

SUMMER 2025

YOU[®]



RISK-TAKERS:
THE ADVENTURE OF
WALKING BY FAITH

+ + +

**CHARACTER
COUNTS**



A BIBLE STUDY ABOUT LIVING WITH RISK-TAKING FAITH

+ + +

In today's savvy computer age, it is a very prevalent reality that ordinary people are unknowingly taking risks. As the internet has become more popular, so has the rise of money-related scams that target the ignorant and uninformed. Many of us may have received an email from what appeared to be a legitimate company or person. The email states that the sender wants you to cash a check and, in return, will allow you to keep a portion of the money. This is a scam. Once the person deposits the check in their account and sends the money, they quickly find out that it's a fraud and they have lost their own money.

Scams are nothing new. Back in the '90s, Pyramid Schemes were very popular. Someone enlists you to come in and pay a certain amount, and then you enlist others. Eventually, you run out of interested people, and those at the bottom of the pyramid

have lost their hard-earned money. These are risky ventures that people will participate in to receive a reward in the end. They say, "No Risks, No Rewards!" Like many who were on the losing end of scams, they risked and received no reward.

In Christ, unlike Pyramid Schemes or check-cashing scams, we have a guaranteed ROI (Return On Investment). The prophet Isaiah said it best in Isaiah 33:6: "[The Lord] will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure."

Reaping this return requires us to be diligent about our faith. Believers in Christ must be all in. The upcoming lessons will inspire you to walk boldly for Christ as a risk-taker. You will read of great examples of pioneers in the Bible that demonstrated faith. So, let's tap into this treasure we have and reap the rewards of serving the Lord.

SESSION 1

NOAH: A FAITH THAT PLEASES GOD

Leader pages on pp. 102-105

THE POINT:
LIVING BY FAITH BEGINS WITH A RIGHTEOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

GENESIS 6:5-9, 17-22; 8:20-22

MEMORY VERSE

⁵ When the LORD saw that human wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every inclination of the human mind was nothing but evil all the time, ⁶ the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and he was deeply grieved. ⁷ Then the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I created, off the face of the earth, together with the animals, creatures that crawl, and birds of the sky—for I regret that I made them."

⁸ **Noah, however, found favor with the Lord.** ⁹ These are the family records of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among his contemporaries; Noah walked with God . . .

+
+
+

.....
¹⁷ "Understand that I am bringing a flood—floodwaters on the earth to destroy every creature under heaven with the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark with your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives.

¹⁹ You are also to bring into the ark two of all the living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you.

²⁰ Two of everything—from the birds according to their kinds, from the livestock according to their kinds, and from the animals that crawl on the ground according to their kinds—will come to you so that you can keep them alive. ²¹ Take with you every kind of food that is eaten; gather it as food for you and for them." ²² And Noah did this. He did everything that God had commanded him . . .

.....
²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the LORD. He took some of every kind of clean animal and every kind of clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

²¹ When the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, he said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of human beings, even though the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth onward. And I will never again strike down every living thing as I have done.

²² As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night will not cease."

KEYWORDS

Human wickedness (v. 5)—The wickedness of humankind was not limited to evil actions. Every mind was corrupted, as well.

The Lord regretted (v.6)— God's emotional life is not like ours. God's regret in this verse is a reflection of God's deep grief over the sin

Establish my covenant (v.18)— The covenant that is established is a continuation of the covenant God had made with Adam.

Altar (v.20)—Noah is the first person in the book of Genesis, and therefore in the entire Bible, said to have built an altar.

HOW DO OUR LIVES DEMONSTRATE FAITH IN GOD?

+ GENESIS 6:5-9, 17-22; 8:20-22

There is a song that the late Keith “Wonderboy” Johnson sang. It was titled “Be Right”. A part of the song says, “When you see me walking along, I just want to be right!” When others look at your demeanor, what is their perception of you? We all know that a person’s perception may not be reality. But what if many are saying the same thing? Lamentations 3:40 tells us to test and examine our ways. Ultimately, Christians ought to be a reflection of Christ’s nature. He is righteous, so we must be, too. He knows your heart. You may be able to fool me or others, but God can never be fooled. He created you, and he knows everything about you (Ps. 139:1-4).

