

The Flood

Genesis 7

by Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Let's ask God to bless us. Shall we pray? Lord Jesus, you are the dearest person and we want you in our hearts. We want your reality, your personality in us. So we come this evening to grasp you and draw you into ourselves so that you may live freely in us this week for your glory.

We're studying Genesis 7, loved ones. If you have a car that won't start in the cold weather, you send it in for repairs and if that doesn't work, you just get rid of the thing and start all over again. If you have a dog that bites everybody in sight, it's a little trickier; you can't send him in for repairs and you think twice before you just shoot the little guy, so it's more of a problem!

If you have a son that is just wearing you out; he is just living a hideous life and not the life that you hoped for him at all, you have a real problem. You can't send him in to be repaired because it's his free will that's the problem, and you can't really retrain him like Pavlov's dogs by reward and punishment, otherwise you destroy his free will also. So about all you can do as a human father or mother is continue to love him, and pray for him, and treat him with kindness; waiting for him to change his will and come back the other way.

Now that's what God faces with us, you see. God wanted real friends who would love him, and that's why he had to give us free wills and he had to allow us to exercise those wills absolutely freely and he had to make it a real choice. He had to make it so that if we chose to act apart from him, we would really create something that would utterly wipe his creation out -- it had to be real -- it had to be a real choice. And yet how was he to allow us to make that choice and to have, necessarily, become the monsters that we would become and yet somehow give us the opportunity to see it and to choose a second time? That was the problem.

And so you remember how God, in fact, did it; he foresaw what we would do. He foresaw what we would become if we chose to live by our own wits and then he miraculously, in a way that we may understand when we get to heaven or we may not, in a miraculous way, he put us all into his son and he destroyed us there: Christ died for all; therefore all died, in the lamb that was slain from before the foundation of the world; and then he began the world. And he put us into this world and gave us freedom of choice, gave us freedom to understand the choice; to make it and, if necessary, if we want it, to take advantage of the mighty recall that he had performed in his son, Jesus.

And that's it; there has been a great recall, just like car companies do, they have a recall and all the work is already guaranteed. It's all virtually done in the factory, but you have to bring your car in. And that's the situation the Creator is in with all of us down through the years; he has the recall already; he has the recall information out, but none of it can operate unless we come in to be remade. And that's what the history of humanity is about really.

The history of the Old Testament is the history of God trying to say to us, "Look, you have to have something fixed; there's something wrong in you. Not only because of the way you have chosen to live, but because of the way your forefathers have chosen to live, and I have issued a recall. If

you come in, I'll make you right; from your feet to your head, I'll make you right. Will you come in?" And that's how it started, you remember.

He gave Adam and Eve the choice and they chose, in Genesis 3, to live by their own wits. So he withdrew from them the Holy Spirit in order to say to them, "I had to kill you for this -- I had to destroy you for this. Now this is a sign that I have to show you; I'm withdrawing the Holy Spirit and now you'll begin to experience aging, which wasn't my plan at all. Now, do you see your grey hairs? Do you see the way you're weakening in your body? That's because you're on the way to death. Stop! Stop! Come back and be remade and receive the eternal life that will go on forever -- please." Then you remember in Genesis 4 he allowed that choice of independence to work itself out in Cain killing his brother, Abel and beginning a generation of children that lived by murder. It was God's way of saying, "Do you see? If you go on living independently of me, choosing your own way, and living by your own wits and not trusting my life this is what you'll make the world -- you'll make it like that."

Then you remember in Genesis 5 he said, "But if you'd come and experience the recall, if you'd come and be remade as I've remade you in my son Jesus and completely start again, this is the kind of life you'd live." He allowed Seth, another son, to be born to Adam, who trusted God and whose generation of descendants lived to 800 or 900 years old, each of them. It was God's way of saying, "You see -- there's death on one hand, but there's life on the other." And then in Genesis 6 he pointed out, "But really, some of you have chosen to live independent of me; the rest of you will join them and humanity is committed to be a mixed race that will actually reject me and will eventually destroy my world." And that's the point we've reached in Genesis 7, where God is about to show us that actually, there's no hope for this world. The only thing he can do is to destroy it absolutely and utterly and that's what he did in his son.

