] And the Bible declares that all of us have sinned and fallen short of his glory. The Bible declares that there are none who are righteous know, not one. The Bible says that there are none who seek after God, and we have a holy god with whom we will have to give account. One day we will all stand, the Bible says before the Lord, these people had a responsibility to before God. Of course, this is pre cross, but they had a light of conscience. They had the light of creation and they had the oral testimony of what God had done and they would stand before God being responsible for it. You know, I mentioned to you earlier that the justice of God teaches us that sin is localized in the human heart. And we know that from the story in Genesis Chapter three, the predator in the Guardian was Satan. But as you read the story, what you recognize is this that sin wasn't localized in the predator. Thin was localized in the heart of Adam and Eve, and we need to remember that that sin in our heart one day will have to give an account to God. Not only is there a divine moral expectation, but there are divine consequences for failure in theological circles. This is called the retributive justice of God. It is never unfair. God always does the right thing. Deuteronomy 32, verse four says this He is the rock. You guys with Michelle. He is the rock. His work is perfect for all his ways are justice a god of truth and without injustice, righteous and upright? Is he? The third thing that we learn about the justice of God in this story is that the justice of God is distinguished by his grace.

[00:26:18] Graciously, Noah and his family are singled out. Now, I think sometimes we have the tendency to to look at the story and think, Man, this really does point to the goodness of Noah. This story does not point to the goodness of Noah. It points to the graciousness of God. You know what? I think sometimes we might confuse it because we look at Noah and all sort this out for us in a second. But we look at what the scripture says and the Bible says, man, he was just he was perfect in his generation, so he walked with God. And so what did God do? Well, God was gracious because Noah was so good. You know, the moral behavior of Noah, really, some people would say, was at the root of God dispensing his grace. And that is not the case. God was was not gracious to Noah because Noah was righteous. Noah believe, listen, this is the order. Noah believed God by faith and thereby received God's grace and the evidence. Listen, the evidence of Noah's faith was that he was a just man was that he lived in a way in his generation where he was unpolluted. He did not get caught up and consumed. And, you know, the cultural norm of his era. Not only that, the Bible says he walked with God. How did he walk with God? Or why did he walk with God? Because he was a man of faith? Let me just ask a question today. This is a question for all of us to answer. Can people see evidence of your faith? Do you function in a way? Do you operate in a way where you express the justice of God in the best sense, where you live your life unpolluted by the ungodly generation around you, where it's evident that there's a devotion in your heart to the Lord? Because this is the pattern established not only in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament as well the grace of God.

[00:28:08] What does that mean? That God gives us what we don't deserve? It is the pleasure and the favor of God upon the infinitely ill deserving. And that comes to us when we put our trust and faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible says in Ephesians two verse paid for by grace, you've been saved through faith that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. The final thing that I want to say today about the justice of God is this The storm of God's justice is always triumphed by his mercy. So we learned that God is just we learned that he executes his justice always in a way that is right. We learn that his justice makes a distinction through his grace upon those who put their trust and faith in him. And then finally, as we look at the story of Noah, we learned that the storm of God's justice is triumphed by his mercy. How many of you going through a storm today? Just curious. Raise your hand. All right, well, it's a relatively well preserved service. You guys are way off way better off than the first service, I'll tell you that right now. I know when we go through a trial or we go through a storm, you know, we find particular portions of scripture that, you know, bring us comfort. Like Romans, Chapter eight people pretty consistently. If you're going through a hard time as a Christian Romans, Chapter eight is a great chapter to turn to people rarely turn to Genesis Chapter eight because, you know, I mean, I mean, there's elements of the story that are pretty rugged, but let me tell you something, there is so much courage and comfort to take from this particular chapter.

[00:29:48] Courage number one, if you're a Christian and the chastening hand of God is have been upon you because you know what whom the Lord loves, he chasen's. When we're wayward in our faith, you know, when we're out of alignment with God, you know, when we've stepped out of the purposes of God, maybe we're just off by a degree, or maybe we've walked away from him for some time. You know, God loves you so much. You know, God has such a jealous love for you. You know, if you love someone and that relationship is turbulent and becoming broken, you don't just walk away from them. In fact, if you do walk away from them, it's a sign that you never really love them in the first place. No, your heart is broken over the brokenness of the relationship. And so what do you do? Everything that you can write, everything that you can to pull that person that you love back to yourself. And this is what God does, sometimes through his chastening hand. You know, not all storms in our lives as Christians are a result of our sin. But sometimes storms in our lives are a result of our sin, and God is using those storms to chasten us to bring us back to him. Maybe today you're not a Christian, and maybe there is just a burden. You've been bearing a bird. And let me tell you something, I know what this feels like. There are things that you've done in your life that you are. You're you're guilty over. You're filled with shame over, you're embarrassed of things that you've done, you know, consistently. And those things begin to pile up. And pretty soon there is that burden of guilt and shame.