Let us remember Job’s story, for example. The Bible states that he was a devoted and righteous man who walked with God. He had found favor with the Lord. What a testament of his life to be declared righteous before God. In this lesson, you will learn about Noah’s relationship with the Lord. Just as God responded to Noah with grace, which is unmerited favor, let us also desire that. Let this lesson inspire us to emulate the righteousness of Christ by faith.

We Walk in Righteousness //

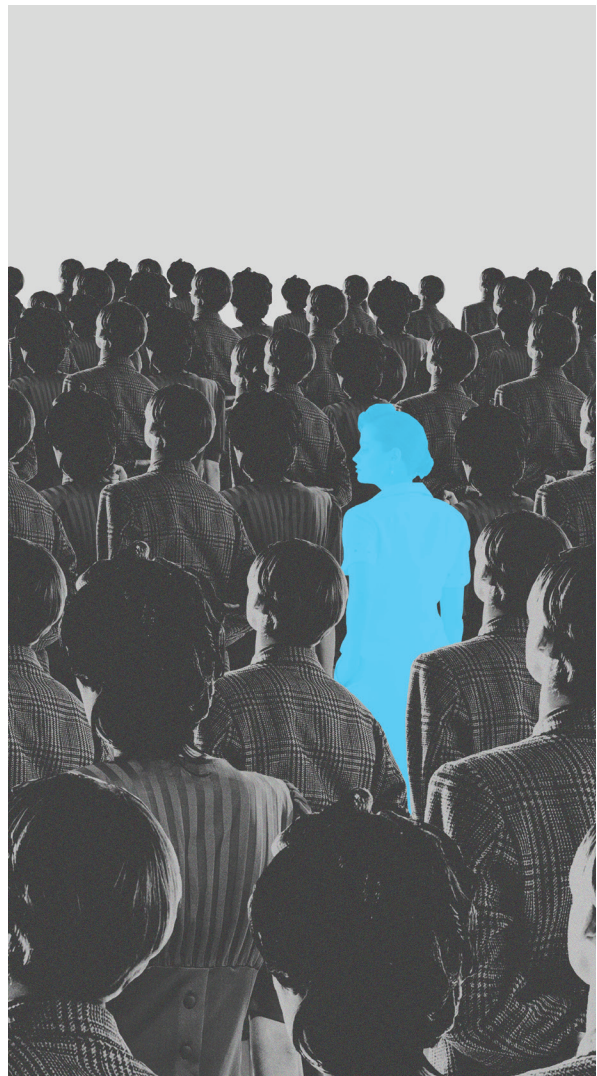
Genesis 6:5-9

It’s easy to follow the crowd. People demonstrate all sorts of bad behavior when there’s a crowd around them to hide their sinful actions in plain sight. Indeed, a person who stands out in the crowd is often one whose behavior doesn’t reflect that of the crowd. This person’s conduct is defined by moral or biblical standards that many people are unwilling to follow.

Football is a popular sport played in high schools. The coaches control every minute on the practice or game field. The coaches evaluate each player regarding their attitudes, abilities, and teamwork. As the season goes on, the players may think they need a place to let off some steam. The locker room is such a place. For the most part, the coaches stay away unless things get out of

control. Players—regardless of their claims to be a Christian or even a moral person—might use profanity and tell exaggerated stories about their exploits on and off the field. Although many of us have never experienced a football locker room, we might have been in other settings that made it easier to compromise our values.

The world Noah found himself in was one large locker room gone wrong. People were engaged in every kind of sinful behavior known to man. Unlike the football coaches, God knew all the behaviors, attitudes, and intentions in the hearts of every



THE POINT: LIVING BY FAITH BEGINS WITH A RIGHTEOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

person. And what was God's reaction to the crowd? God regretted creating mankind.

If we stopped reading God's story after verse seven, we would miss seeing one of the most important features of God's nature. Yes, God is Creator and Judge of His creation, the One who perfectly evaluates how far away humanity has moved from Him. But now we see a tender side to God's nature. You see, God desires to have a close relationship with His creation. This intimacy with God is made possible by His grace through our faith in Him.

One of the most remarkable sentences in all the Bible is, "Noah, however, found favor with the Lord." This simple sentence introduces the subject of God's favor. God's favor is simply defined as His grace. God's grace is His unmerited favor upon mankind. The apostle Paul taught his readers about grace in his letter to the church at Ephesus. Paul mentioned two key aspects of God's grace:

Receiving grace: Paul indicated people are "saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift" (Eph. 2:8). Receiving grace happens when someone responds to God's love and accepts this free gift.