Loved ones, that's the explanation of all God's dealings with us; all God's dealings are God trying to say to us, "You're on the way to destruction, but I have made a way for you -- will you come? Will you come?" He's always trying to persuade us to bring our automobiles in to get them repaired. And of course Satan's job is to say, "You won't die; there's not a thing wrong with you. There's not a thing wrong with you. Carry on the way you're going, you're okay." God is saying that you're not all right so all Satan's servants are trying to say, "Use a little psychology, a little counseling, a little reading, a little education; you'll be okay." And God is always trying to say, "No. No. You need something more serious than that -- you need a remedy that I have provided in my son."

Loved ones there was one dear guy that believed that, so if you would like to look at Genesis chapter 7, you can see him. His name really means rest; that's the name of Noah -- it really means "rest"; one who will bring rest to the world. You can see that Genesis 7:1, "Then the Lord said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation.'" Now why did God find it possible to get through to Noah? Because Noah was righteous; because he had never done anything wrong -- no; because he was righteous the same way as Abel was righteous. It says in Hebrews that Abel's gift was accepted because he offered it in faith and that's why Noah was found to be righteous. Some of us might wonder, "Could we have the kind of faith and do the kind of things that Noah did? We are not as righteous as him." No, but Noah was not faultless until he saw by faith that there was some work that God had done in eternity that could remake him completely, and it was his faith that made him righteous.

That's mentioned in Romans and it's good to be clear about it yourself. Its Romans 4:22, he is

speaking about Abraham here, but it just as well can be applied to Abel and to Noah who are also called righteous; "That is why his faith was 'reckoned to him as righteousness.' But the words 'it was reckoned to him' were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification."

Every one of us that believes that we're so bad that we have to be completely remade, every that has that faith, can be made right with God. So it is important for you to see that people who believe that they have been crucified with Christ are not people who think they're holier than the rest of us; they're people who think they're so wretchedly unholy that the only thing that can be done is for God to absolutely destroy them and remake them. And if any of you are not filled with the Holy Spirit, it's because you don't believe you're bad enough. That's it. Not because you don't believe you're good enough, but because you don't believe you're bad enough. You still think you can eek it out "with a little help with your friends; with a little help from the Holy Spirit and a good deal of will power you can do something about your life" and you don't see that you have to be absolutely destroyed -- removed and replaced with an absolute new creation that may be very different from you. That's really what God is saying. Faith in him is the readiness to believe that you are so bad, so hopeless, so rotten, and so wretched that the only thing to do is let that lot be thrown in the garbage heap and start all over again with a new creation in Jesus. That's why some of us seem to have an excitement about life, or a sense of newness, or a sense of freshness; because we are aware that God has made us absolutely new and that we've let everything old be destroyed in Jesus, and that was the situation with Noah.

Now when that happens Jesus' own spirit comes inside you, and that was very important for Noah, because the things that he was going to be asked to by God required a faith that was beyond his own. Now this is the key; some of you may think, "Ah, I couldn't have that faith." Well, no, you couldn't -- and Noah wasn't able to have this faith. It wasn't his faith at all; it was Jesus' faith.

You see that in Galatians 2:20, it's a verse that we've referred to often, but it's so basic that it's good to see it again. "I have been crucified with Christ" and it's the faith that that has taken place that makes you right with God; "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." Except that the Greek is not "in the Son of God" it is "tou Theou"; this life I now live in the flesh, "I live by the faith of the son of God." And that's what happened to Noah.

When you at last agree that you have to be wiped out and you have to be replaced, God replaces you with his Son, and Jesus stands up inside you and begins to exercise his own faith through you. That's the only way you can have faith for the miracles that God wants each one of us to perform during our life here. Loved ones, you can't do it with your own faith; you won't have enough. It's only if you say goodbye forever to your own abilities and your own holiness and your own ability to exercise faith, and hand it all over to Jesus, that you actually do experience displacing of yourself with a Jesus Spirit. That's right -- you actually experience a new Spirit of faith rising up inside you.

You remember I shared with you before; faith isn't the problem. Faith isn't the problem. The problem is seeing that you're so bad that you have to be utterly replaced by Jesus -- that's the problem. Once that happens, Jesus springs up inside you. You don't have to kind of dial a prayer and say, "Lord, you realize that I have died. I'm waiting for you here." No, you don't -- the

moment you go like that, that moment he's in and faith is springing up in your heart. And why that's important, you'll see if you look back to Genesis 7:1 "Then the Lord said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and all your household.'" Now which ark? We'll look back to Genesis 6 and 13 "And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of all flesh for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark with gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark and cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you are to make it.'" Now first of all, you need to see how big the ark was. This is how you are to make it; the length of the ark 300 cubits. Now actually if you take our building here, our building, looking like that, I paced it out tonight. It's roughly 150 feet long and it's roughly 90 feet broad. And it's roughly 40 feet high. Now this ark was the same height the same breadth, but it was three times the length. So Noah had to build something that was 450 feet long by 40 feet high by 90 feet broad -- hard to get on a one acre lot, really.