[00:31:28] And you know what? You do all sorts of different things to try to numb yourself to it. Maybe it's narcotics. Maybe it's alcohol, maybe it's relationships. Maybe as some experience, because you just want to put yourself in a place where there's distance between yourself and the horrible way that you feel. I know what that's like. I know what that's like. Before I came to Christ, my son was piling up upon my heart and I was breaking under the burden of that guilt and shame. And I want to tell you today there is one present among us who can take the burden from you. There is one present among us who can cleanse your heart from the shame that you have over the things in the past. There is one today who can cleanse your conscience from these dead work so that you can start fresh and serve the living god. And we see that in this story. You know, one thing I want to point out today simply from Genesis Chapter seven is that God remembered Noah. I mean, I know it's simple. I know it's simple, but I want to tell you today, God remembered Noah, and God remembers you. Now, let me just say that when the Bible says that God remembered Noah, it's not saying that, well, you know. God has a lot going on, and he forgot about Noah was 150 days, and Michael the Archangel reminded him, Hey, God, you know, we got that dude out there on the boat Captain Stubing and and he's like barbecuing all the, you know, probably good if the waters subside. AMA thing that the scripture says that because God doesn't remember us in the sense of, Hey, he forgot us or he misplaced us.

[00:33:08] No, the word means to pay attention to it means to fulfill a promise and act on behalf of somebody. And it gives this idea. This picture that God's attention had never left Noah in the first place and that the purpose of God was to fulfill the promises that he had given on behalf of Noah, man. How beautiful is that? And I think, look, I don't want to put thoughts in Noah's mind that weren't necessarily there. But I wonder if you know three or so months into this if Noah wasn't like, Hey, God, what's up? Have you forgotten us? I mean, think about this there literally on the ark for six months, almost. And I just wonder if there were times where it was like, Man, you know, is God ever going to rescue us? Has God ever going to come through? Is God ever? When will this storm? And you know what that's like when you're in the middle of a storm and you're just thinking, God, when is this going to come to an end? It feels like it's going on forever. And then in the midst of that turmoil, as you're spinning, you start to think things like in the devil's there all day long to reinforce this stuff. You begin to think that God's for God knew that God's at work and everybody else's life. But you know what? You don't really matter in the whole scope of what God is doing. And in the hierarchy of Christianity, you really barely make it to the first rung anyway. You're such a loser, Christian, that you should just be happy with what you got, because that's probably all that you're you're ever going to get. And I want to say to you that the ground at the foot of the cross is level.

[00:34:44] We all have equal standing before the Lord. It's true. I was with my friend, you know, last week and and his son was with us and and there was just a different stuff going on and my friends looked at the son. You said, Hey, you guys need to listen to Pastor Derrick because he has a direct connect to God. And and and I looked at the Sun and I said, You need to listen to your dad because his connection with God is the same as mine. And and it is the same for all of us. What is rescue does what is delivered us? Is it or is it our service to God? No. Is it how morally upright we are? No, it is the power of the blood of Jesus Christ. And I love this, I love this. It may be simplistic for you today, but the Bible says in Genesis seven, then the Lord said to Noah, Come into the ark, I just want you to know today. God did not say, Hey Noah, go into the ark. God did not say be separated from my presence. God did not say, Hey, I'm going to send you into the O.R., close the door and I'll see you in a hundred and fifty days. That's not what that's not what God says. God, says Noah. Come where I am. It's an invitation into God's presence. Noah, come and be where I am. And you need to know, as I say, calm that for every day that you will be on this boat in the midst of this crazy storm, I will never leave you. I will be present with you. You know, I said, I've been encouraged by that today. I say that to you today.

[00:36:25] And for some of you, man, your mind just goes directly to hand and I as crying Mitchell a.k.a Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And you remember the story, right? I mean, here they are these these teenage Israelites in Babylon and the idols been exalted and the commands been given everyone's to bow down. When the music strikes, the band plays and worship this gold idol and these guys are refusing to do it. And so they're brought before Nebuchadnezzar and are like, Listen, King, you know, we're not going to bow before your idol, and it doesn't really matter what you do to us because we're going to be faithful to God. The king is irate, the king is incensed, and so he has, you know, the fiery furnace heat is seven times hotter than normal, and he throws these three. I mean, he thinks he's the judge. Oh, how messed up are we? He thinks he is the potentate. He thinks he is the almighty. He thinks he's the one that can stand in the place of God and distribute judgment and justice because he's the greatest leader on the face of the Earth. He had a lesson coming to him. I'll tell you what, because those three boys get thrown into that fiery furnace and he's like, Huh? Two. Wait a minute, didn't we put three in? Why are there four? And the fourth one has the image of the son of God. There is someone with you today in the fire. Maybe it's the chastening hand of God, that's the storm in your life. Maybe today you're not a Christian and you're you're way down, you're burdened by. It's a miracle that you even came to church today because you've had this idea that if you stepped in these doors into this building that the roof itself would cave in on you.

