

Glimmers of Hope in the Darkness of Sin

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 20 October 2019

Preacher: Matt Coburn

[0 : 00] Amen. Amen. Not every chapter in a book.

Is the pivotal point of the story. Not every chapter is a turning point. A big reveal of the problem. Or the crisis.

Which turns towards resolution. But a good story has many chapters that develop the themes. Enrich the storyline.

Introduce new characters. Along the way. Pointing us to the end goal. This is where we are in the book of Genesis this morning.

If you are visiting this morning. We have been preaching through the first chapters. One through eleven of the book of Genesis. And we have come to one of those chapters.

[1 : 20] Which may on the surface seem like a less significant chapter. Because of its. Well.

Along the wayness. But in. I think as we look at it this morning. We will see that. In fact. It is a rich. Chapter. With much to help us see. The big picture. And the development of the themes. And the introduction of the characters. That we need to know.

To see what God is doing. If you would like to follow along with me. We are going to be in Genesis chapter five. In the beginning of chapter six. That is on page four. In your pew bible.

And just to remind you. Or if you haven't been here. To give you a bit of a heads up. Chapter one is the glorious chapter. Of God's creation of all things in the heavens and the earth. And then. In chapter two.

[2 : 17] Verse four. You remember it says. These are the generations of. And that we learn that this was the literary clue. This is a new section. And then what we saw in chapters two.

And three and four. Was this special creation of humanity. And its glory. And beauty. And gendered loveliness. Of male and female. In God's image.

And then we saw in chapter three. The tragic fall. Of humanity. As they rebelled against God. And rejected him. And went their own way. And the curse of sin.

Fell upon them. As God judged them. For their rebellion. Chapter four then. Was the outworking of this. As we begin to see sin. Unfolding.

And spreading. Throughout the world. Humanity is in a tailspin. At the end of chapter four. It seems to be getting worse. Murder and more murder.

[3 : 15] From Cain to Lamech. With just a hint. At the end. Of maybe some hope. That people were turning to God. And this brings us to our chapter this morning.

Chapter five. And if you look. At your Bible. You'll see that chapter five. Begins one of these new sections. This is the book of the generations. Of Adam.

This is a new section. That just goes from. Five one. To six eight. We'll see that again. In six nine. There's another. These are the generations of. This is the book of the generation of.

So this is a discreet part of the story. And here what we will see. Is the story developing. Of where does humanity go from here?

Will the tailspin continue? What will God do? Where is this going? And we know. Because we've all been to Sunday school. At one point or another. That what's coming. Is this huge thing.

[4 : 15] The turning point is coming. Right? Because right after this. Comes the flood. And Noah. And the ark. And the rainbow. And all those things. That we've heard of before.

But what happens in the meantime. And what is it that God wants us to understand. As we try to get there. That's what we're going to look at. This morning.

So if you would. Like you to pray with me. Lord we pray this morning. That you would open our. Hearts. And our minds. To your word. We pray that by your spirit. We would have understanding. About your. This part of your word.

Lord. Lord that we would see. The truth of it. Lord we pray that we would have. Soft hearts to receive. From you these words. In a way that will.

[5 : 14] Transform us. That will change us. That will conform us. Lord help us to see. Lord how your unfolding story.

In the world. Is one of great. Sobriety. And also of great hope. Lord we. Pray that you will help us. I pray that you would help me. This morning. That as I proclaim your word. That you would empower me. And give me strength. To speak clearly. For your glory.

We pray these things. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. So what we're going to do. Is look at this. Section. In three movements. They're unequal movements.

With regard to the text. But they're equal movements. With regard to the weightiness. Of the themes. That are introduced. So the first movement. Is going to be chapter five.

[6 : 10] All of it. From one to thirty. And as we read it. It is a genealogy. But this genealogy. Has a very particular pattern. And as I read it to you.

This morning. What I want you to do. Is to listen for the pattern. And secondly. I want you to listen. For when the pattern is broken. Because often. In these genealogies.

It's when the pattern is broken. That the author is making. A particular point. So let's read this together. And we'll see. What the first movement is. In this section.

Genesis chapter one. Nope. Genesis chapter five. Verse one. There we go. We're all oriented now. Here we go. This is the book.

Of the generations of Adam. When God created man. He made him. In the likeness of God. Male and female. He created them. And he blessed them. And named them man.

