

# Finding Favour

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Date: 20 August 2023

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     The book of Genesis is a book of origins. It's a book that asks and answers questions like, who is God? What does it mean to be human? What's gone wrong in this world?

And how is it actually going to be put right again? And in the last verse of our section that we read, we're introduced to a man named Noah.

It's closing out one section and it's beginning the flood narrative. The story about a man named Noah. Now, I mean, how many of you growing up, a little Bible story, you had a little Bible book about Noah's Ark, or maybe your parents even bought you a toy Ark with some animals on it and things like that.

I think we probably still have one somewhere in our house, right? It's a common thing. It's fun. Kids love animals, right? So we tell the story of Noah's Ark. Maybe sometimes we leave out the context of it, though.

You know, we don't often read Genesis 6-5. Every intention of man's heart was only evil continually. Very uplifting.

[ 1 : 1 2 ]     In the creche at the church that I grew up at, it was called the Noah's Ark Room because they painted all of the walls with animals and the Ark and a rainbow and Mr. and Mrs. Noah and things like that.

There was no Genesis 6-5 on the wall. I don't know why not. But that's the context for the flood narrative. What sends the flood? This problem.

It's the human heart. Have you ever heard somebody wonder, or maybe even wondered yourself, have things ever been as bad as they are right now?

You know, I mean, societies can degrade into senselessness and violence and wickedness and things like that. And there's definitely a lot of bad stuff in the world right now, right?

There's racism. There's war. There's the rich taking advantage of the poor. There's abuse. There's violent crime. There's all sorts of different things. There's lying. There's cheating.

[ 2 : 1 4 ]     There's slandering people's character. It's all over. It's pervasive. And with all of that said, Genesis 6 paints a picture of the world that has devolved into so much wickedness and violence that God says, I am sorry that I made it.

And he looks, and his heart is grieved by it. Ouch, right? It's pretty bleak. Just to briefly remind you how we got to Genesis 6, there's one true God, and he has created everything in the beginning.

And what Genesis 1 tells us is when God creates things, it says he looks at it, and he sees that it's good. And so he blesses it. What did it say in our passage in Genesis 6?

God looks, and what does he see? Wickedness. It's because sin and death have entered into God's creation through a rebellion.

Sin is into the picture. This alien intruder. And so what you see after sin enters in, in Genesis 4, is Cain rises up against his brother Abel. Violent attack.

- [ 3 : 24 ] And he takes his life. And that starts to grow even more. In Cain's line, you get this guy named Lamech, who says, you know, if a young guy steps on my toes and looks at me the wrong way, I will take a vengeance.
- My vengeance will be unending upon that person. I will take his life. And here in our passage, and if you looked just beyond it, if you just look down at verse 11, it says that the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence.
- You know, like a virus attaches itself to a host and reproduces and grows. Violence begets violence.
- Sin begets sin. And it grows exponentially in the earth. You know, sin, it does violence to the one who does it. Against another person and to you, it leads to disintegration.
- There's this uncreation that's starting to happen because of sin. It's like putting diesel into your engine if you have a petrol car. It will ruin everything.
- [ 4 : 32 ] Things don't work the way that they're supposed to. And humanity, humanity, the Bible says in Genesis 1, was created in God's image to reflect his goodness, his character, his justice, his love into the world.
- And instead of reflecting God's image, what you start to see in this growth of violence is man looks more like the animals than like God. Things have reached this fever pitch.
- And what's God going to do about all of this violence and evil? That's the question. Let me pray and then we can talk about it. Father, would you give us understanding as we listen to your word preached.
- We ask that you prepare our hearts and help us to receive your word with faith and love. To treasure it in our hearts and to practice it in our lives.
- We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. There's a repetition of the word heart in our passage. It talks about man's heart. And then it talks about God's heart.
- [ 5 : 42 ] And then overall we're seeing what's the heart of the passage. What's the heart of the message that's getting across. And that's just going to be our outline. We're going to look at man's heart. We're going to look at God's heart. And then the heart of the message.
- So first off, man's heart. Our passage begins in verse 5. God is looking and he is seeing human wickedness is great on the earth.
- Sin is pervasive. Right? And the claim here, as sin grows, is the God who has created everything, he sees everything. Not just things done outwardly.
- He sees into the very core of a person. He sees the heart. And in the Old Testament, the heart is the essence of the person. Right? This is like the control center of who you are.
- And from the heart in humanity is coming evil. It's not something out there. It's something in here. And how is mankind's heart described?
- [ 6 : 40 ] Again, verse 5. Every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Let's break that down. One commentator writes this.
- Points this out about verse 5. Every, no exceptions, intention. It's not an accident. Of the thoughts. This isn't merely your deeds, but it's from within.
- Of his heart. So this isn't peripheral to you, but comes from the very core of your being. was only, nothing else. That's all that's coming out. Evil.
- So we can't call it weakness. Right? Or immaturity. Continually. There's no letting up. Seem a little harsh?
- You're thinking to yourself, yeah, that was like back then. Right? Those were primitive people. We've evolved as societies. We know you can't act like that as much anymore. Surely that's just the condition in Genesis 6.