Sharing grace: Paul taught that saved people are also to share grace. "You have heard about the administration of God's grace that he gave to me for you" (Eph. 3:2)

Two clear signs that we are living in right relationship with God is that we have received His grace, and we are sharing the message of grace with others. How do we know Noah lived in a righteous relationship with God by faith?

Verse 9 describes Noah as:

- A righteous man
- Blameless among his contemporaries
- Who walked with God

As if these three phrases weren't enough, the Book of Hebrews tells Noah's story in its chapter on the heroes of the faith. Hebrews 11:6 states, "Now without faith, it is impossible to please God." Later in verse seven, the writer says, "By faith Noah, after he was warned about what was not yet seen and motivated by godly fear, built an ark to deliver his family." This New Testament tribute connects Noah's faith in God and his mission to deliver humanity and the animal kingdom from the judgment to come. He acted in faith, and he proclaimed these truths to others.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO WALK WITH GOD?



DIGGING DEEPER CLEAN AND UNCLEAR

There is a popular song called "Rise and Shine." The lyrics are about Noah and the Ark. It says the animals came in by twos. However, in Genesis 7:2-3, God tells Noah to take with him seven each of every clean animal, a male, and female; two of each unclean animal, a male and his female; also, seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of the earth. Genesis 8:20 speaks of what happened when Noah and his family exited the Ark. Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered a burnt offering on the altar. So, when singing songs that say the animals came in by twos, it is actually speaking of the unclean animals. God gave a command and instructions and Noah faithfully obeyed.

What unclean thing may God be asking you to put on the altar in your life?



We Act in Obedience //

Genesis 6:17-22

God's words to Noah, which began their conversation earlier in the chapter, were like none other ever spoken. The Bible doesn't record any dialogue between God and Noah before that, but Scripture does describe Noah as a righteous man, blameless, who walked with God, so it would be interesting to know more about their relationship prior to this day. The message of impending doom announcing the complete destruction of every creature because the earth was filled with wickedness would have been jarring words—even coming from a dear friend.

From this point forward, Noah's living faith would be on public display for all his contemporaries and the future readers of God's Word. As the story continued to unfold, there would no longer be any questions about Noah's faith. In verse 17, God began to share with Noah the details of His plan to destroy His creation. Noah's faith in God would be stretched to new lengths as his habit of obeying God's commands reached new limits. Difficult days were ahead.

As God painted a picture of this flood, Noah's ability to capture the concept and act upon God's instructions required great faith in God. There would be no escape for everyone and everything he knew outside of God's specific instructions. Noah was surely overwhelmed.

Beginning in verse 18, Noah's life was forever changed. Noah was perhaps too busy listening to formulate, much less ask questions, as God

said, "But I will establish my covenant with you." These words would change Noah's life and the history of the world forever. Remember God's promise in verse 8, "Noah, however, found favor with the Lord." This was the precursor to the bold statement of God's covenant in verse 18.

Only God knew the day the raindrops would begin to fall. In the meantime, Noah's faith wasn't only public; the world could now measure it by the product of his obedience, and there would be a deadline. Obedience would demand he step outside his comfort zone and accomplish two enormous projects: building the ark and bringing the animals into it. On top of all of that, Noah would pilot a floating zoo and be the steward of God's creation. With his growing faith came an increasing confidence that with God all things are possible.

Verse 22 reads like it was no surprise to anyone how Noah would respond to God's instructions. We sometimes sit back and contemplate God's commands found in His Word and struggle with what appears to be an easy reply. Noah, on the other hand, faced a monumental event and obeyed God's voice with energy and expectation. Having a living faith, Noah knew God would provide him with everything he needed for his obedience to bear fruit.

WHEN HAS GOD ASKED YOU TO STEP OUT IN FAITH AND TAKE A RISK?

We Worship in Gratitude //

Genesis 8:20-22

God continued to instruct Noah and gave him new responsibilities in his stewardship of earth. In Genesis 8:16-19, God commanded the ark's crew and passengers to exit their temporary home. God informed Noah that every living creature exiting the ark would be fruitful and multiply on the earth. God had directed the animals to enter the ark in pairs, male and female, and it's interesting to note that Scripture said when they exited the ark, it was "by their families" (v. 19).