[7 : 07] When they were created. When Adam had lived. For 130 years. He fathered a son. In his own likeness. After his image. And named him Seth.

The days of Adam. After he fathered Seth. Were 800 years. And after. And he had. Other sons and daughters. Thus all the days. That Adam lived. Were 930 years.

And he died. When Seth had lived. For 105 years. He fathered Enosh. Seth lived. After he fathered. Enosh. For 807 years.

And had other sons. And daughters. Thus all the days. Of Seth. Were 912 years. And he died. When Enosh. Had lived. For 90 years.

He fathered Kenan. Enosh lived. After he fathered. Kenan. For 815 years. And he had other sons. And daughters. Thus all the days. Of Enosh. Were 905 years. And he died.

[8 : 04] When Kenan. Had lived. For 70 years. He fathered. Mahalale. Kenan. lived. After he fathered. Mahalale. For 840 years. And had other sons. And daughters.

Thus all the days. Of Kenan. Were 910 years. And he died. When Mahalale. Had lived. For 65 years. He fathered Jared. Mahalale.

Lived. After he fathered Jared. For 830 years. And he had other sons. And daughters. Thus all the days. Of Mahalale. Were 895 years. And he died. When Jared.

Had lived. For 162 years. He fathered Enoch. Jared lived. After he fathered Enoch. For 800 years. And had other sons. And daughters. Thus all the days.

Of Jared. Were 962 years. And he died. When Enoch. Had lived. For 65 years. He fathered Methuselah. Enoch. Walked with God.

[8 : 58] After he fathered. Methuselah. For 300 years. And had other sons. And daughters. Thus all the days. Of Enoch. Were 365 years. Enoch.

Walked with God. And he was not. For God took him. When Methuselah. Had lived. For 8. Or for 187 years.

He fathered Lamech. Methuselah. Lived. After he fathered Lamech. For 782 years. And he. And had other sons. And daughters. Thus all the days. Of Methuselah. Were 969 years.

And he died. When Lamech. Had lived. For 182 years. He fathered a son. And called his name. Noah. Saying. Out of the ground.

That the Lord. Has cursed. This one. Shall bring us relief. From our work. And from the painful. Toil of our hands. And Lamech. Lived. After he fathered Noah.

[9 : 52] For 595 years. And had other sons. And daughters. Thus all the days. Of Lamech. Were 777 years. And he died. After Noah.

Was 500 years old. Noah fathered. Shem. Ham. And Japheth. What do we see.

In this. Rather mundane. Genealogy. This lineage. Of. The line of humanity. What I want to say.

Is that there are three places. Where we see. Unique contributions. Within the pattern. And in each of them. It points to God's. Ongoing goodness.

In his creative purposes. That have been preserved. Despite the fall. And sin. And death. Entering the world. We see this.

[10:49] First of all. In verses 1 through 3. Pastor Nick. If you were here. Last week. Preached extensively. On. The hope. Of the line of Seth. At the end of.

How Seth. Was a. Replacement son. In many ways. For Cain. After he had killed Abel. How he stepped. Into a role. Of being. The true descendant.

Of Adam. And what you see here. In verses 1 through 3. Is a very clear sign. That the author. Wants us to see that. That just as God.

Created Adam. In his own image. Just as God. Had created. This new humanity. Out of nothing. As the beginning.

Of his line. So. Using the language. Of Genesis 1. Again. The author says. Seth. Was. In the image. And after the likeness.

[11:45] Of Adam. This is the line. That the author. Wants you to pay attention to. Not the line of Cain. That you saw. At the end of chapter 4. That was descending. Further and further.

Into death and destruction. And murder. And mayhem. But this was a line. Of promise. That would bring hope. To humanity.

That humanity. Though marred by sin. Continues. To. Brokenly express. Express. The image of God. In a beautiful way.

That's the first thing. The author wants you to see. The second thing. Is. Once. We get into. Verse. Verse 3. And following. We see this pattern. Right? When.

So and so. Was. X number of years old. He fathered Y. And had other sons and daughters. And then he lived another. Y years. And then there was a total.

[12:42] Of a number of years. And then he died. And we do need to see. This repetition. Because it would be so striking. To the hearers. In Hebrew.

And he died. And he died. And he died. So what we see. Is this thread of hope. That. That there is. This line of humanity. That reflects God's image.

That continues. And yet. Death is now. The backdrop. In which that humanity lives. Over and over. And over again. Except. In the two places.