But what is important for us to see is; that didn't come as a voice from heaven. See, we all tend to think, "That was easy -- it's the way that Negro spiritual says -- it was God yelling down from Heaven and everybody was singing and dancing and happy and Noah was the chosen savior and he knew" ... No. The dear guy was sitting at home and there was no voice. There was no voice. It was the same way you and I are told by God to do things -- it was just that way. It was through the intuition of his spirit and that dear fellow sensed that God was saying to him to build a boat three times the size of this building. Now do you see why the faith of the Son of God has to rise to even to conceive that it's possible that God is saying that to you? That's why I shared what I did at the beginning about the singing, and about all of us with abilities here. I mean Mark is right; we have been given a lot, loved ones, but don't you think with all that we have that God is probably giving a lot of directions and a lot of challenges to us and that he is saying a lot of things like this to us? And only if the Son of God's faith is rising inside us will we be able to grasp that.

It's important for you to see that we can't any longer get out of it by saying, "Well, that was Old Testament times. God obviously spoke with an amplifier right from Heaven, or wrote it in the sky, or he shouted it down to Noah in Hebrew or whatever language they spoke." No. God does not change; God spoke to Noah in the quietness of his own heart and that's the way he speaks to you and me. He speaks in the quietness of our hearts and he says, "Will you do this?" Do you see that the flood was going to come? It was going to come anyway. But it was only if Noah acted on this that he would be delivered from the flood. Now in our lives, the plagues are going to come anyway, the spiritual paralysis is going to come anyway and only if we act in response to what God is saying deep down in our hearts will we actually be delivered from it. You notice the details that God gives. Faith isn't feeling; it's detailed actions that God tells us to obey. And that's why I wonder how many of us are sitting here paralyzed after years in God's kingdom because we keep thinking faith is a feeling.

"Oh, I know how it happened -- Noah really worked up a tremendous feeling and he just felt, 'Yes, this is possible! Yes it is! Yes, there's a great flood coming all over the world, but I know this is possible. I can build this boat and I know this boat will save me!'" No, faith is not a feeling like that. Faith is not working yourself up into such a frenzy of confidence that there's no risk involved at all. Faith is obeying detailed directions from God. That's what faith is. Faith is action. Faith is God saying to you, "All right. I want to start training you. You can't become a George Miller right off. You can't become a Noah right off, but I want to train you in a few things. Will you go see that person in the hospital? I want you to go tonight." That's the beginning. When you respond, "Well, that's a silly feeling I have there; I had a feeling a minute ago that I should go and visit that person in the hospital." That's it -- God has to start all over

again with you about a couple of months later. Many of us, I think, drain away the Holy Spirit because we keep regarding these little feelings that we have to do something for God as just our own natural desires. I think it's William Law who says, "Anything that is connected with God's service or that is connected in some way with God's will, always be sure that it comes from Jesus inside you and if you ignore it, you're ignoring Jesus inside you. Never think that it comes from your own natural self."

So maybe it's good to see again that faith is obedience to detailed actions. Here you have it in Genesis 6:15. "This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and set the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second and third decks. For behold, I will bring flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall die. And in verse 19, "And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every sort shall come into you, to keep them alive. Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall service food for you and for them. Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him."

That's what faith is, so don't let's get it wrong; don't let's think faith is something that will be a revelation or a vision that will come to you sometime when you're 45, 55, 60 and it will be some great action that the whole world will know about. No. God is already giving you all kinds of detailed directions -- thousands of them that you don't even give a second thought to. You yield to Satan's deception: "Well that was a funny thought I had." "Well, yeah, that would have been a nice thing to do if I had the time to do it." So you ignore God, and that's why we're not Noah's, because we forget that faith is action on the basis of the intuitive directions that God gives us in our spirits. And that is where it started, loved ones, with Noah.