- [ 7 : 42 ] Is humanity really that bad? Well, skip ahead and then go back. The flood comes and Adam, excuse me, Adam. Noah gets out of the ark. And do you know what it says in Genesis 8, 21?
- God promises, part of the rainbow, the promise, not the flood, the earth again. He says the ground's not going to be cursed again. And he's not going to bring a flood of judgment against man. Why?
- Because man's heart is evil continually from his youth. So the flood accomplishes something. It does something. But it ultimately doesn't fix the human heart.
- Sin remains. Sinful hearts. Psalm 14, which Paul quotes in Romans 3. No one seeks after God. There is none who does good. Not even one.
- What's being described here? What's going on? This is what theologians refer to as total depravity. Okay? Total depravity. And that doesn't mean that people in the world are as bad as they could possibly be.
- [ 8 : 47 ] That would be utter depravity. Right? And it doesn't mean that non-Christians that you know can't do good things in kindness and contribute to the flourishing of society.
- That's called common grace. The Bible has a category for what you observe in your life with unbelieving friends. Right? You see, oh, no, that's a really good thing that they did.
- What total depravity is referring to is that every single bit of your life is touched by sin. Nothing escapes from it.
- And on our own, there is nothing that we can do to save ourselves. We are unable on our own to seek the one true living God.
- Now, if you're a Christian, what we do believe is that God gives you a new heart in order to pursue righteousness. Right? But the New Testament writers like Paul, they make clear that there's still these vestiges of that old heart there.
- [ 9 : 47 ] Aren't you supposed to put on the new man, put off the old? Saying that this heart description in Genesis 6, we actually know that it describes us way more accurately than we would like to admit.
- It's still there. Right? And so, you know, we don't stand off like the Pharisee towards the tax collector saying, Thank you, Lord, that you didn't make me like that man with that type of a heart. I have a new heart.
- No. Instead, we come in humility and say, Lord, give me a new heart. We start to realize just how twisted our hearts are. Surely.
- Surely. Surely, though. Genesis 6, 5. It must be like an exaggeration, hyperbole. Right? This is just religious extremism. We live in a world right now that simultaneously says that right and wrong don't exist.
- Right? A lot of times it's saying, you know, these things that used to be norms within society, of how you're supposed to act, that is just social constructs, guys. There's nothing real about that.
- [ 10 : 54 ] It's just whoever was in power was a power grab, and they tried to say, this is the way you should live. So right and wrong, you can't know. You kind of have to decide it for yourself. There is no right and wrong until it comes to plastic versus paper straws.
- Right? There's no right and wrong. You know, morality is a little bit defined by yourself until it comes to straws. Truth is relative.
- Morality is a social construct. Oh, but hold on. There's certain things that we still hold to. And then the world will also tell us at the same time, don't be worried about what other people think.

