

In the beginning: God's Solution

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- [0 : 0 0] Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Part of the enjoyment we find in watching a TV detective show is to try and work out the solution.
- ! Who actually committed the crime? And the more of these TV shows we watch the more we get used to the fact that the vital piece of evidence is not going to appear until the last five minutes.
- But we keep watching and we keep trying to find the solution. Some of us are naturally inquisitive. When any question pops into our mind we're going to pursue it until we figure it out.
- There's a deep sense of satisfaction in finding a solution. But we are not all wise.
- We are not all knowing. There are some questions to which we cannot find the solution. We might know or suspect that there is one.
- [1 : 0 9] But we just can't figure it out. Hear the good news then. God our Father does not call us to figure out the solution.
- Just as God did not ask Noah to work out how to achieve his plan. In the same way God does not ask us to work out how we are to achieve God's plan of salvation.
- The plan of salvation is always God's plan. The solution. The way to achieve the plan of salvation.
- Is always God's solution. This is what Noah learned. This is what our God declares to us.
- Through the story of Noah. Noah. Let's look at some of these verses then. Which we read earlier. And notice what it is that God does in the story.
- [2 : 1 5] In verse 16 in chapter 7. Noah. Noah built the ark.
- But Noah didn't design the ark. If he had. He might have designed the door differently. Because it turns out the door on the ark.
- Could only be closed from the outside. It wasn't Noah who closed up the door of the ark. It was the Lord who closed it up.
- The ark. The vehicle of salvation. The solution. Only works. Because God makes it work. The solution to human rebellion against God.
- Is not achieved. By humans working harder. But by God being gracious. Giving Jesus and calling all people into him.
- [3 : 2 6] God our Father closes us up. In Christ. In union with him. As the apostle wrote. We are hidden. With Christ.
- In God. This is the solution we need. Then in verse 23. He. That is God.
- 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.
- Than those who were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed on the earth. A hundred and fifty days. Hear the good news.

Wickedness. Cannot survive in the presence of God. One day. God will wipe out. Blot out completely.

[4 : 22] All rejection of him. All rebellion against God. All rebellion against God. Will be finished. That impulse to sin. Which works havoc in your life and mine.

Will by God's grace. Be removed from us. United to Christ. Sin is increasingly put to death within us.

Under the lordship of Jesus. The Holy Spirit can do his life generating work. And renew the life of God within us.

Transforming us. More and more into the likeness of Jesus. This alone. Is God's solution to the problem of the human heart.

God has to do it. Because we can't do this. For ourselves. God remembered Noah.

[5 : 24] 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 water subsided. I said before.

That whenever God remembers something. He does something about what he remembers. You know that way when you're almost home.

You've turned into the street. Or you can see the front door. And it suddenly pops into your mind. I was supposed to get milk. How many of us.

In sight of the front door. Turn round and go back to the shop. Do we not just carry on. And go in. Oh I forgot. I forgot.

When God remembers. He does something. About what he remembers. And in verse 1. In chapter 8 of Genesis. The two come together.

[6 : 27] In the first half of the verse. God remembers. And in the second half of the verse. He makes it stop rain. No I didn't make it rain.

And no I didn't make it stop raining. The solution is God's work. God's solution to the problem of human sin. Is to do something about it himself.

He diagnoses the disease. He operates to remove the disease. He saves from the disease. All who will be saved.

It is God's solution. And God does his solution. And then just five words. Five words in verse 15.

Then God said to Noah. God's solution. Is about what comes next.

[7 : 28] Building the ark. Is not the end of God's solution. Closing the door of the ark. Is not the end of God's solution. Sending the rain.

Stopping the rain. And removing the flood waters. Is not the end of the solution. Having an ark that floats along. And comes to rest on a mountain. Is not the end of the solution.

These things are only part of it. God's solution is not only. A negative removal.

But a positive affirmation. God's solution is. About humans living. And humans living. And humans living.

And humans living. And humans living. And humans living. within us and among us.

[8 : 46] God speaks. Here in Genesis 8 to Noah and to us, God speaks. God makes himself known. God declares his grace.

The word of God transforms those who hear it and do it. We are to stand on every promise, every word, every command, which God speaks to us.

All through our reading today, we read of God being at work. God knows what the solution is and God works to achieve it.

Let's look at what Noah does and we'll see that Noah responds to God's solution and we are to respond in the same way.

Noah, his family and the animals went into the ark. There is no point at all for Noah and his family and the animals in building the ark unless they go into it.

