



Sermon – 06/12/2022
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Verses Covered This Week

Genesis 7:1 – 8:19

Hebrews 11:7

Psalms 69:1 – 3

Matthew 3:16 - 17

Let's open our Bibles together back to the book of Genesis. We'll start in Genesis 7 this morning as we continue the story of Noah. And as you turn there, I want to encourage you to remember our Wired Camp team in your prayers right now. We have about 150 students and volunteers that are there in Central Texas gathered with nearly 600 students from all around the state who are diving into God's word together there even as we do it this morning. And if you're a guest in the room, welcome home. We love having you here and our lives, our church, our hearts are centered around the word of God where last week, we saw in Genesis 6, the story of Noah began. And we saw that Genesis 6 unpacked the judgment of God. That everyone of us stands before God condemned because of our sin. That guilt and shame that we experience in life because of our failures are a foretaste of that judgment that is to come. In other words, last week, Genesis 6 showed us our need of salvation. But now, as we start in Genesis 7, it's going to show us the way of salvation. How God Himself provides a rescue from the judgment that our sin deserves. So, begin with me following along in verse 1 where it says this. When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, this the sons of God. Well, let's start over again because that's chapter 6. I said 7 today, right? Must have been all that heat at the Aggie baseball game yesterday. Chapter 7.

¹Then the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. ²Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, ³and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. ⁴For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground." ⁵And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him. ⁶Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. ⁷And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. ⁸Of clean animals, of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, ⁹two and two, male and female, went into the ark

with Noah, as God had commanded them. ¹⁰And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

Let's pray together.

Father, as we come to your word. We're asking You to change our lives as we experience the flood of challenges all around us, Lord, we're asking that you would work in this time, work in our lives to conform us to the image of Christ so that we might see the rescue you provided through Your Son even more clearly. And we pray these things in Christ's name, amen.

Well, it's been nearly five years since Hurricane Harvey struck the Southeast Coast of Texas. Can you believe that? August of 2017 is when that storm hit the coastline. And when that storm came, it brought 50 inches of rain that flooded that entire region. And you remember what it was like sitting in your living room, watching those images, those videos on TV, that sense of desperation that was there. That was the same experience that a man named Brett Sher had who lives up in Dripping Springs just west of Austin. He was watching those images and he was praying to God to help them to bring rescue. And in response to his prayers, he felt like God was prompting him not just to pray but to go and help. And so Brett loaded up and drove to Houston, drove into the storms, into the water, into the flood, to attempt to provide rescue and relief. And you remember what happened in Harvey. It wasn't just Brett but hundreds of people from the surrounding communities, from Louisiana, all over Texas, you name it, gathered there provide rescue, to try to bring people out of the floodwaters and save their lives. And I can't help but wonder this morning, were there moments like that that were going on when this flood began in the days of Noah? I mean, remember, the text tells us that the world is filled with evil, that there was bad, bad people all around. But you wonder in the middle of the storm, did good Samaritans rise up in the middle of this bad behavior where they try to rescue people, to protect them. They kept trying to move to higher ground. They kept trying to find life preservers to save their lives but the waters kept rising. One moment, there was no higher ground to go to. It was too little and too late. They had missed their opportunity to be saved from the flood, from the judgement that was to come. And this text is sounding that exact warning for us this morning. That on our own, our efforts to try to find rescue from the judgment of God is too little, too late. It's never going to be enough. But God in his kindness, has provided that rescue for us. He has given us a way of salvation and as we turn our hearts to this text this morning, what we're going to see is that this rescue that God provides from His judgement plays out in several ways. And I want you to notice the first one starting back here in verse one which we already read. We're going to notice first that God rescues us from the penalty of His judgement. God rescues us from the penalty of His judgment. So, look back at verse one. It's go time. Noah has been building this ark for decades and now, the moment has arrived. God tells him in verse one to go into the ark. And as he does that, He's going to start the process of rescuing Noah and his family and these animals from the penalty of His judgment. And as this set of verses plays out, it's going to answer several questions for us about what that looks like.