You get to decide for yourself who you are and what is right and wrong. Don't let other people tell you what to do. You get to decide. Does anybody hear the irony in that?

Don't let other people tell you what to do, but listen to me because I am telling you what to do. You decide for yourself what is right and wrong.

[ 11 : 58 ] It's contradictory. You can't be told how to live your life. Someone telling you how to live your life. And what's happening in this younger generation that they call Gen Z, very disillusioned, right?

It's hard to have those two contradictory things being in one ear and then in the other. And so we live in a self-contradicting society. And so we have people who are just like, yeah, no, just live however you want.

You get to decide. But then also there are people who are looking for a norm, a way to live, something to base their life on, some sort of rules. And so there are guys like, if you've heard the name Jordan Peterson, he's a Canadian psychologist and he's become a speaker and wrote in books.

He wrote a book called 12 Rules for Life. And you know who loves it? Biggest audience? Young men. Young men who are looking for a way to live and looking for somebody to follow and tell them, this is actually what you should do.

There is a right and a wrong. And here's what it looks like to be responsible. He's not a Christian. But people are looking for those things. And where does the rationale of right and wrong come from and be able to call a heart evil if there's no God who decides what is evil?

[ 13 : 13 ] Is it science? Science rules in this world. They're not anti-science in the church. But science isn't there to tell you what right and wrong is, right? That's not its purpose, right?

Big fish eat small fish. So why can't big countries eat small countries? Why is Russia invading Ukraine bad? Why do we say that? Just the strong eating the weak, right?

This is precisely what Friedrich Nietzsche, did I pronounce that right? All right, good, yeah. He points out, he says, if there's no God, there's nothing wrong with violence.

And if you say, if you protest this idea, then you're just a weak person who's making a power play. Moral outrage against power plays is just a power play, says Nietzsche.

You need a right to call something wrong. You need a straight edge to say that something's crooked. We all talk about the problem of sin when you come to church.

[ 14 : 14 ] And maybe you wonder sometimes, why do you talk about it so much, guys? Like, we're not going to fire the ministers, right? Guys, stop. It's like job security, right? We get it. We're sinners. Why do we talk about it so much?

Well, first off, we talk about it a lot so that we can repent of it. If we miss what the Bible says about the heart, at best, what we're doing here is just behavior modification.

It's just surface stuff. So then preaching just becomes legalism and moralism. Don't only be like those type of people. There's three things you need to do this week to make sure that God's happy with your life.

I hope that's not what you want. Just be a good person. Be a person that you want to hang out with. Why? What's the problem with that? You want to be a good person, right?

What's the problem at the heart of that? If it's just go be a good person, you don't need God. What's the first sin in the Bible in Genesis chapter 3? We can live on our own.

[ 15 : 10 ] We can define right and wrong. We do not need God for these things. We want us to remember that we need God. But sin, and that should be a fundamental thing, right?

If you believe in God, that should be a fundamental thing that I actually need him. But sin, what it does, sin is illogical. Sin is absurd. Woody Allen has proven himself to be a total creep.

He famously broke off a relationship with another actress, Mia Farrow. And he started to date and then eventually marry Mia Farrow's adopted daughter.

Cool, right? And he was asked for an explanation of his creepiness. And there's all sorts of other allegations against him since then. And do you know what Woody Allen said? What? The heart wants what the heart wants.

Why doesn't the heart just trust God and overlook wrongs and turn the other cheek and give generously and not care about self-promotion and always tell the truth and never lust?

[ 16 : 14 ] Because the heart wants what the heart wants. And what is that? It's sin. It's sin. Cornelius Plantinga, he writes this.

He says, The heart of sin is the persistent refusal to tolerate a sense of sin, to take responsibility for one's sin, to live with the sorrowful knowledge of it, and to pursue the painful way of repentance.

Evil people are simultaneously aware of their evil and simultaneously trying to resist that awareness. As the prophet Jeremiah said in Jeremiah 17, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick.

Who can understand it? And because our passage refers to not just outward deeds but to the heart, it's saying what you do when no one is looking.