[00:38:10] But there is someone who is present and he wants to give you his mercy. The second thing today is this God's justice and mercy me that is means that he's doing something new. I mean, this is really hard to to get out of this story. But as we see the justice of God executed and the mercy of God follow with the preservation of Noah and the consecration of the Earth through the altar that was built by Noah. All of that means that God was doing something new. You know, when God pours out his mercy into your life, it means the beginning of new things. God never judges just to destroy God will judge so that he can start something new. In fact, James did it like this. Mercy triumphs over judgment. I love that. What was God doing? What God was birthing a covenant relationship with Noah and all of humanity and all of his creation? In other words, I've explained to you the concept of covenant God creates these covenants, you know, four to seven covenants in the Bible. He creates these covenants when humanity is wayward and the covenant is intended to pull humanity back so that they can be restored to be image bearers so that they can be restored to have relationship with God. And this is precisely what God did and when he did it. In this situation, he signified the covenant by a rainbow, and the rainbow was an expression of the justice and the mercy of God meeting together. And then what does Noah do? Well, Noah consecrated the moment in worship by building an altar and offering a sacrifice. Sometimes it's hard for us to see the justice of God in that framework that is in fact intended to lead to his mercy so that God can can do a new thing in our lives.

[00:40:07] You know, just considering this, and for some reason, my mind went to forest fires. And you know, there's no doubt forest fires are catastrophic. They're destructive. We don't like to see what happens during a fire. You know, not a lot of fires around here in Las Vegas because there's not a lot of shrubbery and trees to burn. But you can walk out of your house or drive home, and all of a sudden there's smoke because in the air, because you know, there's some fire that's happening in California. And then you watch the video and you see just how absolutely destructive it is. But but as you pay attention to what's happening, inevitably what does happen is this after the fire, there's all of this new growth that in fact, in the ecosystem that God has created, he intends those times so that he can actually do new things like I look at that and I think that how beautiful is that in the midst of such destruction to see this beautiful new life being birthed? In fact, if you're into environmental things, these are some of the things that happen. Good things that happen through a forest fire. It increases diversity. It breaks down nutrients, causing the soil to be filled with a richness. The intense heat of the fire release seeds releases seeds and cones that would otherwise not be released. It clears out the clutter on the forest floor. Let me tell you something the justice of God in my life has cleared out a lot of clutter. Sometimes the canopy in forest becomes so dense that sunlight can't reach the forest floor. And so as the fire moves through a forest, it it opens that up so that the sunlight can reach the forest floor again.

[00:41:50] And then sometimes what it does is it creates areas of grassland for animals to feed on. I'm just saying to you today that that if you're going through the fire of God's chastening hand, what that you can take hope you can be filled with joy. All of that just portends the reality that God is doing a new thing in your life. And in addition to that, let me just say this. That's our message as Christians. Our message is not just the justice of God. Are you with me? Can I can I just remind us of this? Because there are some Christians who love to share the message of God's justice, and somehow they get some sick pleasure over being happy that the unbeliever is going to be judged. And you know, I know, like today, you would say, Well, that's absurd, pastor. Like, who would do that? You would be surprised. You would be surprised, particularly in the culture wars that we're dealing with. You know, people looking at groups of people or subgroups of people in our culture that may really, truly be aligned against God. And what do they do? They Christians express the justice of God without also simultaneously expressing his mercy. And I just want to I just want you to think about this. Like, how could we ever do that? How could we ever do that? Listen, I said to you earlier while there was a predator in the garden and was localized within our hearts. We know that we are no better than anybody else. When we talk about wickedness, we don't just talk about the wickedness in the world. We don't just talk about the wickedness of some subgroup in society or in our culture. We don't just talk about wickedness in the sense of political alignment.

