

A Persistent Problem

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[0 : 00] Good morning. The scripture reading this morning is taken from Genesis chapter 8 through Genesis 9 to the! And it's on page 6 in the Bible's beneath the seats.

And all the livestock that were with him in the ark.

And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed. The rain from the heavens was restrained, and the waters receded from the earth continually.

At the end of 150 days, the waters had abated. And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

And 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. At the end of 40 days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent forth a raven.

[1 : 21] It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then he sent forth a dove from him to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground.

But 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.

He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And 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. Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove. And she did not return to him anymore.

In the 601st 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.

[2 : 27] In the second month, on the 27th day of the month, the earth had dried out. Then God said to Noah, Go out from the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you.

Bring 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.

So Noah went out and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.

[3 : 48] And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea.

Into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.

And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning. From every beast I will require it, and from man, from his fellow man, I will require a reckoning for the life of man.

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed. For God made man in his own image. And you be fruitful and multiply.

Teem on the earth and multiply in it. Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.

[5 : 07] It is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.

And God said, This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you for all future generations. I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

When I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh. And the water shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. God said to Noah, This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.

This is the word of the Lord. Thank you, David.

[6 : 25] Now that some of you have noticed that the title projected on the screen, A Persistent Problem, is different from the title that is printed on your order of service.

The title on the order of service is A New Beginning. But as I studied this passage, I was able to see that it really is not about a new beginning.

Instead, it is about a persistent problem. And so I changed the title to reflect what I believe the overarching point of the passage is about.

Those of you who were here last week will recall that we considered the account of the flood, the global flood in Genesis 6 and 7, and we saw that it was a flood of judgment.

God judged sin and sinners in the flood, and in his mercy and grace, he spared the lives of eight persons.

[7 : 38] Eight persons who, had it not been for God's mercy and grace, would have perished with everyone else in the flood, because they themselves were not perfect.

They themselves had sinned and deserved to die. The passage that we have come to this morning, though, tells us what happened immediately after the flood waters had dried up.

And while it's natural to have great hope and great expectation for a new world that was no longer entrenched in corruption and wickedness and violence, which caused the judgment of the flood, this passage before us tells us otherwise.

And before we consider it, let me pray for us, before we consider what this passage does tell us.

Father, we bow our hearts in this moment, and we ask that you would speak to us. Speak to us together. Speak to us individually. You know what we need. And Lord, I ask for your grace this morning to faithfully proclaim your word to your people.

[8 : 57] Would you demonstrate your love and your care for us through the preaching of your word? Cause us to so posture our hearts this morning that we would hear and obey.

Would you glorify your name and yourself in the preaching of your word? We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. If there was a point in human history where there was reason to have a legitimate hope for a brand new world, a world in which entrenched corruption and wickedness and violence was absent, it was immediately after the flood.

If you halfway follow world news, you would realize that our world is a troubled world. There are wars going on.

There is political unrest going on. There is unbelievable human exploitation going on when you look at the extent to which human trafficking is taking place in the world.

And there is untold suffering from natural disasters. I mean, the world is an almost unbearable place to think about when we try to take in the scope of all the things that are happening in the world.

[10 : 30] But I think if you kind of pan the scope of human history, if there was ever a point in time where there was reason for legitimate hope for a brand new world, it really would have been after the flood, after God judged sin and sinners.

And there were eight people on the face of the earth who were family members. And the animals that came into the ark and God's intent was that they would repopulate the entire earth.

And if there was reason for a hope of a brand new world, this was the point. This was the time that you could hope for because it was like a reset.

We talked about how the world moved from creation to de-creation. And yet, when we consider this account, we see that there is no reason to believe that things were going to change and be any different from the way they had been.

It would have been wishful thinking when you look at this account to believe that the world was going to be corruption-free and violence-free and murder-free.

[11 : 56] And the reason is that the human problem that caused the flood persisted after the flood, pointing to the need for a permanent solution.