This simple phrase should remind us that regardless of the extent of our challenges, life continues and bears fruit in accordance with God's plan.

THE POINT: LIVING BY FAITH BEGINS WITH A RIGHTEOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

Verse 20 tells us that Noah's first act was to build an altar. Noah was no doubt overwhelmed with gratitude for God's provision and deliverance from the flood.

Notice God's method of receiving Noah's offering. Genesis 6:5 said, "When the Lord saw that human wickedness was widespread." Genesis 8:21 now says that "the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma." God is wonderfully able to connect with His creation in powerfully descriptive ways. The aroma was the smell of the burnt offerings, but deeper than that, the Lord was pleased with what this sacrifice represented—Noah's worship. This was a clear sign of Noah's obedience to God's commands and his willingness to be the point man God would use to continue His plan—the plan for mankind and all the creatures to bring life to the earth after their rescue from a watery grave.

Finally, we read that the Lord spoke to Himself and made two promises He alone could make and keep. He stated He would never "curse the ground because of human beings" (v. 21), and He would never again "strike down every living thing" (v. 21). These promises remain reasons for God's people to honor Him and give Him the worship He is due.

WHAT PROMISES FROM GOD PROMPT YOU TO WORSHIP HIM?

DID YOU KNOW?

God's instruction to Noah was to make the ark 300 cubits long by 50 cubits high and 30 cubits wide. We know they didn't have the technology we have now. A cubit was measured as being the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. In today's measurement it was 510 feet long, 86 feet wide, and 94 feet high. It is the equivalent of approximately two football fields. A very good representation of Noah's Ark exists in Hebron, KY. It is the largest timber frame structure in the world. Over 3.1 million board feet (12x12x1 inch) of timber was used in the construction of the Ark. You can actually go in the ark and see what life would have been like for Noah and his family. They even show how the animals could have been housed in the ark and their feeding regimen. I know I left the ark in awe of the amazing God we serve!

Biblical Truth: "God, you are awe-inspiring in your sanctuaries. The God of Israel gives power and strength to his people. Blessed be God!" (Ps. 68:35).

When was the last time you stopped and marveled at the intentionality of God's creation?

LIVE IT

How can we demonstrate Noah-like faith in our daily lives?

The foundation and strength of one's faith rests in the object of one's faith. The only One we can trust unwaveringly is God, but that trust is based on who He is, not on who we think He is or how we want Him to act. Living by faith begins with a righteous relationship with God. Choose one of the following applications:

+ + +

- **Confess.** Do you want a living faith in God? Living faith begins by establishing a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Talk to your group leader or look to the inside cover of this book for more help.
- **Grow.** Your relationship with God must grow. Your faith will grow as you learn more about the God of your faith. Now, your faith is in the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Study the Bible and His Holy Spirit will help you know God better.
- **Share.** Your faith is meant to be shared. Talk with **someone** who is far from God about the ways God has made Himself known to you. You can begin by sharing how God saved Noah!

DAILY READINGS

1. LIGHT WITH A MISSION // MATTHEW 24:37

Jesus noted in Matthew 24:37, “As the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be.” He was warning us that our world would look like Noah’s did before His return. Wickedness abounded, and sadly, the same is true today. Still, in the face of that, Noah separated Himself, choosing right relationship with God over assimilation and sin. God desires the same from us today. We are carriers of His light, and He expects us to let that light shine unabashedly—even if we must do so alone.

God chose us to be His best even on the darkest of days, and just as He was with Noah, He is with us as well.

2. DO WHAT? // HEBREWS 11:6-7

No one had seen rain in Noah’s day, so it was a significant act of faith for Noah to take God at His word and build an ark in preparation for a flood. Hebrews 11:6-7 tells us emphatically that Noah and his family were saved because of his faith in God. He didn’t have to see to know. God said it, and he believed no matter how ridiculous preparing for a flood might have sounded to anyone else. Our obedience might not always make sense to anyone else, but because we know God for ourselves, we can move with confidence, knowing that He’ll be just as faithful in the future as He’s been in the past.

God’s word is always sure no matter how unusual the request.

3. A LAYERED PACKAGE // 1 SAMUEL 15:22

There was about 100 years in between God speaking the promise and Noah seeing the promise. Add to that the fact that God spoke to Noah, not his family, which means they, too, would have had to trust, and it’s easy to see that this task was neither ordinary nor easy. God’s promises rarely come in easy packaging, but just like Noah and his family, we can’t allow the time in between to detour our faith. The very lives of both Noah and

his family hung on seeing God’s promise through to the end. The same could be true for us. Is a lack of patience worth the risk of finding out?