[10 : 01] The ark is not a beautiful museum piece to be stood and looked at. The ark is not a tourist attraction. It is the way of salvation.

Noah was not saved through the flood by holding study groups about the ark. Let's have a Wednesday night meeting and we can talk about the kind of nails that we used to hammer the gopher wood together.

Noah was not saved by having discussions about what colour they should paint the ark or doubting the likelihood of a flood. Noah was saved by entering into the ark, by going into God's way of salvation.

by using the solution that God provided. God didn't save Noah from the flood. For 150 days, Noah was surrounded by raging floodwaters, turmoil and distress all around.

God did not remove Noah from the flood. God's solution provided a way of salvation through the flood. And so it is with us.

[11 : 26] God is present with you in the turmoil of your life, in the distress and heartbreak of your life. God saves you through your life, not from your life.

God saves you through your life, God saves you through your life. God saves you through your life. We are called to enter in to God's salvation and rest upon what God has done.

At the end of 40 days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made. The ark comes to rest on a mountaintop and after 40 days, Noah opens the window.

Noah sent out a raven and then he sends out a dove and then he sends out a dove and then he sends out a dove. Noah learns through all these sendings out, through opening the window and looking out, that God has been faithful to him.

God promised salvation through the ark and Noah looks out and he sees that God has done it. Faith is not closing your eyes and jumping into the darkness.

[12 : 40] That's called foolishness. Faith is based upon the certainty of God's word. standing on every promise that God's word has for us.

Faith is open-eyed. Look around you. See what God has done and depend upon it. Faith expects God to be at work.

If only we could raise our expectations. Faith gathers here on a Sunday morning expecting God to be present and at work among us.

Faith kneels in prayer expecting God to answer us, to hold our hand and care for us. Faith opens its Bible and reads the words of God.

And we can read the words of God. And we can read the words of God expecting God in his own voice to speak them to us and transform our life through them. Faith steps out into service of others.

[13 : 50] Expecting God to go ahead of us and prepare the way for us. Expecting God to go with us when we are anxious about going outside to serve others.

If only we believed what we believe. Look around us. See what God is doing. We are called to live there.

In the 601st year, the first month, the first day, the waters were dried off and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked and behold, the ground was dry. So Noah went out.

His sons, his wife, his sons' wives with him. God's solution is to provide an ark of salvation. But God's solution is not for Noah to live in the ark.

God's solution is for Noah to be saved through the ark and come out from the ark to live in obedience to God and in service of his mission.

[15 : 05] When the power of God reached down and raised the Lord Jesus Christ alive again from the dead, God did not expect his son Jesus to live in the never-to-be-empty tomb.

He expected Jesus to step over the threshold and leave the now-empty tomb behind him. Noah sees dry land all around him and he understands and he understands God calling him to live there, to be human there, to serve God's mission in the dry land.

Did you notice when God calls Noah out from the ark, God repeats the creation command, God's solution is to save Noah and creation from human sin.

God's solution is that Noah and his family and all the animals should live in the creation that God intended them to live in.

God saves humans from human sin so that humans might flourish in God's purposes of grace and serve his mission.

[16 : 41] God saves us from something but he also saves us to something. The solution God achieves in Genesis 7 and 8 is a picture of the greater solution God has achieved in our Lord Jesus Christ.

God has sent his son Jesus an ark of salvation for you. You must come into Jesus. You must run to him and unite yourself to him and be covered in him for only in Jesus is there salvation.

God is judging all human sin and all human rebellion against God. Only those hidden in Christ Jesus are saved through God's righteous judgment.

You must hurry to Jesus. You must make sure you have come to him. for only in Jesus is God's solution to save you.

Our speaking God is speaking. He is calling out your name. He is calling you to come to Jesus. You are able to come.

[18 : 05] Open the windows. Open your eyes and look around. Notice your neighbours, your friends, your family who have come before you. God loves you in the same way as he loves them.

God calls you in the same way as he calls them. You can come. In Christ Jesus there is life and hope and peace for you. This is the solution God has provided for your problem.

Come to Jesus and be safe in him. Let's pray together. God our Father we are humbled by your grace.

We are powerless before our human sin and our rebellion against you. We depend upon your mercy and your purposes of salvation.

open our ears that we might hear your call. Open our eyes that we might see the salvation you have worked for us in Jesus.

[19 : 18] Bring us to Jesus that we might be safe in him. Hear our prayer. We ask it all in Jesus name.

Amen.