So, the first question that we see here in the beginning of the passage is, why does God save us from the penalty of His judgment? And you'll see the way that's answered there in the second half of verse one. It gives us the answer for Noah. It says,

for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation.

So, what does it mean that Noah is righteous? Well, look back one chapter to Genesis 6 in verse 9. We saw this last week. It says about Noah.

⁹These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.

In other words, to be righteous is to be right with God. As 6:9 describes it, he is holy. He's blameless. He's walking with God. There's an intentionality and an intimacy that's there. That's what it means for Noah to be righteous and as you come back to chapter 7, what is the basis for that righteousness? Well, let's see it. It's tempting to think that that righteousness is on the basis of Noah's behavior. That his obedience earns his righteousness. I mean, if you look down at verse 5, it says, and Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him. We see that same type of language in the last chapter in chapter 6 in verse 22. In other words, the whole world around him is turning away from God and yet in the midst of that black hole of sin, in the midst of that darkness, here is this light of obedience shining. Is that why God rescues him? Is that why He brings salvation from the penalty of His judgment? No, it's not. In fact, we see the reason why God rescues from the penalty of that judgment in Hebrews chapter 11. You'll see it on the screen. We, Shane read it for us earlier this morning. Hebrews 11:7 tells us why God rescues us from the penalty of sin. It says this about Noah.

⁷By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events is yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

In other words, Noah had an unwavering faith in an unseen future because he knew he followed an unrivaled God. The basis of our righteousness is not our behavior but our beliefs. It's not what we do with our hands, it's what we do with our heart. And that's what we find here in the life of Noah. We are being saved because of the righteousness that comes by faith. This text answers another question starting in back in verse 6. It tells us to answer the question, who does God rescue from the penalty of judgment? So, when you look back there, you'll see in verse 6, it says, Noah was 600 years old. Okay, so we find here, He, God is saving Noah and his families and some of these animals. And it starts when he's just turned the ripe old age of 600. If any of y'all moved lately, you gotta clear out the mess, the junk. You wonder what piles of stuff can you accumulate over the course of 600 years. Did Noah have a yard sale, a garage sale, a moving sale before he got on the boat? He figures they're not going to it anyway. I might as well get some money off them before we go. There is this sense of immediacy to who is being saved. It's not just who happens to be walking by the boat when the rains come and says, "Yeah, I think that's a good idea." Instead, the ones who get on the boat, as verse 7 says, are Noah and his sons and his wife and his son's wives with him who went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. It's this small group. There's eight of them in the whole world. Which means if they got on the boat, everyone else didn't. The ones who watched them with skepticism, the ones who ridiculed them. In fact, if you went back to Genesis 5 and read that whole genealogy again of the family of Noah, there were probably people listed in that genealogy not on the boat. Who's on the boat? The ones who are marked out by the covenant promise of God. The one who He chooses to rescue. But it's not just the people who are on the boat but look back at verse 9. We also see some of the animals. Verses 8 and 9 tell us that every type of animal comes into

the boat. And I don't know about you, but if you're anything like me, that should fill us with the sense of shock or incredulity. How could that be? I mean, you walk your your dogs around the park and they're wanting to get at each other there. Much less when you put animals who would normally be predators. How did that work? How did they coexist? How did they all fit? How did the slug and the turtle get there in time before the boat closed? We don't know the answer to those questions. But here they are and God preserves them. The reason He preserves them is He's not giving up on creation. He's refining it so that He can renew it and restore it.

Which brings us to the third question we'll find as we move on in the text. How does God rescue us from the penalty of sin? Well, let's pick up in verse 11 now and read along and we'll see the answer to that question.

¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, and on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. ¹²And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. ¹³On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, ¹⁴they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. ¹⁵They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.