Now maybe it's good to see that God often begins with you "Would you start going to the prayer fellowship on Wednesday night?" Maybe he's not saying this, but he can be saying that kind of thing. Or he can be saying to you, "We will stay at work three hours longer tonight." Or he can be saying to you, "Write a letter to your mother." But he'll be giving you directions; he won't immediately be taking you out on what you think is some great faith enterprise, he'll reduce the thing to very down to earth, detailed directives, about things that you are to do in your life which only makes sense if he comes through with his action. That's what it is all about -- and that's why I said a couple of weeks ago that if you are a gambler, you really should be good at faith because faith is risking everything on the fact that God has actually said this to you.

Could I suggest that some of our lives are dull and kind of boring because we don't go out on any limbs of faith? And we don't go out on any limbs of faith because we don't really believe that the little intuitive impressions that we have inside us are from God. If you just move out on a little one of those, God will begin to show you what his voice is and what the voice of your own desires is. But so often we say, "Well, now Pastor, I would like to do that, but maybe it's not me." Well, loved ones, you're not going to find out by examining and analyzing; you're only going to find out by obeying and finding that you have egg on your face or that God has come through. That's the only way you're going to find out -- but at least if you act God knows, "Ah! You do really listen and you are anxious to obey me." It changes the whole relationship from a passive one into an action one.

Now could we look a little, loved ones, at what God told Noah to do in Genesis 7:1, "Then the Lord said to Noah, go into the Ark you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation." And that "you and all your household" it's good to see that that's important because Genesis 9:19 shows why Noah was to take all of his household in. Genesis 9:19, "These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled." So it was from Noah's own family that the earth was peopled again after the flood. Then you see in Genesis 7:2, "Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate; and seven pairs of birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive upon the face of all the earth." Now you know the distinction between clean animals and unclean animals that is given in Leviticus 11.

So God said "You are to take three pair of each animal and probably one more that you would sacrifice -- probably a male" that's why he says seven altogether, "a male that you would sacrifice as a reminder that this mighty act of salvation is due to the previous eternal active salvation and the lamb that was slain and the blood that was shed there." Then you see their kind in verse 3, "and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive upon the face of all the earth." Some people say, "Oh, he couldn't have taken each species in." Well, there's no way in which you can say that "kind" means "species" in those days. Presumably God so arranged it that out of those "kinds" could develop all the species that we have today.

Then in verse 4, "For in seven days I will send rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made, I will blot out from the face of the ground." And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him." The same way that God said to Moses, "Step into the Red Sea." Moses did it. The same way that God said to Moses, "Strike the rock with your staff." And Moses did it. The same way that God said to Moses, "Throw this tree into the waters of Mara and I will sweeten them" and Moses did it. The same way that God said to Peter and John when the lame man at the Gate Beautiful of the temple asked them for alms, he said "Say to the man, 'Rise up in the name of Jesus'" and Peter and John said that and the man was healed.

God only acts when you act, loved ones, that's the key to it. That's what that plumber [Smith Wigglesworth] from England, did – he did it! He was so stupid he didn't know any better; when God told him to do something, he did it and trusted that God would act. And if you examine all the miracles, right throughout the Old and New Testament, they all occurred after a man or a woman did something that put their lives and their reputation on the line, and that's the same with us. I don't know how many of you have found your finances sorting themselves out after you have tithed. but you seem to have to take that step. It's no use even saying, "Lord, believe me, believe me, I'll tithe, I will -- believe me, cross my heart!" It doesn't matter. God says, "No, I'll believe it when your money's in the plate or your money is in the mail. When you act, then I will act." Then you see why God says that; because he still believes he has done all the acting necessary. He has in his Son destroyed all the things that need to be destroyed in our lives and he reckons he has already done the great act. Now it's up to us to act to show that we believe. But loved ones, that's why it's important to see faith is action. Faith isn't feeling. Faith isn't a deep conviction in your heart. Faith is action.

Do you see that's why you're saved when you turn from your sins? It's when you stop doing the sin that God works the miracle in your heart. It's when you actually change your way of life and your attitude in your heart that God fills you with the Holy Spirit. Faith is action. Its acting on the basis of what God says it's true.

Then, loved ones, will you look at verse 6, "Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark, to escape the waters of the flood. Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and the birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth." It presumably took about seven days for Noah to get all the animals and the birds into the ark along with all the people. And at the end of seven days, then the waters came upon the earth.