It's not what you do when everybody's looking on a Sunday morning and you're helping with tea and coffee and in the crash and all those things. That doesn't what defines you most. Right? Since this passage is speaking and God is looking straight at the heart, it's saying what you do and what you think when no one is really looking is who you truly are.

[ 17 : 24 ] That's who you are. And we talk about evil that proceeds from our hearts because we long to confess it and to find healing. Sin left unattended.

It's not this static thing. It grows. It attaches deeper. It finds footholds in our heart and it grows stronger and stronger. There's a minister in America named Dane Ortlund and he writes this.

To the degree that we minimize the evil within, we lower the ceiling on how deeply we can grow. We take a painkiller and go to sleep when we think we have a headache. We undergo chemotherapy when we know we have a brain tumor.

The severity of our condition dictates the depth and desirousness of the medicine we know we need. If you view your sin as a bothersome headache more than a lethal cancer, you will see tepid growth, if any.

You won't see yourself as needing to grow all that much. But when we see how desperately sick we are and how profoundly short we fall of the glory for which God intended us, we've already taken the first decisive step in bridging the vast gulf between who we are and who we were made to be.

[ 18 : 33 ] That's the first thing we see. Man's heart. From it, perceiving evil. Only evil. Continually. Wickedness. Violence. It's coming from the heart. The next thing we turn to, it doesn't just talk about man's heart in our passage, it also talks about God's heart.

Responding to the state of humanity's heart in verse 6, it says that God's heart is what? It's grieved. Now, I think this is a very important statement, and we don't want to skip over this.

What this means is God is not ambivalent to sin and evil in the world and in our own hearts. His heart is filled with pain at the state of the world.

That word grieved that's used to describe God's heart is the same word that's used when King David finds out that his son Absalom has been killed. It grieves his heart.

The flood, it doesn't start with God's anger but with his grief, with his sadness. And this brings, I think, two things from it. When we see God's heart in this passage and the grief over sin, there is a challenge and there's a comfort within that.

[ 19 : 43 ] There's a challenge and there's a comfort. First off, let me talk about the challenge. See, this verse forces us to ask ourselves, Does my sin and the sin I see in this world, does it grieve me in the same way that it grieves God?

Does it grieve us when we see sin proceeding from our hearts, out of our mouths, and telling half-truths, and giving biting criticism or mocking people?

Does it grieve us when we see sin proceeding from our hearts and out of our eyes in lust and envy, wanting what is not ours? Does it grieve us when we see the sin of ignoring God or always needing to be right or pride in our accomplishments, even religious ones that we have?

Does your heart grieve over sin? Not just the consequences of it. Everybody feels sorry when the consequences of sin comes, when you get caught, when you feel shame, when something happens, right?

You feel regret over that. Not just the consequences of sin, though, but grief that your sin grieves the heart of God. If we take sin lightly, we end up taking the cross of Jesus Christ lightly.

[ 20 : 54 ] There's a pastor who I referred to, I guess, a couple sermons ago named Jonathan Edwards. Lived in New England in the early 18th century. And he would lead these prayer meetings.

It was during the Great Awakening. There's a lot of people coming to faith, and there was religious fervor in the land. And so he was hosting this prayer meeting that had 800 men. Not 800 people.

800 men came to it to pray. And the population was lower back then, guys. So 800 people came out to pray. And a wife, a woman who had a husband who she thought was going to be at the prayer meeting, sent a note to Jonathan Edwards asking for prayer.

Asking for prayer. Whether he prayed at the prayer meeting or not, it was up to him. But you see, the reason she asked for prayer is because her husband was spiritually proud. And when there's spiritual pride in your life, it really hurts relationships.

Right? You never enter in at the same level. You're always the superior. You can never be wrong. You're always right. You always look down on the other person. And even if you don't say it, the other person feels it.

[ 22 : 00 ] Right? And so she simply asked, she didn't say, go confront my husband or anything like that. She said, would you please pray for that? And Jonathan Edwards, he had a feeling, because he knew the woman, that the husband might be at this prayer meeting.