God’s process often requires reinforced patience, but in the end, He always delivers.

4. UP-SIZE YOUR WORSHIP // PSALM 63:3-4; JOHN 4:23-24

Imagine how it felt to actively witness God’s salvation in the midst of total devastation. This was Noah’s reality for almost a month and half. He was not oblivious as to what was happening outside of the ark. It’s no wonder that when he finally emerged, he did so with a heart of gratitude and worship. We can all recall a time when God miraculously brought us through some particularly hard trial. The relief and gratitude on the other side that brought about a different level of worship—the offer of our lives. This depth of worship should always be our response; it goes straight to the heart of God!

True worship originates at the spirit level; it’s the only kind that’s pleasing to God.

5. GROUNDING WORSHIP // DANIEL 3:16-17

There is a worship that brings with it grounding faith. Faith that is cloaked with a knowing that whatever life brings, our God is stronger. This type of worship is able to remove all doubt because in remembering what He did, we come to know He’ll do it again. A famous worshiper described it this way, “Sometimes we sing it because we’re sure of it; sometimes we sing it until we know.” The very nature of Satan is to send doubt. He likely did the same to Noah, but Noah knew who God was. We must know who God is, too, and often stirring up this knowing in worship is exactly what’s needed for a guaranteed win!

True worship has the power to propel us into our next victory!

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Examine your Relationship

Since the session is about living a life of faith in a righteous relationship with God, use a Bible dictionary to define God's attribute that He is righteous. Examine your relationship with God by considering what does being righteous mean and look like in your life? Reflect on how to describe your relationship with God in one word? Draw closer to God in prayer this week and give thanks that through Jesus Christ you have become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).

Engage the Learner

Send an email or text to engage the learner and motivate them to read the first session of the student pages. Also encourage them to tell a friend and bring a friend to participate in the upcoming study. Do make use of social media to invite people to attend the class. Champion the entire class to spread the word to others and come with an eagerness to share.

LOOK BACK

Connect with learners by email, text, voice call, or social media. Encourage them to review prior sessions and the current one for this week. Challenge them to think about how God is at work in them through the study and to share their personal testimonies with another. Invite them to come with an eagerness to share specifically how they applied "Live It" (p. TBD) in their lives this week.

TEACHING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

DO: Write on the board or give learners an index card with the following: U H E G S O T I R

EXPLAIN: We will begin this session by playing a game called Bible Word Scramble, and the objective of the game is to unscramble the word

which reveals an attribute of God. Allow learners time to guess the correct answer. Invite learners to discuss what does this attribute of God mean for their lives?

EXPLAIN: The exercise shows us the kind of relationship that we must have with God in order to honor and glorify Him.

TRANSITION: Read **The Point: "Living by faith begins with a righteous relationship with God."**

Read the Session Question: "How do our lives demonstrate faith in God?" Tell learners this session will remind us that living righteous living is dependent on our faith in God.

PACK ITEM: Focus attention on **Pack Item 1 "Risk-Takers: The Adventure of Walking by Faith"** poster to provide an overview of the study.

DIG INTO THE TEXT

We Walk in Righteousness //

Genesis 6:5-9

READ: Call for a learner to read Genesis 6:5-9.

GUIDE: Use the commentary for verse 5 (p.104) to discuss how the wickedness of man impacts the human mind. Explain the "noetic effect of sin" as stated in the commentary. Emphasize the importance of allowing the mind of Christ to dwell in us and setting our affections on those things found above rather than on earth below (Col. 3:2).

ASK: "What are some practical things believers can do to train the mind to focus on God?"

GUIDE: Use the commentary for verse 6 (p. 104) to consider God's emotional response to the wickedness of humanity. Guide learners to reflect on the key difference between human regret versus divine regret.

OBJECT LESSON: Use the "Object Lesson" (p. 104) to discuss how God feels when man lives unrighteously and in broken fellowship with Him.

READ: Invite a learner to read the paragraph that begins "If we stopped reading..." (p.13) to discuss the desires of God's heart. Point out that although the culture in which we live is corrupt just as it was

THE POINT: LIVING BY FAITH BEGINS WITH A RIGHTEOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

in the days of Noah that God calls believers to walk in righteousness and to intimate fellowship with Him.