Where the pattern was broken. Did you notice it? First. You see it in. Verse 21.

Enoch. Seventh in the line. From Seth. So striking. How it's described. Verse 22.

[13:39] Enoch. Enoch. Is described. Is described. As one. Who walked. With God. We see it again.

In verse 24. Enoch. Walked with God. And at the very end. So striking. He did not die. But God took him.

He was not. What do we make of this? Well. There's not a lot of explication.

Is there? We don't know what it meant. Exactly. For him to walk with God. Although we know that Noah. Walked with God. That Abraham walked with God. That Moses walked with God. A few people were mentioned in the Bible.

As people who walked with God. There was some characteristic. Of a particular attention to. And righteousness of. Relating to. And living in relationship to God.

[14:45] We don't know exactly all that looked like. But what we do know. Is that. In the end. Somehow. He did not die. But he was taken up.

To be with God. Only Elijah. Throughout the whole scriptures. Only Elijah. Similar. Similarly. Had such a.

A fate. And it points us to this hope. To this hope that. One could walk with God. And not die. That one could be.

Righteous. And live. And escape. The curse. Now obviously. This is not the general pattern. This is not a hope.

That we can hold on to. For ourselves. As we look at the broader. Biblical teaching. But Enoch. Stands out. As this little bright light. In this. Litany of.

[15:41] And he died. And he died. And he died. And this one didn't die. But he walked with God. And he was not. For God. Took him. There is hope.

That the curse of death. Could be broken. And secondly. Having looked at Enoch. Then the second break. In the promise. Is.

Starting in verse. Twenty. Twenty. Eight. Begins normally. Lamech. When he was such and such. Years old. He fathered a son. But rather than just giving a name.

As all the other ones did. He fathered Kenan. He fathered Mahalal. He fathered Jared. It says. He fathered a son. And he called his name. Noah. Saying out of the ground.

That the Lord has cursed. This one shall bring us relief. From our work. And from the painful toil. Of our hands. So Noah is the other break. He's at the end of this line.

[16:37] And what you see is that. He's given a particular name. Now if you have a Bible. With footnotes. You would see that in verse twenty. Nine. The word.

Relief. Has a footnote on it. That would say. That the name Noah. Sounds like the Hebrew word. For relief. Or rest.

Different translations. Might have the NIV. Has comfort. The message. By Eugene Peterson. Says. That this one might. Give us a break. I thought that was kind of nice.

Give us a break. From the toil. And the hard work. Might give us a break. From bearing. The fullness of the curse. That has fallen on us.

Because of our sin. There may yet be comfort. And rest. And escape from the curse.

[17:34] For God's people. And Lamech. Names his son Noah. In hopes. That Noah might be one. That God would use.

To bring. That relief and comfort. To his people. Friends. I wonder. As you think about.

How you navigate life. Do you feel like. The. Unending. Relentless nature. Of the curse. Of sin. Is overwhelming.

Your life. Death. Death is coming. Death is coming. Death is coming. Life is hard. It is toil. It is pain. It is hardship.

In chapter five. Of Genesis. God wants to remind us. That he has not abandoned his people. But there is a line of hope in Seth.

[18:32] There is a promise of one who. Did not die. But walked with God. And was not. Because God took him. And one who would bring relief.

And comfort. And escape from the curse. These are breadcrumbs. Little. Little moments. Along the way.

Where the light breaks through the darkness. A little morsel of food. To keep us going. In hope. It's like in the Lord of the Rings. When at the.

Council of Elrond. Suddenly. Aragorn. Is revealed. Not to simply be a ranger. But to be the descendant of kings. And to be the one who can rightfully take up.

The sword. Of Narsil. The sword that attacked the enemy. Victoriously. Here we see.

[19:30] Similar signs. He's dropping us. These breadcrumbs. That maybe not all is bleak. And maybe a king could come. This is the hope.

That chapter five. Could bring us. I want to spend one minute. On an excursus for you. The other thing you might have noticed. Besides the pattern. And these things. Is that these people lived a really long time.

What the heck is going on with that? All right. Let's just talk about this for a minute. The answer is. There's a lot of really fun speculation. About what this might mean. And how this might work.

It might. Some people speculate. That their years were shorter. Some people speculate. That generations were skipped. Through this. And so they were covering multiple generations.