That's really the bottom line of this account that we have in the aftermath of the flood. This account highlights a persistent problem.

And brothers and sisters, the problem exists even until this very moment that we are alive on the earth. And so this morning, I have two simple points as we consider this passage.

And they are, number one, the persistent problem, and number two, the permanent solution. So first, let's consider the persistent problem. In this passage, we see it beginning in verse 1 of Genesis 8 with the words, but God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark.

When you read the full account, you see they were in the ark for more than a year, a little bit more than a year. They were cooped up in that ark together. We read in Genesis 8 verse 15 that God told Noah and his family to come out of the ark.

[13 : 27] So what we see is that they went into the ark and they came out of the ark for the same reason. God instructed them to go in and God commanded them to come out. And when they came out, they placed their feet, they stepped out on land that had been purged of wickedness and corruption and violence.

It had been purged of all those who committed such acts. And again, from all appearances, it marked the beginning of a brand new world that was going to be populated by Noah and his family and these animals that God had preserved in his kindness for this version 2 of his created order.

This was God's plan. We see in Genesis 8, 20, that the very first thing that Noah does when he comes out of the ark is Noah builds an altar and he offers to God a sacrifice.

This reference to the building of an altar and the offering of a sacrifice is the first time that we see an altar being built and a sacrifice being offered in Scripture.

And Noah does this as an act of worship unto God. He does it not questioning God, he is worshiping God and you can imagine Noah probably had friends and relatives who died in the flood and yet his first act of coming out of the ark is to offer a sacrifice to God.

[15 : 16] It is as if he is saying amen to God's judgments and to God's ways and what we see Noah doing is Noah offering the best to God. He takes some of all of the clean animals and all of the clean birds and he offers a sacrifice to God.

And in verses 21 to 22 we see God's response to it. Look again at those verses. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma the Lord said in his heart I will not I will never again curse the ground because of man for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done while the earth remains seed time and harvest cold and heat summer and winter day and night shall not cease.

Now it's easy to pass over these words spoken by the Lord but notice that Noah's offering does not cause God to think back on the flood.

It doesn't cause him to think back on this cataclysmic event that has just happened where the earth has been purged with some say up to a few billion people.

Instead God reflects back not to the flood but to the fall and he says I will never again curse the earth because of man.

[17 : 01] He's reflecting upon when Adam and Eve rebelled and when they sinned against him and in saying that he will not do that he gives us the reason that he will not do it.

He says the reason I will not do it is because the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. The New International Version says every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood.

childhood. When the Bible speaks about the heart it's not speaking about a part of us it's speaking about all of us.

It's speaking about the entirety of our person our whole inner being it represents who we are. And this is what the all knowing all seeing God says about mankind that from childhood from the earliest days our heart is intent upon evil.

This evil intention colors every single thing about us and this world in which we live. Even our best desires and actions are tainted by this evil intention of our hearts.

[18 : 26] It's what theologians call total depravity which means that every part of who we are has been tainted by the fall and by sin. So it doesn't mean that we are totally evil but it means that we have been totally affected by the fall and every intention of our heart is evil.

And the Lord says I will not curse the ground again because every intention of man's heart is evil.

And what is clear brothers and sisters is that this condition of the heart was true before the flood. this bent towards evil of the human heart existed prior to the flood.

And this was even true of Noah a man who was righteous in the sight of God blameless in the sight of God to the extent that a human being can be blameless in the sight of God.

And it was true of the rest of his family. The flood did not deal with sinful hearts. The flood didn't deal with sinful hearts because it couldn't deal with sinful hearts.

[20 : 00] I mean you would think that the effect of the flood, the recalling of it, all that happened in it, that that would have been enough to say to people, you better behave yourself, you better live in a certain way because God is a God of judgment, he will rain down judgment on those who rebel against his ways.

But that's what we see here. Actually, when we read on in the account in Genesis 9 verses 5 and 6, we're able to see that God fully expected that even murder will continue in this new generation of the earth and humanity on the earth.