And so he decided to confront it in the midst of the prayer meeting. And so what he did was he read the note aloud and asked if this described any of the husband's present.

300 men raised their hands. Each had been convicted by the Holy Spirit of their sin and longed to confess it.

You know, rather than hiding or minimizing sin or blaming others, the repentant heart longs to confess sin. There's a challenge in that, right? When we see the grief that our sin in our hearts causes God's heart, oh, man.

We should long to repent. And God's heart being grieved by the wickedness of the human heart, it means we don't announce the bad news of God's judgment, of sinful hearts.

[ 23 : 12 ] You know, we're not going out onto the street corners. We shouldn't be doing this and just saying, hey, y'all, Genesis 6, 5. You have sinful, evil hearts. It's right here. Watch out.

Is that the posture? No, it shouldn't be. Why? Because that's not God's posture. He looks at the sinfulness in the world and it grieves him to his heart.

So when we announce God's judgment on sin and the wickedness of humanity, we don't stand far off. We don't stand in pride. But we say it with tears.

Knowing it in our own lives and longing to see healing. Now, I know for many of us, maybe we kind of wish God didn't grieve over our sin that much.

Like, could it be a little less significant to him? God, if you were just a little bit more indifferent to my sin, I'd appreciate that. But if we take that route and we want to avoid the challenge of it, what we also miss out on then is the comfort of what Genesis 6, 6 tells us.

[ 24 : 17 ] There's a comfort in that. God's grieved heart is a comfort. And this is what I mean. Can you imagine if evil didn't grieve God's heart? Can you imagine what that world would be like?

Can you imagine if he was indifferent to sin? Do you know what that would mean? That would mean if you were wronged by somebody else, God didn't care. If you've experienced abuse of any kind, God's indifferent to it.

If you've experienced violence from somebody else, if your name's been drugged through the mud, people have done awful things to you. God doesn't care. If you've gone and experienced awful suffering in this life because of sin in this world, God doesn't care.

That's what that would mean. There's actually this immense comfort in this verse. God hates sin and its effects. That's why he judges and that's why he rescues.

God's heart is bigger than ours. And so sin grieves his heart more than it grieves ours. And there's a comfort that comes in knowing that God is grieved by sin. One person writes, because in our suffering, it helps us to know that he is there alongside us and grieves with us and the wrongs done to us.

[ 25 : 38 ] If you've read C.S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia, The Magician's Nephew, which is the sixth one he wrote, but the first one chronologically. Not that you care. There's this scene in The Magician's Nephew that really, I think, accurately illustrates and captures what Genesis 6 tells us.

The main character, his name is Diggory and he goes off into this far off land and he starts to see Narnia being created. And there's these apples that come from an apple tree and he wants to take one of the apples from Narnia because it contains magical powers back to his mother who's sick back in England.

He longs to do that. And so he says to Aslan the lion, who's like the Christ figure in the story, he says, but please, please, won't you? Can't you give me something that will cure mother?

And then C.S. Lewis writes this. Up till then, he had been looking at the lion's great feet and the huge claws on them. Now in his despair, he looked up at its face.

What he saw surprised him as much as anything in his whole life, for the tawny face was bent down near his own and wonder of wonders. Great shining tears stood in the lion's eyes.

[ 26 : 53 ] They were such big, bright tears compared with Diggory's own that for a moment he felt as if the lion must really be sorrier about his mother than he was himself.

My son, my son, said Aslan, I know grief is great. That's the tomb of Lazarus in John chapter 11, where Jesus is about to do a pretty cool miracle, bring a guy out of a tomb.

And instead of saying, hey, everybody, watch this. What does he do first? He weeps. This verse, it comforts us in our suffering.

You don't have a far off God who's unconcerned with sin. It grieves his heart. You do not want a God who is indifferent to sin, because that would mean that he was indifferent to your pain and your suffering.

