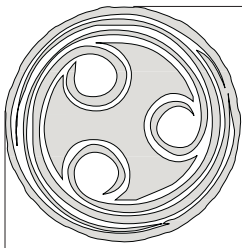


The Wrathful Grace of God : Genesis 7-8



sermonnotes

Introduction

Imagine facing God at the end of your life and having Him say to you, "Well done my good and faithful servant." (see Matthew 25:23). I admit I am motivated by that thought. I also know that I am called to be a worshipper of God. Our sin deeply grieves God keeping us from being able to do what we are created to do. Because of sin's destructive nature, God cannot let it go unpunished. That would be thoroughly unrighteous of Him to do. In our passage today, we see God once again acting out in justice as well as mercy and grace. The flood story reminds us that God will not be mocked and He will judge unrighteousness. But His purpose and will, will be re-established in the midst of His wrath. We often believe, because of God's grace, that He is soft on sin. We are then incredibly surprised when we read accounts of His wrath in scripture. If we want to maintain a "God is love only" theology we are confronted regularly with a bible that won't allow it.

Our passage begins again with Noah being called "righteous." Our righteousness is a result of the covenant that God has given His people. Noah had a simple obedience to what he knew God wanted him to do. Our righteousness is ultimately a work of God in our lives (Ezekiel 16; Romans 10:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21), but our response to God in obedience is a real part of God's grace in His covenant creation.

Noah is obedient to his call. We also are called to obedience.

From The Head...

God Judges Unrighteousness

There is no doubt that these two chapters in Genesis (amongst many others found in the bible), indicate a God that is as wrathful as He is loving. It is truly unfair to judge the God of the Old Testament as one of wrath, while the New Testament God is a softhearted grandpa.

One can only read Revelation and realize that God hates sin and has a full plan to bring this creation once again under His complete kingdom rule by judging wickedness and extolling His righteousness for the entire world to see. He judged life with death (Genesis 7:22). Death is that which reminds us of our mortality and that this world is not the way it is supposed to be.

God Delights In Justice

This is a reality about God that I believe we struggle with, but one that I believe we can identify with if we try. Injustice is a terrible thing, and we always cheer for the little guy that finds justice in an unjust world. Revelation 18:20 projects us into the judgment seat of God and reveals a God who delights in justice. We stumble over verses like Psalm 137:9, because we don't understand the context behind verses such as these. Throughout chapter 7, we find the idea that the flood "prevailed" over the earth (7:18, 19, 20, 24). The word brings forth the ideas of triumph and glory (see Genesis 32:25).

Gods Grace Shines Brightest in Judgment

In chapter 8 we almost see a re-creation of Genesis 1. The waters have prevailed (triumphed) on earth creating chaos (see Isaiah 45:7), but it is the "wind" ("ruach," can otherwise be used for the Spirit, as in Genesis 1:2; see too Psalm 104:4) that begins to bring forth order on the earth. Where as the "breath" was taken away from man in judgment (Genesis 7:22), it is given back to him in re-creation (Genesis 8:1).

God Restores His Purpose in Judgment

All throughout the account, the phrase "male and female," is a reminder of Genesis 1:26-28. Genesis 8:17 is a direct rendering of 1:28. We are called out

27 FEB. 2005 PASTOR MIKE GUNN

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of the safety of the ark into the world to be worshippers of God and to glorify Him, and be "fruitful" in this land.

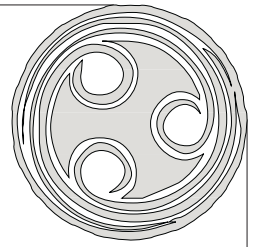
Our salvation is personal, in that the righteousness God grants is to the person. The persons that God has levied His grace on are called to publicly be agents of righteousness for His name's sake. We cannot allow this mandate to go by the wayside of religious duty and personal holiness. We are called to come out of our safety nets to love God and love our neighbors.

It is interesting to note that God promises not to do this to humanity again even though they are clearly going to be deserving of it (Genesis 8:21) and that in the midst of their evil He restores the universe's intended function, which is to do what it is created for. To bring forth vegetation, keep the weather in check, and control time (Genesis 8:22).

Peter 3:20-22, reminds us of what the Noah story represents. It is a type of the salvation we have in our baptism into the body of Christ, by the Spirit of God in our lives. The issue here for us is clear:

1. God hates sin and will judge it. Our sin is a personal affront to His holiness.
2. He has sent His Son to glorify Himself and to pay the penalty for our sins so that He could, in love, give His righteousness to an arrogant and fallen world.
3. Our part is to receive this grace that He offers. Or at least to know it is being offered, and rejection will always result in judgment! God will not be mocked!
4. Our restoration to life is for the sake of the mission we are called to in the community of faith. That mission is to worship God with our lives and help develop others to be passionate worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

sermonnotes



... To The Heart

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