We Act in Obedience //

Genesis 6:17-22

READ: Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 6:17-22.

DIGGING DEEPER: Read “Digging Deeper” (p. 13) to discover and discuss God’s instructions to Noah and how his conduct upon exiting the ark was tied to obedience.

EMPHASIZE: Point out that Noah built an altar to worship and praise God and his obedience was evident in his following God’s command. Point out that even Christ Jesus said, “If you love me then you would keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

ASK: “How does the passage show God’s judgment and justice awaits those who disobey Him?”

GUIDE: Use the commentary for verse 18 (p.105) to discuss how Noah took a great risk by building the ark.”

READ: Invite a learner to read the paragraph that begins “Only God knew...” (p. 14) and the paragraph that follows to discuss Noah’s mandate to obey and carry out God’s instructions.

ASK: “How will you demonstrate faithful obedience before God and others to show He is worthy?”

We Worship in Gratitude //

Genesis 8:20-22

READ: Invite a learner to read Genesis 8:20-22.

GUIDE: Use the commentary for context (p. 105) to understand what the Scriptures mean saying “God remembered Noah.” Explain that God is not forgetful and unable to forget but rather at the appointed time He turned attention to Noah to honor His promises.

ASK: “What experiences can you recall from your life that demonstrated God remembered you?”

READ: Invite a learner to read the paragraph

that begins “God continued to instruct...” (pp. XX) to discuss what does it mean or look like in application to exercise stewardship of the earth.

EXPLAIN: Stewardship refers to caring for all of God’s resources that He created including people, animals, and land. Emphasize that stewardship does not imply ownership but responsibly managing the oversight of something that belongs to another.

ASK: “How can stewardship reflect worship to God?”

GUIDE: Use the commentary for verse 20 (p.105) to discuss why Noah’s first response was to build the altar after exiting the ark and what was offered to God on the altar.

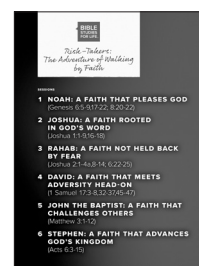
ASK: “What was the significance of Noah’s burnt sacrifice offered to God?”

EXPLAIN: Point out that the burnt sacrifice was symbolic of worship that ascends to God like a sweet fragrant aroma.

READ: Invite a learner to read the paragraph that begins “Notice God’s method...” (p. 15) and the paragraph that follows to identify how God responds to the worship of a believer.

ASK: “How does knowing worship is like a sweet pleasing aroma to God inspire you to worship in spirit and truth more often?”

SUMMARIZE: The main idea of all three divisions is to describe how our lives demonstrate faith in God. We are to walk in righteousness, act in obedience, and worship in gratitude. Remind the learners that the only right response to a righteous God is righteous living.



PACK ITEM 1



OBJECT LESSON

DO: Display an image of a broken and sad heart that you searched for and downloaded from the internet.

ASK: What are some common causes of heartbreak that people experience in their relationship with one another?

DO: Listen for answers such as cheating, adultery, rejection, lying, etc.

EXPLAIN: Point out that some but not all relationship problems are caused by sin which suggests one or both individuals fell short in the expectation for the relationship. Emphasize that this image represents the heart of God in the days of Noah due to the corruption of mankind. It grieves the heart of God when people choose to live in disobedience to Him. Now is the time to respond to God's call of obedience to live a life of pleasing faith in a righteous relationship with God.

CLOSE THE SESSION

DO: Play the song by Vicki Yohe titled "Because of Who You Are" from YouTube. Identify lyrics that makes you appreciate your personal relationship with God. Read "Live it" (p. XX) and encourage learners to apply it this week.

PRAY: Close in prayer thanking God for who He is in our lives. Express gratitude for Jesus who reconciled us back into a rightful relationship with God according 2 Corinthians 5:18. Ask God to help us honor our relationship with him through our demonstration of faith and obedience.

COMMENTARY

GENESIS 6:5-9

Connection to the Point. Noah lived in a right relationship with God.