So, we've seen man's heart. We've seen God's heart. It's the heart of this message, then. It's the last thing. Humanity's heart has a problem. It grieves God's heart.

[ 27 : 57 ] So what? If you were reading Genesis for the first time, you might be going like, so end of story, I think, right? Spoiler alert, no, right? There's a little bit more coming. So what are we supposed to do?

What are we supposed to do? You've got an evil heart. I know what I should do. By golly, I'm just going to be righteous. If I look down in verse 9, it says that Noah was righteous.

I should be righteous, too. You know what the problem to an evil heart is? The solution? A righteous heart. I'm just going to go ahead and do that.

All right. Oh, man, thanks, Nate. Be righteous, and you can fix your heart, and then you can make God's heart happy. Woo-hoo-hoo! Isn't that good news? Martin Luther, if he was here, he'd come in, and he'd, like, push me out of the pulpit, and he'd say, no!

No! I've tried that. I've read the Bible more than you have. I've prayed more than you have, and I've served the poor more than you have. You know what I realized at the end of it?

[ 28 : 58 ] When I was just trying to fix my own evil heart on my own, in my own power, and just be a righteous person, you know what I found out? I was doing it all for myself. I had never become more selfish than when I just tried to fix my heart on my own, because it wasn't for the good of others.

It wasn't for the love of God. It wasn't for the love of neighbor. It was for me. What are you supposed to do? Tim Keller's wife, Kathy Keller, I think, had this quote.

She says, what goes on to the ark with Noah? What goes into the ark? Animals? Noah's family. Anyone else goes into the ark with Noah? Sinful hearts.

God's judgment has an effect that it's supposed to, but there's still sinful hearts at the end. Noah's righteousness doesn't fix it. You can read Genesis 9 about Noah's sin.

Now, I know you guys remember every single thing I've ever said in any of my sermons, but I'm going to repeat something just in case, just for the people who are new here. The book of Genesis, it gets structured with these genealogies.

[ 30 : 02 ] There's a bunch of different genealogies that are going through the book of Genesis. Hebrew is Toledot. This is where we get these phrases. These are the generations of. Right? And so, we have the generations of the heavens and earth, the generations of Cain.

These are the generations of Adam. And then, if you look at the verse right after our passage, so verse 9, it says, these are the generations of Noah. Right?

So, verse 8, if you actually had the chapter titles in your Bible, those aren't inspired. Somebody put them in there later. But if you were to have a chapter break that went more with the actual structure of the Hebrew, it would be right after chapter 6, verse 8.

Right? So, the end of this, it's really summing up the generations of Adam before. And then, verse 9 is starting a new section. Why do I mention that? Because there is this break right here at the end.

It's a pause that happens in verse 8 before you get to verse 9. So, you know, sometimes we want to skip ahead or read the whole thing as one. But there really is. There's a structure to it, and there's a break between verse 8 and verse 9.

[ 31 : 09 ] So, if you look at verse 9 where it says, these are the generations of Noah, you look at it and it reads, Noah was a righteous man. Right?



And so, again, you go, what am I going to do about the evil heart? Be a righteous person like Noah. But we're not actually following what the biblical writers are trying to communicate. Because, you see, verse 8 happens, break, pause, and then verse 9.

And what does verse 8 say? Despite all this wickedness in this world and the evilness of the human heart, and God's heart is being grieved, but Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

And that word there for favor is just the word grace. Before it says anything about Noah being a righteous man, grace finds Noah.

The same eyes that look and see the wickedness of the human heart look with a gaze of grace, and they find Noah.

[ 32 : 12 ] Grace finds Noah. How are you going to deal with the sinfulness of your heart and the grief it brings to God? It's grace. Not even grief in God's heart can extinguish the flame of grace.

And you see what happens then, you're saying, grace comes to Noah, and therefore then what comes out of that is Noah was righteous. Right? Noah's one of the ones who's calling upon the name of the Lord.

But why? In his own strength? Just be like Noah? Mm-mm. Grace found him. That's the only hope for Noah, and for the rest of mankind, is if grace finds you. And how does that change you?