Look again at verses 5 and 6 of Genesis chapter 9. The Lord, in these verses, instituted capital punishment for the killing of another person, and this is what he says, God knew that the evil intention of the heart, the potential to murder would result in murder.

And so he instituted capital punishment. Prior to the flood, there was no divinely instituted punishment for killing another person.

but after the flood, in this moment where there was reason to hope for a better world, God institutes capital punishment.

[22 : 05] And he does it because the intent of the human heart is evil from childhood. And I just want us to take a moment to consider a bit more in case we may have read it over and not seen the point.

The reason for capital punishment that God lays down here is not to deter murder. It's not given as a deterrence. God gives it for one enduring reason.

He said it is supposed to happen when the life of someone is shared, whether by an animal or whether by another person, it is to be there to be held accountable for it because they killed a person made in the image of God.

The issue here is the image of God and God instituted capital punishment as a way to vindicate this assault on his image.

And so, if it deters murder, fine, but that's not the intent of it. the intent is that it is to vindicate the image of God.

[23 : 21] And notice that there's no capital punishment for killing animals. As a matter of fact, what we see in the passage is after the flood, God changed the diet of human beings and he said, you can eat everything that creeps on the earth.

He says, no longer would you just have the green plants for your food, but now you are able to eat everything. And his only prohibition was that they could not eat food, they could not eat flesh that had blood still in it.

I wonder what was going through Noah and his son's minds when the Lord spoke these words to them because we see in verse one of chapter nine that God spoke these words to them concerning capital punishment.

I wonder what were they thinking? I mean, here it is, these are family members. This is Noah and his sons and their mother and their wives.

And the earth has just been cleansed of all these violent, wicked people and yet they're being told about capital punishment and anyone who takes the life of another person, they are to forfeit their own life.

[24 : 43] And what is very clear is that any hope that they would have had about a brand new world was being dashed. But even with this dark cloud that was hanging over them, even with this dark cloud that this old world order that has been washed away with the flood is going to come again, we see God so being gracious to them and God makes a covenant with them.

Starting in verse 8 of chapter 9, God begins to lay out this covenant that he is making with all flesh, with Noah and his sons and all flesh.

And notice what he says, for all future generations. generations. Not just for them, but for all future generations.

In verse 12, he says that. God covenanted that he would never again cut off by water all flesh on the earth, and he will never again by flood destroy the earth.

And he says, I make this covenant for all future generations, and the sign of this covenant is the rainbow. Now, when we read the language here, the language is that God says, I'm going to put the bow in the clouds, and when I see the bow, I'm going to remember my covenant that I made with you.

[26 : 30] But that's really like, we know that God doesn't forget. So we know God didn't put the bow up there because otherwise he would forget. But this is the language of condescending to human beings.

This is almost like trying to talk to a little child and you bend down and you speak to them in child's language. So this is language for us to understand. But here's what we know. We know that although God doesn't forget, we do forget.

And so the rainbow should certainly mean something for we humans who live on the earth. It should be the promise that God is not going to destroy the earth again, ever again, with a flood.

But the rainbow should remind us about the judgment of God. It's amazing how a lot of times we see a rainbow and say, oh, that's a beautiful rainbow. And we admire the rainbow, but we sometimes could miss the message of the rainbow.

The rainbow reminds us that God brought judgment upon the earth for sin. And it should remind us that God is a God of judgment.

[27 : 45] He hasn't changed, and he will judge sin. But notice that this is not an unqualified promise. It's a qualified promise.

The Lord only promises never to destroy the earth again by flood. He says, I'll never do that again. But he never promises that he will never destroy the earth or he would never bring judgment upon the earth.

As a matter of fact, what we see as the scripture unfolds is that God promises another judgment. And one example of that is found in 2 Peter chapter 3 verses 5 to 7 where Peter warns those who are mocking about the idea of a coming judgment.

Look at what it says in 2 Peter 3, 5 to 7. For they deliberately overlooked this fact that the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God.