With these ages. Some people think. That there's a lot of really interesting. And creative Sumerian. And Babylonian astrology. And numerology going on. That all the numbers are figurative.

[20:29] And not real. But it's really hard to read it. In those ways. Instead. As you look at the whole big picture. There's actually a parallel genealogy.

To this one. This line takes you from. Adam. And the son of Adam Seth. All the way to Noah. And there's a genealogy. In chapter 11. Starting in verse 10.

That takes you from Noah's son. Shem. All the way to Abraham. With 10 generations. Each. And interestingly.

What you see is the ages. Seem to decrease. They're getting smaller. And smaller. As they go along. And there are times I think.

That maybe before the flood. The world. Was not. Quite as hard. As it is now. That's my own guess. The further we get from the fall.

[21 : 25] The shorter lifespan. Comes for a little. To a large extent. We're moving from. Eternity. To mortality. That's my own speculation. That's worth about.

One cent. But. I do think that. It's. It's possible. That the ancient world. Was much more different. From our world today.

Than we imagine it. But I also want you to see that. In cultural expectations. In. As the ancient Near East readers. Were reading this. They were actually thinking.

That these numbers. Were very. Very reasonable. For instance. There is a table. Of kings of Sumeria. And they lived. Eight kings ruled. For. 241.

Thousand years. Those eight kings. Ruled. Ruled. For that long. Okay. According to their tables. So. When you look at this. And you think. From.

[22 : 20] The birth of Seth. To the death of Noah. Is. Under. 1800 years. That actually seems. Kind of reasonable. It's. You may not think so.

Coming from a modern world view. Where you think. Nobody lives. After 120 years. But. Recognize. That the cultural expectation. And the questions. That we bring to it. Are very different. Than the kinds of questions. That might have been brought to it. In. In the ancient near east. With that. I'm going to punt. You can come talk to me. About it afterwards. If you want to talk more. About what that means. But. Chapter five. Has this thread. Of hope. This thread. Of hope. Where the storyline.

Might look a little hopeful. Particularly in line. In light of chapter four. When we saw. The sin of Cain. And the outworking. Of sin in the world. But then when we get to the next movement.

[23 : 16] In our section. That's chapter six. Verses one through seven. We will. Have a big but. There is hope.

But. Let's look together. At chapter six. Verses one through seven. Let's read this. Again together. When man began to multiply. On the face of the land.

And daughters. Were born to them. The sons of God. Saw that the daughters of man. Were attractive. And they took. As their wives. Any they chose. Then the Lord said.

My spirit. Shall not abide. In man forever. For he is flesh. His days shall be. One hundred and twenty years. The Nephilim.

Were on the earth. In those days. And also afterwards. When the sons of God. Came. In to the daughters of men. And they bore children to them. These were the mighty men.

[24 : 12] Who were of old. The men of renown. The Lord saw. That the wickedness of man. Was great in the earth. And that every intention. Of the thoughts of his heart.

Were only evil. Continually. And the Lord regretted. That he had made man. On the earth. And it grieved him. To his heart.

So the Lord said. I will blot out man. Whom I have created. From the face of the land. Man and animals. And creeping things. And birds of the heavens. For I am sorry.

That I have made them. Well. If there was a thread of hope. This is a dark picture. Upon which that thread of hope.

Is laid. Is it not? And let's just acknowledge. From the start. Verses one through four. Is one of those sections. Of scripture. That I believe. Is put there.

[25 : 08] To confound us. So that we do not think. That we know everything. This section. Is quite discussed. In commentaries.

And. The question of the identity. And the meaning. Of some of the titles. And names. And exactly what is going on. There is a lot of speculation.

And I will talk about that. In just a minute. But. To start with. In verses one through four. Regardless of how we read this. We need to see that it is. Heading towards verse five.

And in the meantime. Verses one through four. What I think we see. Is the on. Is an example. Of the ongoing decay. Of humanity. Male and female.

Had been. Commanded. To be fruitful. And multiply. This. Pinnacle. Of God's creation. Of humanity. That was going to rule. Over the world.

[26 : 06] Under God's rule. And be fruitful. And multiply there. So that they might have dominion. To bless the world. And so that the world. Might flourish in life. Instead has gone bad.

And I believe. That what you see here. Is an abuse. Of sex. And power. Violation. Wantonness.

Part of the reason. That I see that. Is when you look at verse two. The sons of God. Saw. That the daughters of men. Were attractive. And they took.

