

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



Walking in the Favor of God – Part Two

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 6:5-9, 14 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 3:5-6

► SUMMARY

A story written thousands of years ago continues to speak to us today because the lessons we learn from the life of Noah are still applicable to our daily lives.

What makes Noah unique is that in the midst of a wicked, evil society, he alone “found favor in the eyes of the LORD” (Gen. 6:8). This is the kind of affirmation from God that we should all desire and pursue in order to honor and please Him.

► SERMON POINTS

The favor of God is His acceptance, approval, provision, divine energy, and joy given to us.

To walk in His favor day by day, we must listen to Him and trust Him. Both of these are required for salvation because God is the One who tells us of our sin and our need for a Savior. Then we must believe Him, receive the forgiveness of our sins through Christ, and trust Him to be our Savior and Lord. Listening and trusting the Lord are also essential in the Christian life in order to follow His guidance and walk in His will.

A good way to test whether we are truly trusting God is to consider our prayer lives. Do we come to Him with our needs and concerns and leave with an expectation that He has heard and will answer? Sometimes our prayers become lifeless because we lack confidence and faith in the One to whom we pray.

Proverbs 3:5-7 shows us how to walk with God as Noah did. “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean

on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

Noah’s Society

The culture in which Noah lived was characterized by great wickedness and evil. It was so corrupt that the Lord was grieved and decided to blot out mankind and all the animal life on earth (Gen. 6:5-7). But one man was different from everyone else: “Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God” (v. 9).

That should be our ambition as well—to be righteous and blameless and to walk with God. No other compliment could surpass this. Such a lifestyle requires that our conversation, conduct, and character reflect that we are walking with God in righteousness. If this is true of us, we will be different from the culture around us just as Noah was.

Noah’s Assignment

Because Noah was a righteous man who listened and trusted the Lord, God commanded him to build an ark (v. 14). This wasn’t a small project because the ark was to be 450 feet long, 50 feet wide, and three stories tall. Nothing like it had ever been built before so Noah could have made excuses, but he trusted God and did exactly what he was told.

Sometimes in our obedience to the Lord we may not understand how it will all work out or even how we are to accomplish it. Our human nature wants a full explanation of all that’s required before we proceed, but the Lord wants us to believe Him and obey. If we’ll trust Him enough to take the first step, we can be sure that God will

provide what we need to take the next step. And if we need further direction, we can ask Him earnest questions in prayer being confident that He will reveal what we need to know.

Noah's Collision With His Society

Even though Noah faced inevitable obstacles, He listened to God's instructions, trusted Him to save him from the impending flood, and started building the ark. Because he was righteous and blameless, he already stood out in his culture, but now he was doing something that seemed ridiculous to the people around him. Yet in the midst of their inevitable questions regarding the ark, Noah had the opportunity to tell the people about God and warn them of the upcoming destruction. But no one listened or believed Him, and they were ultimately destroyed in the great flood.

We, too, may face skepticism and questions when we listen to God and follow His instructions. Although others may not understand or might even ridicule us, we must seek to tell them about God and answer their questions, if possible. Then our responsibility is to trust and obey God and leave all the consequences to Him.

Noah's Trust in God

Although the Lord's command to build an ark seemed absurd to his neighbors, Noah trusted God and carefully followed His instructions regarding how to build it. Every step of the way, Noah had to rely on the Lord to provide materials and guidance for the construction of the ark. It had no rudder because God was going to steer it. There were no sails since the Lord would power it, and there was no need for a compass because God would direct its course. All the instructions were clear so Noah would know exactly what to do.

Trust is also essential in our lives as we walk with the Lord. Without it, we'd be like a car without wheels going

nowhere in life. If God gives us a command, He assumes the responsibility for providing the means for us to do it. If we always insist on having all our questions answered before we move forward, we never will. Like Noah, we can count on the Lord to provide whatever we need to accomplish His will. Whether it's resources, finances, or specific directions about what to do next, all we need to do is ask God and wait for Him to provide in His time.

Noah's Formula for Living

The example Noah gives us could be called the ABCs for life—listen to the Lord, trust Him, and then obey. This simple formula is God's solution for living in a sinful world, and it can be applied to every area of our lives. Yet sometimes listening, trusting, and obeying God scares us because we fear that we won't be understood by others or might lose out in some way. However, anytime we follow the Lord's instructions we win simply because we've obeyed Him.

To live a godly life, we must listen to God by reading His Word and trusting what He says. Then we step out in obedience, knowing that He has all knowledge and all power in every circumstance in life. Nothing is beyond Him. Furthermore, blessings follow obedience. Because Noah listened, trusted, and obeyed God, one family was saved from the flood, and a new civilization was started.

► RESPONSE

- What obstacles cause you to waver in your trust in God? Is it the opinions of others? Are you afraid circumstances won't work out as you desire?
- What personal assurances do you find about God's ways in Isaiah 55:8-11? What benefits of trusting Him are mentioned in Psalm 34:8-10?

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