You notice that there is never any question in people's minds about the flood. That's why they go to such length to emphasize how all these animals and all these people were delivered from the flood. Because that's the difficulty: the problem that there was a flood. There is no problem at all, because it is written in through all the sedimentary rocks strata that we have in our world; throughout the world there is evidence of a mighty catastrophic flood in just the rock strata alone.

But then you remember some of the fossils that we find; we even find cows that have the cud still in their mouths or in their stomach. And obviously the only way they could have been fossilized in a moment like that, almost freeze dried it seems, is because some tremendous catastrophic thing took place in a moment. So there is evidence all over. There are about two hundred and sixty or seventy different accounts of the flood throughout the literature of ancient times, so there is no question in anybody's mind that there was a great catastrophic flood. The question is always, "Well, how did anybody live through it?" And that is why, of course, God emphasizes again and again, "This is how it was done."

Verse 11, "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month," probably the second month of the civil year, which would make it probably October or November, "on the seventeenth day of that month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth." And you know the emphasis there is, it wasn't just a little flood of rain; there seemed to be great stores of water in the earth that burst up through the earth and forced all the oceans and the rivers to flood their banks so that it was a tremendous rising up of water from beneath and then you see the fountains of the great deep burst forth and the windows of the heavens were opened. The Hebrew word here means sluices; the sluices of heaven -- as if all the gates were just blown wide open and there were floods of rain that poured down upon the earth. "And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights." So for over a month, almost a month and a half, it seems that that whole shield of water vapor and all the waters that were gathered in the stratosphere and the atmosphere fell upon the earth.

"On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth and Noah's wife and three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, they and every beast according to its kind, and all the cattle according to their kinds, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind, every bird according to its kind, every bird of every sort." To emphasize, "Yes it really happened." And this is how God preserved the race: "They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. And they that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in."

And loved ones, it's probable that we will have to face some of the same kinds of things in our lives. If you think of that dear man with his family, and with the animals and the birds in that ark, and the sense of nothing but absolute chaos outside, he knew that there had to be a great trust in the Father, and a great readiness to die if necessary if the Father wanted them to. Now loved ones, there is no way in which we are going to get round that if we are going to be any use for God.

Really, it is going require us, as a group, to be willing to go out on all kinds of limbs for the Father. Now, I agree with you; it has to be on the basis of what comes from within you. It can't be me saying to John "Oh we should start a theatre" or me saying to Terry and Sherri "Oh, we should get on television." It has to be something that comes from our hearts, but that is why I encourage you to see that, that's what God wants.

There are little souls in Bangkok who will be brought to Jesus through some little one here who doesn't think she's very talented, or some little guy who doesn't think he's very much of a saint. But God will get into one of your hearts and he will give you a little vision for something that you have to do and you will go out and do it and there will be people in heaven because you've done it. But that's the way it works. It doesn't work with guys like me up here rah-rahing. It doesn't. It works through God, in the intuition with your spirit, giving you a little vision, a little vision of something to do.

I remember calling an old friend of mine that was at the same seminary as me and he's, in the pastorate in Georgia, I think. I remember him saying, "Yes, I think the Lord has a wee work for me to do here." Well that's it; the Lord has a wee work for you to do. That's why you are here in the world. You're not here just to grapple through and get your social security and your pension. You are here to do some wee work for the Lord -- some work that only you can do. But it will mean, loved ones, beginning to follow up some of the directions that God is giving you. Maybe one of the worst emphasis of the media is you have to be an Oral Roberts or a Billy Graham or you have to be somebody else. That's foolishness -- they aren't the men that bring in the kingdom of God -- it's the little ones among us that get something from God, and share it with the rest of us. So in four years time we announce here, so and so has gone to Italy, or someone is now living in Rome, or someone is now living in Melbourne, or someone is now living in some little town that none of us have ever heard of, but you have gone out as God has guided you and he has begun to answer your faith and do many mighty little miracles. And you find yourself, sooner or later, shut up in some old ark with a lot of animals and a lot of children and wives and husbands and you are the only one who seems to know why you are there.

That's the moment when the faith of Jesus rises within you and gives you confidence in the Father. But it will take that; it will take a few little steps at the beginning, and then bigger steps and bigger steps until eventually you end up in that position. But it is good to think of what Noah was in; not really sure of anything but that this seemed the best that God had said to him in his heart. I don't know if you have ever heard me say that, I don't think I'm an example but I know it has happened in my own life. You've said, "Well do you think we should go this way?" And I've said, "That's the only direction I've got from God." There's a great confidence that comes in that. Not certain that it will work, no assurance that God has not something deep to teach you by letting you fall flat on your face, but a certainty that there is no other way to go. "I have no other direction from the Lord" and that's a great place to be.