And that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. Notice what he says in verse 7. But by the same word, the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

[29 : 15] It will no longer be by flood, but it will be by fire. And the God who cannot lie says that. And any misreading of that is only a misreading of his patience and his kindness.

And so no doubt Noah and his family, they enjoyed some good years, I imagine, that was free of violence and free of murder and free of corruption.

I mean, I used to marvel, I don't anymore, but there would be some Sundays, for example, this is many years ago before cars were flooding the island, you get on the road on a Sunday and it's like you could just drive and sometimes you could drive for a minute or two and not see another car.

Some of you are thinking, yeah, that's a long time ago. And it was to some extent, but you kind of got a feel as to what it could be like. Or maybe you went to a family island and you know what it is like there where there are not as many people and it's just you and just the safety you feel and just the freedom you have to go and to do as you want.

I imagine that Noah and his family had some good years that they enjoyed like that. But in time, things changed.

[30 : 45] in time, corruption of sin set in, the violence set in, in time, murder was being committed and we see the cascading effects of that still in our world today.

It persists in our world today. The reason it persists is the problem that produces it still persists. the problem is within us.

You know, have you ever heard people, they'll say things like, well, you know, something isn't going well on a job or something that's well, I'm leaving. in human relationships, you know, they're leaving and you wonder like, okay, so where are you going to go that's going to insulate you from sinful conduct and the fallout from it?

Indeed, where are you going to go that's going to change your own heart? Because we're part of the problem as well. And what Noah and his sons, no doubt, soon realized is that even though the flood had taken place and had taken a lot of people away, they who continued, this persistent problem of evil from childhood was in their hearts.

And the children they would produce would have this evil in their hearts. They would all be infected by it. This is one condition that all of us share, like, doesn't matter who we are, doesn't matter what our background is, every single one of us has this persistent problem in our hearts.

[32 : 26] This bent towards evil from a very young age. So the problem that existed before the flood and indeed was the cause of the flood persisted after the flood.

God is the solution to it. What is the solution to this persistent problem that brought about this judgment on the earth?

Well, the answer to that question brings me to the second and final point of the sermon, the permanent solution. solution for a heart that is intent upon evil from childhood is really a new heart.

But that solution is not mentioned explicitly in this account in Genesis, but it's foreshadowed. foreshadowed.

One of the functions of scripture is that as we watch the unfolding of God's revelation is that we oftentimes would come to passages that though they don't specifically speak about Christ, they point towards Christ.

[33 : 58] They show us the need for Christ. They show us why Christ needed to come. They show us why we still need Christ. Genesis 8, the aftermath of the flood is one of those occasions.

Look again at verses 21, 20 and 21 in Genesis 8. We're told that Noah built this altar to the Lord and he sacrificed some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird as a burnt offering to the Lord.

And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, he promised never again to curse the ground because of man for the intention of his heart was evil from his youth.

I don't know if you've ever smelled burning flesh, but there's nothing pleasant about burning flesh.

But it tells us when God smelled this sacrifice, this offering that Noah was offering up, he smelled the pleasing aroma.

[35 : 19] He promised never to curse the ground because man. For the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.

I think what it should help us to see is that there's more to Noah's burning of this offering than meets the eyes. In the ESV study Bible, there's a very helpful explanation of Noah's burnt offering, and they provide this note.

While this, referring to the burnt offering, is undoubtedly intended to express gratitude for divine deliverance, it is also an act of atonement.

And when Israel's sacrificial system develops over time, and we see this in the book of Leviticus in particular, we see that burnt offerings are associated with sin offerings and atonement for sin.

It's the place of the burnt offering in Israel's sacrificial system. It was an atonement for sin. And Bible scholars who know the Hebrew language tell us that this word, this word that is translated pleasing, for us in English, is a similar word for Noah's name in Hebrew.

[36 : 53] These two words, pleasing in Hebrew and Noah in Hebrew, they are very closely connected words. And they have the same sense in their meaning.