As their wives. Any they chose. Turn back with me. One page. In your Bible. Maybe two. Chapter three. Verse six.

So when the woman saw. That the tree was good. Or beautiful. For food. And that it was a delight. [27 : 11] To the eyes. And the tree was to be desired. To make one wise. She took. Of the fruit. In the original language. A reader would hear.

The same verbs. Saw. Something beautiful. Attractive. Desirous. Good. And took them. This taking. Is not. A good taking. In chapter six. It is a selfish. It is a covetous. It is a controlling. Take. And therefore. Whatever we think. Of who the sons of God were. And there's lots of speculation.

They might be angels. This is suggested. At least. Plausibly. From the New Testament. In second Peter. Chapter two. Verse four. Or in Jude. Verses five and six.

[28 : 07] Talks about. A potential pattern. Of sin. Between angels. And humanity. Some think. It's the sons of Cain. As opposed to. People in the line of Cain.

As opposed to. In the line of Seth. Though I think. This is less likely. Because it doesn't. Really work out. With the way. That humanity is described. In verses one through three.

Some people think. That it's. Tyrannical rulers. That there's a sense. In which. These sons of God. Were exalting themselves. As rulers. Of the nations.

Around. Around. The line of Seth. And they were ruling. In this. Incredibly. Aggressive.

And destructive way. Taking women. Into their harems. Into their. Their courts. Taking them as possession. And using them. These are the three options.

[29 : 01] That are out there. They all have problems. None of them are decisive. In my mind. But regardless. Of how we read that.

What we do see. In verses one through four. Is that what it meant. To be good. To be fruitful. And to multiply. Had become wrong. And they were filling. The earth.

With this. And God. Mercifully. Responds. And says. I will not let you live. For thousands of years. Or almost a thousand years. And continue to perpetuate.

This evil. I am going to limit. Your lifespan. And as you see. This is. This is exactly. What plays itself out.

Not immediately. But over time. In the Old Testament. Verse four. Talks about the Nephilim. Who are.

[29 : 56] Giants. Or. Who are the fallen ones. This is a word. That is also used. In numbers 13. If you remember. The story. Where the 12 spies.

From Moses. Go into the promised land. To scout out the land. That God was telling them. To enter into. And take. Because it was good. And they saw. The giants. Those are the Nephilim.

They saw. These huge. Scary men. And again. Whoever they are. In verse four. We need to recognize.

That they were. Mighty warriors. Not in a valiant sense. Of doing good. And fighting for justice. But they were fearsome men. Who were doing evil.

They were using their power. For selfish gain. This is the picture. I believe. That leads us. To verse five. And it helps.

[30 : 52] To make sense. Of verses one through four. Because. In verse five. We see. With such clarity. Where the author is going. With this section. Look at it again.

There cannot be. A more clear statement. Of the pervasiveness. And the depth. Of sin. As it has infected. And infused itself.

Into. Human beings. Than this. The Lord saw. That the wickedness. Of man. Was great. In the earth. And that.

Every intention. Of the thoughts. Of his heart. Were only. Evil. Continually. Friends.

At the end of chapter one. God looked at his creation. And he rejoiced. And he said. It was very good. And he rested. From his work. Five.

[31 : 52] Five. Chapters. Later. God is looking. At his creation. And seeing. How great. The evil is. That had spread. God responds.

With grief. Like a jilted spouse. Or a betrayed. Best friend. He recognizes. That every intention. Of the. People.

That he had made. Men and women. That he had made. In his image. For his glory. To honor. And worship him. And to live under him. They now.

Were consumed. With evil. And God. Will not stand by. I will blot them out. I will not allow them. To continue. To perpetuate. And to multiply. This evil. But mankind. And all of the creatures. That are under him. The words of the air.

[32 : 47] And the animals on the ground. The ones that God had given him. Dominion over. They would all be wiped out. Because of the evil. Of it. Because sin.

Had spread everywhere. Judgment. Would go. Everywhere. And God would. Undo. In many ways. The creative work. That he had done. Where he had breathed life. Now he was going to bring. Death. Where he had. Parted the waters.

And created order. So that life might flourish. Now he was going to bring. The watery chaos. Of a flood. To destroy his creation. Again.

This is a quick turn. And it's a summary. And we will see. As we unfold.