Verse 5. *Human wickedness.* As he was writing about the time before the great flood, Moses wrote that the wickedness of humankind was not limited to their evil actions. Moses wrote that every mind was corrupted, as well. Theologians call this concept the noetic effects of sin. The noetic effect of sin is the idea that, as a result of the fall in Genesis 3, even the way people think is impacted by sin. Humans do not merely do wrong things or make mistakes. The human mind outside of the work of Christ is sinful. Without the regenerating work of God in our minds, we will not only commit sin, but we will also think sinfully. The noetic effect of sin includes the fact that fallen human beings will not see the beauty, power, and benefits of the gospel unless the Spirit of God gives us new hearts and new minds.

Verses 6-7. *The Lord regretted.* In order to understand God's emotional response to the sinfulness of humankind, we should let Scripture interpret Scripture. Other Scriptures make it clear that God does not repent or change His mind (Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Ps. 110:4) The word translated regretted here is connected to the previous verse in which we see that the people had hearts that were full of wickedness. When the text tells us that God regretted that He had made man, we should not conclude that God regrets in the same way humans regret. Just as God's thought life is different from the thought life of humans, so His emotional life is different from the emotions of humankind. Whereas our emotions are often a mix of sin, selfishness, and righteous anger against the sin of others, God's emotions are always perfect.

Verses 8-9. *Found favor.* This phrase also appears later in Genesis before the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (18:3). It also show up

in Exodus 33 as Moses pleaded with God for His presence to go with the people of Israel. In each of these cases, God's initiative and love is highlighted. These individuals did not earn God's favor. This interpretation is consistent with the New Testament understanding of grace.

GENESIS 6:17-22

Connection to the Point. God gave Noah an unusual command and instructions, and Noah obeyed.

Verse 17. *A flood.* Throughout the years, different scholars have sought to explain the Genesis flood in various ways. However, there are both Scriptural and scientific reasons to believe the flood described in Genesis occurred on a global scale, not restricted to the local area. The Bible says the flood was to destroy sinful humanity as well as every creature. Only a flood on a worldwide scale would have ensured all people and all animals would die.

Verses 18-19. *Establish my covenant.* In this case, the covenant that is established is a continuation of the covenant God had made with Adam. As such, Noah is pictured as a new Adam. This interpretation is confirmed by the covenantal language used in Genesis 9:1 when Noah and his sons were instructed to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." The covenant God established with Noah was not limited to just Noah and his immediate family. *The ark.* From a human perspective, Noah took an incredible risk by building an ark. Not only had the flood not begun, but some biblical scholars believe rain had never before fallen on the earth until that time.

Verses 20-22. *Two of everything.* Noah was instructed to take two of every animal for repopulation of the earth after the flood waters receded. In the verses that follow, we also read that Noah was instructed to take seven pairs of all of the animals that were considered ritually clean (7:2). The number seven is a literary signal of completeness and perfection in the Bible—Moses was signaling to readers that God's plan is perfect.

GENESIS 8:20-22

Connection to the Point. Noah's faith in God led him to worship.

Verse 20. *Altar.* Noah is the first person in the book of Genesis, and therefore in the entire Bible, said to have built an altar. He built an altar in order to make a sacrifice to God who had just demonstrated both unlimited power and loving compassion. The text does not record that God gave Noah any specific instruction to build an altar or offer any specified form of worship after he exited the ark with his family and the animals that God had preserved. However, Noah did just that. This spontaneous act of worship was pleasing to God (v. 21) and indicates that Noah truly understood that his life and the lives of his family and all the animals on the ark had been preserved by God's loving kindness and compassion.

Every kind of clean animal. The Law of Moses would not be delivered until many hundreds of years later—after the time of the patriarchs and the exodus from Egypt. This designation of clean animals indicates to us that God's people were given some understanding of clean and unclean animals even before that time. It is not yet clear at this point in the storyline of Genesis why some animals and birds were designated as unclean, but Noah's actions indicate a desire to be specifically and precisely obedient to what the Lord had revealed to him.

Verses 21-22. *God's promise.* In the account of the flood, verse 21 makes it clear that God was the author of the flood and the death of His creation. God declared that He was the direct cause of these events. In the midst of this declaration, God made a promise. This promise put an end to His declaration in 6:5. Now, instead of bringing death to His creation, God promised to "never again strike down every living thing as I have done." Later in chapter 9, God would place a bow in the clouds as a sign of His promise (vv. 12-13). This is a subtle hint of the gospel each time we see a rainbow.

Note: *Additional commentary can be found at you.lifeway.com.*