And so this word pleasing is better understood that it means more soothing. That this offering that Noah was offering up to God, this burnt offering, had a soothing effect on God.

And really from the text, the way Moses communicates it to us, he says that it was that offering that caused God to say, I will no longer, I will no more curse the ground which I had cursed before.

In other words, he's saying that this offering had a merciful effect on God. Cause God to respond in a way that he will deal with humankind in a more merciful way.

And brothers and sisters, what we have here in this act of Noah offering of these clean, burnt animals to the Lord is we have a foreshadowing of Christ's offering of himself for sin.

[38 : 18] But Christ's offering is so much better. Noah offered animals, but Christ offered himself, and he does more than change God's heart towards sinners, he changes the heart of sinners towards God through his sacrifice.

In his sacrifice, Christ addresses this persistent problem of evil hearts by providing a permanent solution. And when we study this unfolding of God's revelation in the Bible from the Old Testament to the New Testament, those specific sins are mentioned repeatedly.

The authors always go back to the heart. They always go back to the heart issue, emphasizing that the human problem is a heart problem.

It's a heart problem. Not just a deed problem, not just to get us to conform our ways, but it always would address the heart because that's where the evil intent is, and that is what taints every action of ours.

And so what we see is that God never loses sight of the human heart. He never loses sight of the plight that we have of this evil intention from childhood.

[39 : 50] And neither should we because the human heart is really the human problem. God is going to redeem them and how he is going to redeem them and how he is going to vindicate his holy name, and he's going to bring them into a land of their own.

He uses the language of salvation to talk about it. In Ezekiel 36 verses 25 through 27, this is what the Lord says to Ezekiel, I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh, and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and be careful to obey my rules.

Notice that the Lord gets to the heart of the issue, he gets to the issue of a stony heart, and he says to his people, I'm going to remove that heart of stone, and I'm going to give you a heart of flesh, and I'm going to put my spirit within you, and I'm going to cause you to walk on my statutes, I'm going to cause you to obey my rules.

Brothers and sisters, God does this for all of his people, and it's called the new birth. Our sin problem is a birth problem, and it can only be addressed by another birth, it can only be addressed by a new birth, we must be born again, which is an act of God through the Holy Spirit.

[42 : 00] To be born again, Jesus told Nicodemus, he said, it is to be begotten from above. All of us have had an earthly begetting, all of us were born physically from this earth, this new birth that comes from God, that is designed to change these stony evil hearts that can cut a person down in cold blood, that will live indifferently towards God, we need to be begotten from above.

We need God to do something in us, to transform us, to change us in order for this to happen.

And so Christ makes this possible through his death on the cross. He is the ultimate clean sacrifice. Noah's sacrifice of some clean animals and some clean birds pointed ultimately to Christ.

He lived a perfect life in the sight of God. He was perfectly clean. from every blemish of sin. And then on the cross, he offered himself as an atonement for sin.

And on the cross, he endured the full fury of the wrath of God burning against him as a punishment for the sins of his people. And the result was that God's wrath was turned away from them.

[43 : 33] Listen to what the writer in Hebrews says and how he puts it in Hebrews 2, 17. Therefore he, meaning Christ, had to be made like his brothers in every way so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God to make propitiation for the sins of his people.

The word propitiation means to turn away wrath. And you see the shadow of this turning away of wrath in Noah's sacrifice after the flood.

But we see the substance of it, the fullness of it in Christ. The wrath of God was turned away. The wrath of God was propitiated against from his people as Christ hung on the cross.

Christ in his sacrifice made God propitious and favorable to his people. Brothers and sisters, this is the solution to this persistent problem of evil.

The atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross and the new birth that made it possible through his death. That's what Noah's sacrificial offering.

[44 : 59] was a shadow of. We see a glimpse of it in that. We see a picture of it in that. We see it pointing towards that. This was their dilemma after the flood.