What's the difference? Right? Because if we're going to own up to our sinfully wicked hearts and how it grieves God's heart, we're going to need some help with that. Let me tell you a story.

There in the United States, in one of the states, they tried to implement this new curriculum for students who were failing. They were falling behind. Their test scores weren't up to par, and they were just way behind all their other classmates.

[ 33 : 17 ] And so they created these study programs in order to help those struggling academically. If you're struggling, they said, you know what we're going to do? We're going to put you into a separate class, and we're going to give you more care. We're going to come alongside you.

We're going to teach you. We're going to teach directly to who you are. The best tips and techniques and studies have told we're going to teach in those ways. Do you know what happened, though?

Not a single student ended up getting out of the program. All of them got stuck in it. It was like you put the label failure, and you're behind everybody else.

You stuck that label on, and they all stayed in it for the rest of their academic career. Except for one girl. Her name was Edie.

They called her Speedy Edie because she ran track, and she was really fast. Speedy Edie. And Speedy Edie made it out. Her grades came up, and she got back with the other students.

[ 34 : 18 ] Out of this program, she graduated. She was like the one success story. So all these muckety-mucks, you know, created this program, came, and they interviewed the teachers at this school, and they're like, what did you do differently? Did you use a different curriculum?

And she said, no. Same thing I taught everybody else. Well, like, tell us about the technique that you used. Like, the schedule that you used in the day was anything different?

Did you slow it down? Did you speed it up? And they're like, nope, nothing. Was anything different? And so the teacher thought about it. She said, oh, you know what?

There was actually one thing that was different with Edie than any of the other students, is we knew Edie loved to run track. Speedy Edie, right? She loved to run track. And you know what I would do?

I'd go to her track meets and watch her sprint. And I would cheer her on. That's the only thing that was different.

[ 35 : 14 ] That was the difference. So when Edie received this label that, you know, the grown-ups weren't trying to put on it, but everybody else was feeling it, this label of failure. The left wanting.

She found a teacher who supported her anyway. And the encouragement, the grace, actually empowered her. What if you found someone who didn't just cheer for you, but would die for you?

How much more can you and I know that we found favor in the eyes of the Lord than even Noah?

You see, what's happening here is you have this creation story and sin is leading to uncreation and you're just seeing everything unravel and you're thinking, okay, that's the end of it, right? Uncreation. What are we going to do about that? Grace comes.

Grace interrupts. And what happens to get from, instead of just creation to uncreation, you get recreation. And so what comes in, how is Noah saved? How does Noah get saved?

[ 36 : 20 ] Does God just overlook the sinful heart? No. Does God just bring judgment and Noah is righteous on his own? Clearly, right?

That's what it is. His heart is different. That's how he gets saved. Uh-uh. What's the solution? Salvation through judgment. It's not salvation despite judgment. It's not half salvation, half judgment.

It's salvation through judgment. That grace comes and Noah gets in the ark and the same waters that bring destruction to the earth are the same waters that lift the boat.

And if you think I'm getting to, you know, kind of like Aesop's fables with all these connections, the Bible makes the same connection in 1 Peter 3 where it refers to the flood that comes in Noah and it draws a parallel to the waters of baptism.

If you don't get into the ark of the gospel, when problems come, they're going to crush you. But you can actually live as if not only the flood has come, but the waters have receded.

[ 37 : 26 ] How? You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Right? The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ appeared. Not by things done by us, but because of His mercy.

You know, if you fail, you're going to lash inward and you're going to beat yourself up. If you get criticized, you're going to lash outward in violence unless you realize that there's grace for you.

That there's grace for you on your own. You can't fix the human heart. And as great a comfort as it is that God's heart is grieved at the sin in this world, that means it's also grieved at yours and mine.

But what if we could actually have hope? What if we could actually have salvation in the midst of a world that is evil and wicked? What if we could actually hide in something that secures our life?

That's what's offered to you and me in the grace of the cross. Let's believe it together. It's another one.