[00:43:34] We all know that within our hearts there, there is wickedness. We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And when we do have the boldness to speak about the truth of God because we know we've been forgiven because we know that we pass from judgment into life because we've graciously been extended the mercy of God. While we do convey truth, you know what we convey and humbly, we conveyed humbly to the unbelieving heart. We convey it with a heart of forgiveness because Jesus said, if you want to be forgiven, you need to forgive others their sins. And we need to do it. Mercifully, when we ministered to people, we need to do it with mercy. Jesus said Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy and the heart within us. Listen is always hope. We take someone through the process of maybe the Roman Road. You know, we're talking about the justice of God upon our sin because all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But the purpose is this so that God can do a brand new thing in that life. Second Corinthians Chapter five says this. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Well, all things have passed away, not old people have passed away. All things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. Let's go. Just finally, to wrap this up. God's justice, this is tied to this last point God's justice is intended to draw people to Jesus. You know, the ark when you think of the Ark. Remember, with me, this morning is a foreshadow of Christ. It was pointing to Jesus. In fact, as a New Testament believer, we can legitimately say that Jesus is our ark.

[00:45:28] DVR represented the preserving hand of God. His salvation, his demonstration of goodness to Noah and Jesus is all of that to us. You know, just as the Ark passed through the waters of judgment and was submerged under the justice of God. So Jesus passed through the waters of God's judgment for us. And when he hung on the cross, he took all of the justice that we deserved for our sins, upon himself, every sin, every scene in your life. Pastor Jim was talking about this during communion, past, present and future. He bore it all for you. There was one entrance in the side of the ark. God beckoned Noah to come, and there's one entrance in the side of the Tabernacle and the Temple. And there was one hole that pierced his side, and as John was looking from that hole came water and blood god from the inside of the ark said to Noah, come and God drew Jesus. His son today says to you, Come, come to me, come just as you are. Because when my son died on the cross, the justice, my justice and my mercy kissed, my justice was poured out on him. So that simply through faith in him, you could receive my mercy. He says today, his arms were outstretched wide, symbolizing his ability and his desire to receive anyone who comes to him. Anyone could be saved. How good is the message of the gospel? Does it matter how far you're gone? Doesn't matter how much you have screwed up. Your life doesn't matter how much chaos you've caused in the life of others. I'm not saying that that doesn't matter, but I'm saying to you today you can calm just as you are. You don't fix yourself up and then come to God.

[00:47:24] You come to God with all your dysfunction and chaos and craziness. And he is the one who fixes you up and the very presence. Listen. The very presence of guilt and shame is a gift of God to draw you to himself. The presence of guilt and shame is a gift from God. Not to push you away. It's not there so that you can find some way to numb yourself to it. It is present there it is God saying Come to me just as you are. John, 6:37, says this all to the father gives me will come to me and the one who comes to me. I will by no means cast out today. If you want well-being today, if you want the best experience of life that you can have today, if you want freedom from the burden that you've been bearing. The answer is found in one name and that name is Jesus. Let's pray together and God, we thank you today for your son. We thank you today that we do give you praise, we worship you. For you're just nature and God, we thank you that you are so merciful. And that the message of the cross is so unparalleled, there's there's no message like this message. God, it is your self revelation, you've declared who you are. So the giving of your own son. That you are a God who takes pleasure in forgiving that you are a God who finds joy. In loving your creation. And extending your grace and mercy. And God, that you would. Deal with your own justice. Within the Trinity upon yourself. The day that your son died. God, we just were humbled today. And we're thankful. That you are who you are today as their eyes are closed and as we're just wrapping up in this moment of prayer today, maybe you've never put your trust and faith in Christ, and maybe you heard a message today that was something that you just weren't expecting.

[00:49:46] You know, you maybe you were expecting someone talking about getting things right morally and fixing yourself and being a better person. And that's not the message of the Bible. There. Our behaviors and attitudes within all of our hearts that have deserved the justice of God. But the story doesn't end there. God today wants to extend his mercy and his grace, he wants to lift the burden of guilt and shame that you've been burying and exchange it for his peace and rest. Today, where there has been death and destruction and chaos and decay. He wants to bring life. Today where there has been darkness and. Payne, he wants to bring hope. Well, you let him when? Will you he calls you to come today? Come to me, are you who are weary and heavy laden, he calls you to come when you come to him. Just as you are today, there's no religious game is being played here. It's not your church attendance or becoming a member or something like that, God wants your heart. Today, if you need to take that step of faith and come to God through faith in his son, you need Jesus, you need the forgiveness of sin, you need that guilt and shame, the burden of that lifted from your heart. I want to pray for you right now. God did not bring you here today just to make you feel better about yourself. God brought you here today to save you, but you need to come. And so this morning, if this is you, you want to put your trust and faith in Jesus Christ. I want to pray for you right where you're sitting. Would you raise your hand today? Be bold. Stretch your hand up high and give me the opportunity to pray for you.