So, here we go. The flood begins and just imagine this moment with me for a second. The rains begin to fall and perhaps for a short time, there's a sense of appreciation and relief. Perhaps, there was a drought going on there much like we experience here right in the heart of Texas. But soon, the intensity of the rain and the duration of the rain begins to create anxiety fear, uncertainty amongst the people. And how long does the rain fall? Look back at the end of verse 12. It says, 40 days and 40 nights. Isn't that number significant in the Bible? For the first time, we see the number 40 being used and it shows up over and over again. And the significance of the number of 40 in the Bible, it's a number of testing. It's a number of refining. So, you see that Israel was in the wilderness for 40 years before they entered the promised land. Jesus is in the desert for how long facing the temptations of the devil? 40 days. Right here from the very beginning we see the way that God is at work not just in rescuing His people but in refining His people. And notice one more thing about how God rescues. It happens there at the end of this section. At the end of verse 16, it says this, after they've been loaded up, after the waters had begun to fall, it says this,

and the Lord shut him in.

Now, imagine if you're Noah. You've shepherded all these animals onto the boat. You've got them all in their places. The rains are surging. The water's rising. You've kind of gone through your checklist and made sure everything's okay. And then all of a sudden you look up and you realize that the door to the boat is still open. How you going to get it closed? How's this thing going to keep floating with the door wide open in its side? But the text tells us that God shut the door. What's the significance of that? It's not just a casual mention in the text. What it's showing us there is those who God calls, He also keeps. Those who He rescues, He also

sustains. Those who He provides salvation for, He also protects. In other words, this passage is showing us that all of salvation is all of God. From begin to end. God calls him, He keeps him. And that's the reason why it is that God can rescue Noah from the penalty of the judgment of God.

Now, let's keep going in the passage. We'll pick up in verse 17 to see a second big idea here in the text. I want you to notice next, how God rescues us from the power of His judgment. So, let's start that beginning in verse 17.

¹⁷The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. ¹⁸The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ¹⁹And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. ²⁰The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. ²¹And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. ²²Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

So, think about what's happening here. God doesn't just rescue us from the penalty of His judgement but also from the power of His judgment. And here in this portion of the passage, we see the power of God's judgment on display in a number of ways. I mean, look at the power of God's judgment in the fury of the flood. So, notice back here that the fury of the flood is seen in the flood's depth. Look at the end of verse 17. It says that the waters rose high above the earth. Now, look down at the end of verse 19. It says all the mountains under the whole heaven were covered. In other words, nothing in creation is spared from the judgment of God. That's the depth of its power. But this fury is also seen in the destruction that comes from the flood. So, you'll notice here three times, a word shows up in this portion of the passage. It's the word prevailed. So, look in verse 18. It says, the waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth. Verse 19, and the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth. Now, verse 20, the waters prevailed above the mountains. What's the significance of that word to prevail? It means to overcome, to overwhelm with force, to demonstrate your might, to prove your superiority. Kinda like what the Aggies did to the Louisville Cardinals this weekend in baseball. Prevailed. That's the picture. That nothing can stand against the fury of the flood. And from the very beginning here, this starts a theme that shows up throughout the entire Bible. Where the waters rage in fury and in opposition to the people of God. For example, I want you to see how this theme is picked up in one of the Psalms, in Psalms 69. You'll see it on the screen. David is writing about some of the trials and hardship he faces in his life and he speaks about those trials using this theme of the fury of the flood, the the the waters raging against him. Psalm 69 in verse 1 says this,

¹Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. ²I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me. ³I am weary with my crying out; my throat is parched. My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God.

