

Sermon Series: Transformed Leadership
Sermon Title: The Transformed Leadership of Noah
Sermon Text: Genesis 6:8-9 & Hebrews 11:7
Sermon Presenter: Pastor Larry

Full Sermon Notes

“How deep the Father’s love for us, How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son, To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss, The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One, Bring many sons to glory”

It’s hard to imagine our Creator God loving His wayward creatures so much! But He does and we are the beneficiaries!! Amen? Amen! Let’s pray and ask God to teach us today how His love in our lives can cause us to become transformed leaders to those around us! Let’s pray!

Today we’re going to talk about another Old Testament figure who walked with God and as a result, his life stands as an amazing example to us of transformed leadership. We talked briefly about this guy in our first message on Abraham because he played an important role in God’s redemptive plan for humanity before Abraham. You might remember this guy named Noah! Now there’s a lot of folks in our world today that would relegate the story of Noah to a fable or fairy tale. Some doubt whether or not there really was a flood, and an Ark filled with animals from all over the world. The Hollywood movie Noah was not even based on the Bible, but on an ancient Jewish Gnostic or Kabalistic interpretation of the world. So if you watched that movie and walked away confused, now you know the reason. I don’t have time to go into all of that but suffice it to say it’s not Biblical! In a Wall Street Journal Opinion Article written by Evan Goldstein April 8, 2011, we get a glimpse of what the Kabalistic philosophy or “religion” is based on, which has been followed by a number of well known people like Madonna, Demi Moore, Ashton Kutcher, Britney Spears and Lindsey Lohan. According to Goldstein...

“The Kabbalah Centre preaches a nebulous spiritualism that blends kabbalistic ideas with astrology, secular science and a large dose of pop psychology. The literature is laden with words like “energy,” “chaos,” and, most central, “Light”—“the Infinite source of Goodness, the Divine Force, the Creator.”

One of the things that fascinates me is the fact that those of us who accept the Bible as divine truth and believe in the Creator God of the Bible are often ridiculed and seen as backwards, uneducated, unscientific and superstitious, while the most bizarre and even cultish belief systems based on secretive, and very questionable origins are somehow viewed as enlightened and highly intellectual. So it fascinates me, but it does not surprise me that these kinds of things are happening. We know that Satan has distorted the truth from the very beginning. In fact, when referring to Satan, Jesus said this about him...

John 8:44 ...He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Jesus told it like it is! I want you to know that I wholeheartedly believe the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God! I base my life, my beliefs, my purpose, my future, and my hope for eternity on the truth of God's Word! My preaching and teaching are unashamedly based on God's Word and I seek to saturate my sermons with God's Holy Word, His guiding principles, His absolute truth, His irrevocable commands, His trustworthy instructions, His undeniable wisdom, and His life giving teachings! With that said, I want to remind you of the background to the Biblical account of Noah which I shared at the beginning of our series on Abraham! You might remember that things had gotten so bad with humanity that God was in pain!

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.

Genesis 6:6 The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.

Genesis 6:7 So the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them."

God understands pain and suffering more than we could ever know. Some people think because God is perfect and sovereign that He knows nothing of pain, but only love, peace and happiness! God is love but it is that very love which causes Him to know the depths of pain, the depths of suffering, the likes of which we could never fully understand! Parents sometimes have a glimpse of the pain love can cause! God as Creator, was the Father of humanity and His heart was filled with pain at the horrible sin, injustice, and abuse that was happening amongst His children! People were involved in unspeakable wickedness and some were even sacrificing their children to pagan gods in horrible rituals. I don't fully understand or have all the answers to all the hard questions surrounding the judgment of the flood, but I can say this: I believe God gave the people chance after chance to turn from their wickedness and as for as the innocent children, when they drew their last breath on this earth in the flood, God gave them their first breath of eternal life in heaven where they would never face those terrible abuses again! Had God not stepped in, this pattern and cycle would have continued unabated, and God had to act. Again, I don't have all the answers, but under the Old Covenant there was the law and there was judgment, however, God had a New Covenant plan that included a powerful solution for breaking patterns and cycles of sinfulness and it was the cross! When I want to understand and know the heart of God I look to the Cross where God took on unfathomable pain and showed us His ultimate love for humanity by taking the punishment we deserved. You might remember this quote which a Japanese theologian wrote back in 1958...