[00:52:04] God bless you right here in the front of my left and in the back on my left. Thank you. And here in the center, over here on my right, I see your hand over here, on my right, in your hand as well. Thank you so much right here in the center. Awesome. And he loves you. He loves you. If you came with Christians today, he loves them too. But but he wants you to know. He wants you to experience. His great love, anybody else stretched your hand up. Awesome, thank you. You're in the center of the back. On my left, thank you. Today, maybe as you put your hands down, maybe as a Christian, you've been just going through a storm, and in some sense it's been the chastening hand of God, and I just want to I've got good news for you today. That chastening work of God isn't because he's just angry and mad at you. It's because he has a jealous love for you, and he's calling you back to himself and Christian today. You need to come. God is calling you today to respond to the work that he's been doing in your life and come home to your heavenly father. And so if this is you as a Christian today and you need that fresh work of God's spirit that that a loving justice of God in your life through whatever storm you might be dealing with would be purposed for a fresh new beginning in his mercy. Would you raise your hand today? Let me pray for you. God bless you and you and in the back here in the front and you're in the back of my right here on the right. Thank you over here, on my left, in the back.

[00:53:53] And he loves you so much to see your hand to in the back. You see your hand. He just doesn't let us go. Are you thankful for that today? You can put your hands down. And father, we thank you God, for your presence here in this place. God, we pray that every good thing that you have prepared for these hearts would be received by them in Jesus name. Amen. Hey, let's all stand today, and as I'm just going to encourage you guys, please, no, do not leave right now. Do not leave early to go pick up your kids or go to lunch. This is the most important part of the service. If you raise your hand today, I'm thankful that you gave me the opportunity to pray for you, but there's a step of faith that you need to take today. God is calling you to come. God is calling you to come and to lay down sin at the altar. God is calling you to come and to receive this fresh mercy and grace. God is calling you to come so that he can start a new work in your life. And so maybe you raise your hand to receive Christ. Maybe for you. You've been as a believer under the chastening hand of God. Whatever the case may be, I want to lead you in a prayer. Today, you're going to pray. You're going to turn your heart over to God. You're to confess faith in Christ. And so as Pastor Tony leads us into song of worship, if you raise your hand. Come on down to the front. Stand next to one of our follow up leaders. I'm going to lead you in prayer. Worthy of every song we could ever see.

[00:55:30] We could have. Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe. For you. Jesus, the name above every other name. Jesus, the only one who could ever say. You're worthy of every breath we could ever bring. We fear. All right. Hey, I just want to interrupt Tony, because in the first service, we had so many people raise their hand and and just a couple of people came forward, which I was really thankful for. But I think there's just a lot of spiritual adversity in people's lives. And, you know, God speaks to you and you raise your hand. It's like, Well, God, I'm willing, I'm willing to take that step. I'm willing to go just that far. Listen, if that's your attitude, that's what you'll leave with today. You'll leave with that. You'll leave with conditions. You'll leave with boundaries like, OK, God, well, you know, now I've left and I'm still only willing to go this far. What is the value of coming forward is the value. One value is in this. You're saying, God, I'll do whatever. I'll do whatever. There are no boundaries. There are no boundaries. I'm not I'm not going to limit your work, my pride and pride in my heart. I'm not going to be concerned about what other people think and what how they'll perceive me. If I if I take that step and come forward, I'm not going to be in a place any longer in my life or I'm just trusting in myself and my ability to get myself out of difficult situations. God, I'm choosing to follow you with all that I have. That is one of the values of in the midst of God's people coming forward and taking this step. And so I'm just saying there are a whole bunch of you that raise your hand, and that means that a whole bunch of you need to be right here today.

[00:57:38] So come on, girl. Let me lead you in prayer. Oh, there is no. Like you, there is missiles open my eyes in one year. Show me who you are and fill me with your heart illegally in your love and those around me. For me, fear is no. There is the beast eyes open my eyes in a. Show me who you are and fill me with your heart in the. And you loved to those around the. I will fill my. Oh, for your love, it is a firm foundation. I will put my trust in you, I alone and I will not be shaking hands. I will build my life on your. It is a firm foundation. I will put my trust anyone, and I will not be shaken. Awesome. You've got praise today, so great for. It's going to lead you in a very simple prayer today, bow your heads with me and I'd like you to pray this prayer out loud as I lead you to pray with me today. God, thank you. That you have rescued me. But you are my deliverer that you are faithful, that you have remembered me. Today, I trust in Jesus. His sacrifice on the cross. And his resurrection. I give you my whole life unconditionally with no reservation for your glory. In Jesus name, he's a man. Awesome. Praise God.