And I can't help but wonder are there some of you in the room this morning are catching this by video who feel what David feels in this moment? That the the water of your life have come up to your neck. That there is no foothold. You're brought down by the mire. You feel that you are weary with your crying out. In other words, the hardships of your life feel as if they're about to overtake you. The flood is seeming to sweep you away. That might have been how Noah felt in that moment when those waters rise. It was certainly how David felt in this moment when those waters rose in his life. See, one of the things that we can find ourselves believing is that if God rescues us from the judgment of sin and its penalty, that what that will mean is that He will take away all the problems of our life. That if we're saved, that life should be easy. That the trials are a sign of our shortcomings or our failures. But instead, what we find here is that just because you're in the boat doesn't mean the waters won't be choppy. It doesn't mean that the trials won't come. God doesn't just save us, He sustains us. He doesn't just rescue us, He restores us as we experience the power of that judgment raging all around us. That's exactly what we find in the story of Noah. It's what we see in the life of Jesus. The only hope we have to survive the storms of life is to walk in the way of Noah. Noah stands even in the midst of the fury of the flood, not because of the strength of his boat. Not even because of the strength of his faith. The reason he's able to stand is because of the strength of his God. That his God is enough.

Do you believe that in your life today? No matter what you're facing, the fury of the flood all around you, but there's more going on here in the text than just that. You'll also see that beginning in verse 21, the power of God's judgment is also seen in the force of the flood. So, look at the devastation it brings. The destruction that takes place. For example, look in verse 21, it says, and all flesh died. Now, down in verse 22, everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breadth of life died. And in this moment, you see it speaking of the totality of death. And I can only imagine the desperation that would have been taking place in this moment. I mean, you can't help but wonder that as the waters rose and the ark rose up with it and less and less high ground was around, were there people surrounding the ark, clawing their way up it, trying to get on there. Were there animals seeking to grab onto that as their only hope of deliverance and yet none of them were able to make it. The text tells us they were all dead. It's too late and they cannot save themselves. And why does that happen? What brings the force of the flood? Well look back at verse 23. We see that it comes from God himself. It says, He blotted out every living thing. This idea of blotting out is a total annihilation. It's a wiping out. It's like locust that swarm a field and eat the crops. It's like teenagers who swarm pizza and eat it all up in 5 seconds. It's like the shelves at your grocery store once they finally get restocked with baby formula. It's gone in an instant, wiped out, wiped clean. There is a total judgment that comes for the first time here in Genesis 6. But it's a theme that moves forward all the way through the Bible. So, think for example, in the Holy War of Israel. We see this pattern where God fights for His people in their faithful obedience and He fights against his unfaithful people in their sinful rebellion. And in both cases, the victory that God brings, whether it's against their enemies or when Israel is acting as an enemy of God, is total victory. There's none spared. And that sense of total judgment spans its way all the way to the cross of Jesus Christ. And just remember with me for a minute what Jesus did for you and for me. Now when he goes to the cross after living a perfect life, a life with no sin, He takes on the sin that we have committed and pays the debt that we owed. And it's not in part; it's in full. He takes on all the judgment that we deserve. He stands there as a criminal condemned going to the cross so that all the wrath of God is poured out upon Him. In the same way that God brings judgement in this text,. the judgment of God falls against Jesus. So that like Noah, who looked to God for rescue by faith

and that was counted to him as righteousness, all of us who do not put our hope in ourselves but put our hope in God can find that same rescue from the power of sin. That's why it tells us back in verse 23, who it is that is rescued from the power of God's judgment. Look at the end of the verse. It says, only Noah was left and those that were with him in the ark. There's only one. One person. Noah. And the reason for that is because Noah is the head of the covenant that God has made. In other words, God has made a covenant promise with one man. It's Noah. And God keeps that promise and the only ones who experience salvation, who are rescued from the power of God's judgment, are the ones who are united to that covenant head. The ones who benefit from the promises because they are with the one who is the receiver of that promise and in that way, it's giving us a glimpse of what God does through His new covenant promises in Christ. That that promise of salvation comes to one man, the God man, Jesus Christ. And he receives the promises of the covenant because he fills the, fulfills the demands of the covenant. And now, the ones who are rescued, the ones who are saved from the waters of judgement are only those who are united to Jesus by faith. That covenant head. We are like Noah's family here on the boat, not because of what we have done but because God is keeping His promise to His faithful covenant partner. He rescues us from the power of His judgment.

But notice with me finally as we begin verse 8, you'll see that God also as a third item rescues us from the presence of His judgment. So, let's start chapter eight and beginning now in verse 1. And here's what the text goes on to tell us.