"The gospel, that is, the pain of God, infinitely transcends the pain of the world, but why has it come into existence? What is the object of God's pain? It was born to save the pains of the world and to make the pains of the world its purpose."

In other words, God wants to take our pain, our sadness, our troubles, and our brokenness. He wants to carry our burdens. Not because He enjoys pain, but because it hurts Him more to see us hurting! Folks, this is the reason for God's plan of redemption! So we see in Genesis this: rather than give up on His plans for humanity, God once again went to His contingency plan, the plan He had if we rebelled. We must remember, there was no flaw in God's plan. He knew exactly what He was doing when His great love allowed the variable of humankind's free will to be part of His plan as He created us in His image! He is, after all, Sovereign, and it was His choice to give us choice! We chose poorly, and it caused God great pain, but God didn't give up on humanity as He protected Noah and His family in the Ark and rebuilt the human race through them. Noah's life and testimony found in our text gives us some things that need to be on your list for transformed, Godly leadership! Today is Father's Day and Dads, I can't think of a more fitting and challenging sermon for Father's day. I wish I could say that in my great wisdom I planned this message for this day a long time ago, but I didn't! This is totally a God thing, and to be very honest with you, in my ministry, it's never my wisdom or abilities, but God's amazing grace and willingness to use an old Mississippi dirt clod like me! I'm just so grateful for His willingness to do in my life what I could never do on my own! And by the way, Webster's definition of dirt clod is...

"a lump or mass especially of earth or clay"

And God's Word says this...

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.
2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

And as we look at our story of Noah today, we will see a wonderful example of a man who allowed God's light to shine in his heart and give him knowledge that he would have otherwise not known and we'll see how he would need that all-surpassing power from God to save his life and his family! So Dad's pay close attention today! Your family needs you to be clay in God's hands so you can be the leaders God has called you to be! The stakes couldn't be higher! Noah's family was going to face a literal flood and depended on Noah's faithfulness in Godly leadership to save them! Your family is facing a flood of wickedness, ungodly influence and temptations to abandon the ways of God! Will you follow Noah's example and provide an Ark of spiritual safety for them?

Read with me God's Word in Genesis 6:8-9...

Genesis 6:8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 6:9 This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God.

Those two verses speak volumes about Noah and the transformed leadership that was a part of his life! And then we see this additional wisdom about Noah in the Book of Hebrews in the Hall of Fame of Faith! Hebrews 11:7...

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

There are several things from the story of Noah that need to be on your list for transformed, Godly leadership! These are things we learn from Noah's life and if we pay close attention to each of these in our own lives then the way we live our lives and lead with our lives will be radically transformed! The first thing on the list is...

1. Your Standing with God

Where do you stand with God? In other words, what is your relationship with God? Do you have a relationship with God? Noah did!

Genesis 6:8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah found favor with the Lord because he had a relationship with the Lord through faith in the Lord!

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

We talked about this last week: Our standing with God, our relationship with God comes when we admit we are sinners in need of a Savior, trust that Jesus died on the cross to be that Savior and then commit our lives to God by calling on His name! Our standing with God is not based on our own righteousness, but on the righteousness provided to us by God through Jesus!

By faith we have righteousness for salvation based on our right standing and relationship with God!

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 5:2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

Before we can even begin to think about having transformed leadership we need to have transformed hearts through faith in Jesus! If we aren't standing in His grace then we are lost and our families are in great danger! So I would ask the dads here today, where do you stand with God? And that question applies to all of us in this room. The second thing on our list for transformed, Godly leadership is...

2. Your Steps with God

How is your walk with God, your fellowship with God? Once again, we must ask ourselves about the health of our prayer life, our devotional life and our study life! Genesis 6:9 is clear about Noah...