[33 : 45] In the chapters to come. More of this. But it certainly. Raises a question. Was their sin. Really. That bad.

Because you know. In our culture today. And in our world today. We really want to believe. That people are good. Or at least. There's some good. Right.

We really want to believe. In our culture today. That by improving education. By increasing social resources. By meeting physical needs. That we can somehow.

Eradicate the sinfulness. Of human hearts. And suffering. In the world. And look. None of those things. Are bad things to do. But that end. Is not possible.

And it is a modern dream. That we might actually. Eradicate this. G.K. Chesterton. 20th century.

[34 : 42] Thoughtful writer. Writing about original sin. Said this. It is the only part. Of Christian theology. Which can really. Be proved.

The strongest saints. And the strongest skeptics. In years past. Alike. Took positive evil. As the starting point. For their argument. If it be true.

As it certainly is. That a man can feel. Exquisite happiness. In skinning a cat. Then the religious philosopher. Can only draw. One of two deductions.

He must either. Deny the existence of God. As all atheists do. Or he must deny. The present union. Between God and man. As all Christians do. He writes this.

In his book. Orthodoxy. Where he's. Attacking. A third kind. He says. The new theologians. Seem to think it. Highly rationalistic. Solution. To deny. The cat.

[35 : 42] To deny. That. The evil. Is actually. Happening. We so. Want to deny. Sin. And yet. It's so evident.

I was a history major. You cannot study. Human history. And really think. That people are good. And it is not.

That humanity. Has not. Improved. And it is not. That there have been. Great things. That have made things. Better. In significant ways. But the 20th century.

Or the 21st century. Is not a better place. Think with me. Is the Rwandan genocide. Any different. Than the French revolution.

Have we really. Done better. In treating women. And abusing. And preventing the abuse. Of power and sex.

[36 : 45] Have we really. Overcome greed. Or anger. Or violence. Or lying. Or deception. Or pride. Or selfishness.

Are we really. Better. Or have we just found. New context. New ways. To express it. And of course friends.

The most sobering thing. Is that the question. That we want to ask. Is it really bad. What they did.

Was that really so bad. Needs to be the question. Then we turn on ourselves. Am I really.

That bad. If I'm honest. About my own heart. The apostle Paul said. I am the chief of sinners.

We ought to humbly. Take the same. Title. Ourselves. How can this be.

[37 : 44] We read from Romans 1. Earlier. What are the dynamics. Of our human heart. That make every intention. Of our hearts. Evil. Always. Continually.

Romans 1. Describes. How we deny the truth. Of God's existence. How we question his character. And his goodness. How we doubt. Or reject his sovereignty. How we do not honor God.

How we do not thank God. For all that he has done for us. How we exchange the glory of God. For the glory of our careers. Of our families. Of our success. Of our personal self-fulfillment. Of our pleasures. How we exchange the truth about God. For a lie. About what is true about the world. And about ourselves. And about how we not only do evil. But how we also encourage others. How we fall into. At times. Leading people away.

[38 : 45] From the God. Who is there. Prophet Isaiah. In verse. 64. Says. We have all become like one who is unclean.

And all our righteous deeds. Are like a polluted garment. Even the best things that we do. Are tainted with our desire to justify ourselves. Even the best things we do.

We hope that someone will see us. And be pleased with us. And praise us. Even the best things we do. We do for ourselves. To build our identity. To think. Now I'm a good person.

Now I'm better than I used to be. Or look at me. I'm suffering. By doing good for others. And doing so. How little we truly.

Long for God. To be first. And central. In our lives. Friends. Maybe you're. Better than I am. But how often.

[39 : 45] I forget God. I forget God. Every day. I wake up. Determined. To honor God. In everything that I do. And if I can get through breakfast. Without forgetting him.

It's a good day. So here's my application. And my challenge. If you are questioning. Whether I. I am being too harsh.

If you are questioning. Whether the Bible says this. Is true about you. That the intentions of your heart. Are this evil.

And deserve judgment. Purpose in your heart. To sin. For a whole day. No evil thought. No selfish impulse. No unloving response. Seek to live without sin.

And then come and tell me. If your heart is not resonant. With every intention. Of the thought of his heart. Was only evil. Continually. And if you want a sounding board.

[40 : 42] You can ask your spouse. Or your roommate. Or your children. Just in case. You might be. Reading things through a lens. It's always good. To get objective outside.