When you go that way, not sure mathematically that all the other ways are wrong, not sure mathematically that this way is undoubtedly successful, but sure in your heart "This is the only news I have heard from the Lord recently, and I have to act on that." That's the excitement of faith -- that's the excitement of saying that your Father never lets you down.

So loved one, look at verse 17, "The flood continued forty days upon the earth" so you see it fell forty days and forty nights and that is what it means there, "continued falling." The flood continued coming "and the waters increased and bore up the ark and it rose high above the earth.

The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered." And that is why we say that it was a universal flood; it wasn't a local flood, because that's the only explanation of, "all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered." I think Ararat is about 26,000 feet high, so if all those mountains were covered, then it meant that the flood was universal. "The waters prevailed above the mountains covering them fifteen cubits deep. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, birds, cattle, beasts, all swarming creatures that swam upon the earth, and every man; everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died."

It had to be, loved ones; that's why you and I need to see there is no good in us. That's what God was trying to bring home to us, "The reason I'm doing this is because this is the only answer for what you people have become; I have to destroy every bit of you. I have to flood it out absolutely. There is no bit of you that is really good." That's the key to being filled and baptized with the Holy Spirit; to see that there is no good in you, nothing good that can be used by God, everything has to be redone in Jesus and do you realize that's the place for full consecration? Full consecration is not saying "I will give my car, Lord, I will give you my job, I will give you my wife, and I will give you my friends." Full consecration is, "Holy Spirit, what will I give?" That's it. Or saying, "Holy Spirit what did God put of mine into Jesus on the cross? What of me cost Jesus pain on the cross? Holy Spirit, you alone know, tell me and I will say yes." It's what I think Sue said "If you say "yes" to God then all the rest follows." It's just saying "yes".

And then we come to the very end in verse 23, "He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days." So for 150 days there was a great flood that destroyed all life on the earth except what was in the ark which was locked and had been crucified with Christ from before the foundation of the world, and which God was trying to bring home to us.

Then maybe it would be good for you to look at the important verse that brings it all down to today in 1Peter 3:18. "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formally did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons were saved through water." And there the teaching is that the people who were destroyed in the flood were really the only ones that were not given that chance to see what God had done in his Son, so Jesus, in some way, presented the truth to them after his resurrection. And then in verse 21, "Baptism, which corresponds to this," which corresponds to the flood, "now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him."

Let's pray. Dear Father, the thought of the massiveness of the flood is beyond our imagination, and the thought of that relatively little ark compared with the size of the flood waters, and the thought of that little ark with Noah and his family inside, and the animals and the birds, is beyond our ability to conceive. But, Lord, we do see that things were very serious when you had to destroy the whole creation. Then Lord, we see that baptism is the real meaning of that; we are baptized into Jesus' death and as the waters go over our heads, so we once and for all are blotted out; absolutely destroyed by the power of the Holy Spirit making real the great flood that took place in

Christ before the foundation of the world. All that is evil in us is destroyed and wiped out once and for all and we rise up as in an ark, as Jesus rose from the dead, and we are made new.

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation, the old has passed away and the new has come. Father, you are saying you have done that for all of us; we simply believe it and it will be real for us. Father, thank you, Lord, thank you; thank you that all that we are and all that we have become up to this very moment tonight has been wiped out. Lord, however nice we all may appear to each other, however attractive, whatever goodness we may seem to have, thank you, Lord, that tonight by faith, we can recognize that all of that has now been destroyed in Jesus and you have made us new and we are new. We are new creations tonight.

Lord, now we will allow everything that is of the old nature to drain from us; all our attitudes, all our motives, all our hopes even for our own lives. Father, we come before you now and we lay all of those down at your feet and Lord Jesus, we allow you to trample them into the dirt. Lord we say, "Here we are at your disposal. Will you take our lives now?" And now that they are new and created anew in your own image, will you now direct us as we begin to move forward in a life of faith?

Dear Father, we are available for whomever in South America, or in Africa or in India, you want to use us to contact for yourself. We are available. Here am I, Lord, send me. We give ourselves to you, our Father, ditching forever our own personal hopes for our lives and from now on enlisting in your service for your glory and for your purposes.

Now, the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us, now and throughout this coming week. Amen.