Their dilemma after the flood was they needed their hearts transformed. And so my question to you this morning is have you experienced the new birth?

have you been born of God? And if your mind is going to something that you have done and something that you continue to do, your mind is in the wrong place because to be born of God is something that only God can do.

to be born of God is to have something done to us that we cannot do for ourselves.

Some people ask, how will I know? How can I know if I have been born again? know if can't God is up to us.

[46 : 15] us, know if us, know if know if us, Chapter 3, verses 9 to 10. I want you to hear this this morning, brothers and sisters.

And I encourage all of us, let us place more stock in this than any prayer that we prayed, than any experience that we've had where we felt warm and unusual.

This is what it says. 1 John 3, verses 9 and 10. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning.

For God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God.

Let's hear that this morning. Is he saying that no one born of God ever since? No, he's not saying that. He says no one who is born of God can make a practice of sinning because God's seed abides in him.

[47 : 35] The regeneration, the being born of God, something happens in us. God does a divine, transformative work in us.

He puts a part of himself in us, if that's helpful language for us to appreciate. Something abides in us from God that deters us and makes it impossible for us to continue a lifestyle of sin.

We cannot keep on sinning if we've been born of God. It's an impossibility. Will we sin? Yes. Will we sin in an ongoing way? Yes, until the day Christ comes.

But will we sin as a matter of practice and lifestyle without any kind of conviction, without any kind of confession, without any kind of change?

No. The Bible says no one who is born of God is able to do that. And then in verse 10, he says, By this it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil.

[48 : 42] And brothers and sisters, we are one of the other. There's no in between. You are a child of God with the seed of God in you because he gave you the new birth, or you are the child of the devil because you don't belong to Christ and you are serving the one who is your father.

He goes on, he says, Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

Our practice of righteousness is not perfect. Our practice of righteousness is faulty and it falls short from God's perfect standard.

But brothers and sisters, it is still a practice of righteousness and it identifies us as belonging to Christ. And this is the solution to this persistent problem that evokes the wrath of God on men and women.

And be sure that there is a coming wrath as sure as there was a wrath in the day of Noah. There is coming a wrath in our day and the only ones who will be spared the wrath of that judgment will be those who find themselves belonging to God having been born again and purchased through the blood of Jesus Christ.

[50 : 23] Christ. And so I call us this morning to not get lost so much in a lot of the details of the Genesis passage but let us think of ourselves and our own condition and to recognize that only the new birth can change this persistent problem that we have.

And so if you're here this morning and you do not know Jesus Christ or you would profess to know Jesus Christ but as you hear these words from 1 John 3, 9 through 10 you acknowledge that that's not true of you.

That somehow your life is continuing in a pattern of sin even though you attend church and even though you pray prayers. I call you this morning to repent.

I call you this morning to believe the gospel. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners and he turns away no one who comes to him. And that's true no matter who you are no matter what you've done your greatest sin your greatest sin your worst sin will not be grounds to be turned away from a gracious and merciful Savior who will be quick to pardon it and quick to receive you as one of his children.

Nations and government should do all that we can to make the world a better place. We should do all that we can to make the world a better place but we also need to understand that even when we do those things unless there's a changing of the hearts of men and women the problem persists.

[52 : 29] It's like pulling up it's like pulling up weeds. They're pulling it up but they're going to come up again they're going to come up again. It has to be addressed at the core of our hearts and only God through the new birth can do that.

Let's pray. Father we thank you this morning that through Jesus Christ this persistent problem of an evil heart has been addressed the solution has been provided and God we thank you that we who have trusted in Jesus can testify to transformed hearts and lives because of the new birth.

I pray this morning that you would help us to soberly consider the depraved condition of the human heart and those of us who have come to Christ Lord may we be amazed at your grace that has come to us and I do pray for those who do not know Christ those who stand outside of the ark of safety Lord would you bring conviction would you help them to see their need for a savior and would you do the transformative work in their hearts that only you can do we ask in Jesus name Amen