Friends. This is what. Chapter six. One through seven. Points us to. That though chapter five. Says there's this threat of hope. That God has not abandoned us. The backdrop of that.

Is the increasing evil. Of the world. That is bringing us to a point. Where God now regrets. Making the world. Where God looks at it. And he says. I will not allow. This creation.

That I have made. To continue to destroy itself. In such a terrible way. But I will bring a judgment. On it. Just like us.

Romans three. Where it says. That all have sinned. And fall short of the glory of God. And that the wages of sin. Is death. He says to the.

[41 : 42] Early world. I will bring this judgment. On it. And just like them. We need help. From beyond ourselves. To be saved.

From this judgment. And where does that leave us. Well thankfully. We have verse eight. This is the final movement. In our. In our passage this morning.

Look with me in verse eight. But. You almost have to look for the but. In scripture. Because it's a really important word. But God. But so and so.

These turning points. Are central. In the storyline. So though it looks as dark. As it can be. But. Noah found favor.

In the eyes. Of the Lord. We've already seen him. At the end of chapter five. He's the one. Who's going to bring rest.

[42 : 38] And relief. He's the one. In the line of Seth. The line of promise. The line of hope. He's the one. Who. Who we hope. Will. Somehow break.

This pattern of. He had. He had a child. And then he lived. And then he died. Isn't it interesting. The pattern of genealogy. We didn't. We don't learn about Noah's death. We actually have this suspension.

Until the end of chapter nine. At the very end of chapter nine. It says. After the flood. Noah lived 350 years. And all the days of Noah. Were 950 years.

And he died. And the author picks up that theme. And he says. Here's the end of the story. But in the meantime. There's this amazing act. Whereby God raises up a man.

Who actually pleased him. A man upon whom God would look with favor. That there could be a righteous man.

[43 : 33] Who would stand in the gap. And who could be an instrument. Through which God would. Even in the midst of his judgment. Save his creation. And his people.

Noah would obey God. When no one else would. And in doing so. Would be an instrument of his salvation. Noah would endure the flood.

And go through the judgment. But be carried through it. Not destroyed by it. And yet we know.

This is a preview. And a spoiler. That by the time you get to the end of Noah's. Life. He too. Needs a savior. He too. Is not the final promise.

The final expression of God's saving work. But friends. This is Christ. Christ who will come. And go through the flood. Of God's judgment on sin.

[44 : 33] At the cross. Christ who will come. Bringing comfort to sinners. By being a refuge. Under whose righteousness. We as sinners may hide. And find rest.

And find rest. From that judgment. We who. Under Christ. And with the new life that he brings. Will find rest from the evil. That rules in our hearts.

In our salvation. He who will come to free us. From the power of the curse. And set us free to live.

Friends. Friends. This is the thread of hope. This is the beacon of light in the darkness. And yet we know that it is a true.

And good thing. That this passage in Genesis. With the promise. Of God's continuing goodness.

[45 : 32] The overwhelmingness. Of the sinfulness of humanity. And yet the pinprick of hope. In a savior. Who will come to deliver us.

And isn't it sweet. That this little chapter. It almost seems like a throw away. In the build up of the whole thing. This little chapter. Tells us the whole story.

Of creation. And fall. And redemption. And tells us about what God is doing in the world. People ask me why I believe in Christ.

It's partly because I believe Jesus rose from the dead. That's a really good reason. But the other reason that I really believe in this. Is that because this story makes more sense of what I see.

What I see in the world out there. And what I see in my own heart. That I am created in the image of God. But that I am a fallen sinner. And that apart from God's grace.

[46 : 31] My heart is evil always. Continually. And that I need a savior. And that God has provided one in Christ. Hallelujah.

This is the good news of the gospel. Let's pray. Lord we are thankful to you this morning for this word.

We pray that you will continue to apply it to our hearts. Lord we know that the depth of our sin is matched by the greatness of your love and mercy. And Lord may we know that now as we come to your table.

We pray this in Jesus name. Amen. It is fitting that we would celebrate the Lord's Supper. Because this is where we come to celebrate his death on our behalf.

To celebrate his resurrection from the dead. To defeat sin and death. This is where we come to see how great our sin is. That it would require the very life of the son of God to die for us.

[47 : 39] And yet we come to this table with both sobriety for that reason. But also with great joy. Because we have such a great savior. Because we have such a great rock in which we can...

And we love to record it.