Genesis 6:9 This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God.

Are you walking faithfully with God? Dads, if I asked you that question today, what would you say? If I asked your wife that question about you what would she say? And if I asked your children that question about you, what would they say?

When I was growing up, I remember seeing my dad up early in the mornings before work, at his desk studying for his Sunday School lesson he would be teaching the next Sunday. He is still a man of prayer and study. I remember hearing my Dad and Mom talking around the supper table and how their conversations were always seasoned with Godliness even when they were talking about difficult things. And here's something huge, I never ever heard my dad say a cuss word even when I had pushed every button he had and was talking back to him and being so disrespectful! His Godly restraint was amazing. I remember as a rebellious teenager and he was fussing at me, I actually was thinking, "just cuss me!" I wanted him to do that so I would have an excuse for my bad behavior and throw that back at him. But my dad didn't cuss. So let me say this right here: You may walk faithfully with God and your kids may still go another direction, but you don't want to be the reason they go in that direction because you weren't walking with God! My dad was not a perfect man, no one is, but my dad lived his faith in front of his family because it was real, not fake, and it had a powerful impact on my life! Still does! I'm so blessed to still have my father in my life! I'm grateful and still call him for advice and Godly wisdom!

You might say, "but Pastor Larry, it's a tough world out there and it's just not easy to walk faithfully with God! I mean, maybe back 50 years ago, but in today's world it's so hard!" I agree, but when we look at Noah, he was surrounded by an extremely wicked culture and yet he walked faithfully with God! 2 Peter 2:5 says that Noah was a "preacher of righteousness!" I can't even imagine the ridicule Noah endured as he preached and lived righteousness! God wants us to influence the world rather than the world influence us! How do we do that? We seek to be consistent with what we teach and preach and the way we live and talk! Are you a preacher of righteousness with the way you live? Your life is telling a story! None of us are perfect, but people need to see that we are sincerely trying to live the life God wants us to live! You see, we are saved by grace not by works, but we also live by grace and that allows us to do good works. You all know that one of my favorite passages in all of the Bible is found in Ephesians 2:8-10. Check it out...

Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

Ephesians 2:9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

God has prepared things for us to do that will proclaim the truth of God to the world! Our walk with God allows us to accomplish those things regardless of the wickedness around us! As bad as things are today, and it's getting closer and closer to being as wicked as it was in the days of Noah, but I don't know if we're completely there yet! I do know that Jesus said this...

Matthew 24:37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

But here's the deal, It is critical that we be in the world but not of it! Your family is watching you. If your children follow in your footsteps will those steps lead them to Jesus? Will those steps lead them to a spiritual ark of safety? People need to see the difference Christ makes in our lives because we live in fellowship with God!

By faith we have righteousness for living based on our steps with God, our walk with God!

Some people think that living a righteous life is God making us live a dull life while everyone else is having the time of their life! Nothing could be farther from the truth! God wants us to live by His standards because He created us and He knows how we work best! He designed us! Being in step with God brings a purpose, a peace, a power, that cannot be found in the ways of the world! And when we have that, the leadership we bring to our family is transformational! For this to happen, we must have the third thing that Noah had in his life and needs to be on our list for transformed leadership...

3. Your Submission to God

What does your obedience to God look like? Noah was obedient and began building the Ark...

Genesis 6:13 So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.

Genesis 6:14 So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.

Genesis 7:5 And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him.

Noah's obedience to God literally saved his family! Dads I must tell you that your obedience to God or lack thereof will be a determining factor for your family, good or bad! Submission to God is also based on faith! Do you trust God's will for your life? If God asks you to do something will you trust Him to provide the resources, the wisdom, the direction and the power to get the job done? God's going to give us tasks, ministries, things to do, things to accomplish and He will make a way if we trust Him. I love what God told Israel in Isaiah...

Isaiah 41:8 “But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham my friend,

Isaiah 41:9 I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, ‘You are my servant’; I have chosen you and have not rejected you.