¹But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. ²The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, ³and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, ⁴and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

So here at the start of chapter 8 it marks a turning point in the text. God's creation has already received the penalty of His judgement. God's people have already been surrounded by the power of that judgement. But now we're going to see that God rescues us from the presence of that judgment. See the waters begin to recede. The presence of the judgment of God begins to abate. It begins to fade away and right here this rescue shows up in several ways in the first half of this chapter. You'll notice as it begins that God remembers His promise and relents from His judgment. So, notice this key verse, perhaps the most significant one in this part of the story back in verse 1. It says, but God remembered Noah. He's not talking about God's memory. It's not like He forgot about him. Oh yeah, like you forget a cake in the oven or you leave the burgers on the grill for too long. That's not the issue. It's not an issue relating to God's memory but His mission. He remembers Noah. He remembers the promise. He remembers the purpose. He remembers what He is about to do. And as a result of that, He responds. And look at the way that that response happens. It, that remembering leads to rescue. It's a pattern we see over and over again in the Bible. So, you think about the way that in Genesis 19, we'll see in a few weeks, that after the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, God remembers Abraham and rescues him. Or later on in Genesis 30, God remembers Rachel and Jacob in their barrenness and He provides for them a son. There's a connection between remembering and rescuing in the saving

ways of God all throughout Genesis and all through the entire Bible. But notice what happens when God remembers. Look back at the end of verse 1. It tells us, and God made a wind blow over the earth and the waters subsided. Look at the end of verse 2. The rain from the heavens was restrained. Look down at the end of verse 4. The ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat and the waters continued to abate. In other words, God doesn't just remember, He relents. He removes that judgment. He takes it away. And you'll notice back in verse 1 when it says that the that the wind began to blow over the earth. That word wind is significant in the original language. It's pronounced *rū-ah* and in some places, it stands for wind. In other places, it stands for spirit. In some places, it stands for breath. And here's why it's significant in this passage. This word has already showed up throughout the passage. When it speaks in Genesis 7 about how all those with the breath of life, they died. That word breath there is the same word *rū-ah*. And now, those that have faced death after the judgment has come, how does the new creation begin? How does the new life start? How does the restoration begin to happen? It happens through that same *rū-ah*. The breath, the wind, the spirit that brings judgement now brings newness of life right here in the passages. God relents.

But let's keep going. Pick up with me in verse 6. You're going to see how God removes the presence of His judgment and reveals the gift of new life. It goes on to say,

⁶At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made ⁷and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. ⁸Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. ⁹But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. ¹⁰He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. ¹¹And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. ¹²Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore.

So, in this section, we see a tale of two birds. First, it's the raven. And you know about ravens. You'll see it talk about it in verse 7. It says, and sent forth a raven. Ravens are scavengers. They feed off of flesh. In other words, the life of a raven is only sustained by death. When the raven goes out, it's eating of all of these carcasses that have been destroyed by the flood. The raven does not come back. But next, we see not just a raven but a dove. And if the raven experiences its life from death, the dove is a sign of life that comes after death, of new life. When the dove is sent out, you'll see the way it talks about it there in verse 8. Then, he sent forth the dove. Down in verse 11,

¹¹And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.

I mean, just imagine this moment. Noah sees that dove coming back from the distance. It sees something hanging from its beak and it knows in that moment that new life has begun. That a restoration has started. Imagine the joy that he would experience. But don't miss the symbolic significance. What type of bird is this? He could have sent out any bird in the flock. But he sends forth a dove. And that dove over the face of the waters and brings back a sign of the

newness of life. Doesn't that sound familiar? Look at the screens in Matthew 3 in verses 16 and 17. Speaking about the baptism of Jesus. Listen to the way this imagery mirrors what we see here in Genesis 8. It says,

¹⁶and when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were open to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him; ¹⁷and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

So, this is yet another way that the rescue of Noah is pointing ahead to the rescue of Christ. That in both cases, the the dove hovers over the waters of judgement to signal that new life has now come through the one that God has raised up to receive the promises of the covenant and to achieve the rescue that He has promised. That He does that in Noah in a way that foreshadows what He's going to do in Jesus. Which leads us to the last part of this passage I want us to see this morning.

Pick up with me down in verse 13 of Genesis 8 where we see how God not only renews our creation but restores our calling. It says.

¹³In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. ¹⁴In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. ¹⁵Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶"Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." ¹⁸So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. ¹⁹Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth went out by families from the ark.

And as you read that portion of the passage, can't you just hear the echoes of the original creation story in Genesis 1? It's the start of a new creation by a new Adam and they're all these parallels, all these echoes that are there. Look back at verse 13, it speaks about the face of the ground was dry. Just like in Genesis one, God creates the dry ground. Or look in verse 17, it says, bring with you every living creature that is with you of all flesh. And it reminds us of the way in the original creation, God has created the animals that surround us in the middle of His creation. But there is something more important to play here. Not just the renewal of creation but the restoration of a calling. And that calling is captured there at the end of verse 17 when it says, be fruitful and multiply on the earth. So Noah went out and his sons and his wife and his sons wives with him. In other words, God hasn't given up on humanity. Even though He's brought His judgement, there is a hope in the midst of judgement. There is a mission still to be carried out. There is a calling that is restored. And what is the calling? It's the same one as from the beginning. In Genesis 1, verses 26 and 27, to take dominion on the earth and to be fruitful and multiply. And when Noah hears it, you see the way that he responds in verse 18. Noah went out. After God rescued Noah from the presence of His judgement, he turned and lived a life on mission to fulfill the calling that God had placed on his life.

And that's the challenge I want to leave with us today. You know, back when Hurricane Harvey was hitting the Southeast Coast of Texas five years ago, I was watching from our living room in Nashville. And there was a press conference that was going on in the early stages of the storm and I wasn't paying attention to who was speaking. But all the sudden while the press conference was happening, I heard a voice I immediately recognized. And when I looked up on the screen, there's a face that I know. The face of my college roommate from Texas A&M, a guy named Rodney Reed. Speaking to the national media who had gathered there to hear the emergency management report on how they were going to try to rescue people. And the reason that Rodney was out there is because he was the one amongst the local emergency management officials who came up with the idea to empower private citizens to bring their own assets, their own boats, their own trucks and all of those things in order to bring the rescue. In other words, Rodney through his investment enabled others to be saved. And what we saw on the news playing out day after day was in part because his idea was carried out by others in a way that made a huge impact in the middle of the storm. If you remember last week, the question I left you with, was the question of salvation. Are you in the boat? When the, when the waters of God's judgment come in your life, will you be saved? You're either in the boat or you're not. But the question I want to leave you with from this passage this morning is not the question, are you in the boat, but who else is in the boat because you fulfilled the calling that God has placed on your life. Who are you bringing with you into His kingdom? Who are you rescuing from judgement? Who are you pouring yourselves out to make a difference in their lives? That God might use you on the front lines in evangelism, on the back lines through giving, through the ministry of this church, through your investment in the community, to not just be on the boat yourself, but to bring others with you. That's the question that Noah puts in front of us. God's rescue is great but that rescue is only of value if people hear about it, know it and believe it because of our faithfulness to join the spirit in God's mission. So, let's pray with that kind of urgency to that end right now, Central family.

Father, as we come back to You, seeing that Your salvation is all of You from beginning to end. And yet, even with that being true, You invite us into Your mission. You restore us in our standing. You give us a new calling and direction. And I'm asking for You now, God, in this moment, to be at work amongst our people. To help us be filled with the same kind of urgency as if these flood waters were rising today. As if Your judgment was standing on the doorstep of our lives. And that that same type of urgency would cause us to live our lives not with a sense of complacency but a sense of calling to be faithful to all you have asked us to be in Christ for the sake of your kingdom. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.