Isaiah 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

So God will make a way if we will just trust Him. And we must not forget that submission to God and obedience is not just about the things we are to do, but it also includes the things we should not do. Jesus said we are to repent of our sins and turn from our wicked ways. Jesus’ brother James had this to say...

James 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

James 1:23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror

James 1:24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

James 1:25 But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

There’s yet another important thing about transformed leadership we learn from Noah and it needs to be on our list...

4. Your Surety with God

What role does faith play in your life and leadership style? Noah’s standing with God, his steps with God, his submission to God, were all based on faith! And by faith Noah had a surety and security with God that was powerful! The Oxford Language Dictionary says that surety is...

Surety - “the state of being sure or certain of something.”

The writer of Hebrews states this...

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

To say, “for Noah to start building an ark in the middle of the desert was a huge step of faith” is a huge understatement!! Can you imagine the ridicule he got on that one? But Noah was sure and certain he was doing the right thing because of his standing, his steps, and his submission to God. And all of those things were a part of his life because of his faith and trust in his God! Faith also plays an important role when it comes to our confidence! Do you truly trust God to work things out when you are facing challenges, struggles, temptations, discouragement, criticism, or

attacks on your integrity? When you talk about the things you believe God has called you to accomplish, do you speak with confidence in what God is going to do for you and through you? I love what Paul said to the Philippian Church in this regard...

Philippians 1:3 I thank my God every time I remember you.

Philippians 1:4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy

Philippians 1:5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now,

Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Does your language portray confidence in God and His promises to help you accomplish all that He has called you to do? Are others inspired by your surety in God? This matters in your leadership of your family and in your leadership of others. And while this is Father's day, folks, this applies to every one of us in this room, father or not! And when we have surety in God's promises to us by faith it causes us to realize another very important thing on our list...

5. Your Security with God

Do you have security with God? Do you know that God has forgiven you, saved you, and promised to never leave you? You can have this because God establishes a covenant with those who are willing to put their faith and trust in Him! We see this in Noah's life.

Genesis 9:8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him:

Genesis 9:9 "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you

Genesis 9:10 and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth.

Genesis 9:11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

In the same way God promised Noah to never again destroy all life with a flood He makes a New Covenant with all of those who have placed their trust and faith in what Jesus did on the cross to save us from our sins! Paul puts it beautifully in Ephesians...

Ephesians 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Ephesians 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

Ephesians 1:5 he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—

Ephesians 1:6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Ephesians 1:8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding,

Ephesians 1:9 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,

Ephesians 1:10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Ephesians 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

Ephesians 1:12 in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,

Ephesians 1:14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

Predestine means to pre choose and God pre chose to love us and offered a way for us to have a covenant relationship with Him through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross! We were included in Christ when we heard the message of truth and made the choice to believe! To God be the glory!! What security! And when we realize and accept what an awesome thing God has done for us in His Son Jesus, we can add the one last thing to our list needed for transformed leadership like Noah.....

6. Your Service to God!

Noah served God in worship! Ever wonder why we call it a worship service? Because we serve God in a special way when we worship Him. And worship is loving God! When's the last time you had a deeply meaningful worship experience with The Lord? Noah worshiped God and was the first person to build an altar to The Lord!

Genesis 8:20 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it.

One of the greatest ways we can worship God is by serving God with our lives on a daily basis. God's Word tells us this...

1 Peter 4:10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Let me give you a very practical example of why worshiping God is such an important part of serving God. You may serve your family by providing for them, and protecting them, but I can guarantee you that the thing they want most from you is your love! If you're doing all of those other things and not loving them, then they will not thrive! And you can do all of the right things

and religious things that you would feel like God would want you to do, but if you are not loving God in worship, then His heart is broken. If you are legalistically following all of the rules, but your heart's not in it, then that becomes impersonal religious activity rather than a personal relationship with God! The book of Micah tells us this...

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

God desires a personal relationship with you and me and it's that personal relationship in worship that will transform the way we lead others with our lives!

Let's pray!