

AND HE WALKS WITH ME AND HE TALKS WITH ME

Sunday, February 4th, 2024 - 10:00 a.m.

Pastor Chris Micks, Cedarview Community Church, Newmarket, ON

AND HE WALKS WITH ME

Open up your Bible with me to the book of Genesis, chapter six. Genesis is easy to find, first book of the Bible. Genesis chapter six. It's the story of Noah, I absolutely love this man, Noah. I love his story because what an amazing life he lived. I was reading about him again this week in my own reading and I was just struck in a fresh way by Noah's obedience. Just what a man of obedience he was to the Lord.

God said to him, there's going to be a flood. And Noah said, Okay. I mean, he didn't know what a flood was. Noah lived 500 miles from the ocean. He had never seen rain because the Bible says that at that time, it wasn't raining in that way but a mist came up to water the earth. The whole ecology changed after the flood. In those days, there was no rain and he had never seen it. But God said there's going to be a flood and he said, Okay.

And God said I want you to build a boat. A really big boat, big enough for your family and for some of every kind of animal in the world. It's going to take you about 70 years to build it. And Noah said Okay. I mean, that's a lifetime commitment, isn't it, 70 years to build a boat, but there's no record in God's word of any argument or any discussion. Maybe he did have questions that he asked the Lord, I don't know. But there's no record of it. In God's eyes, all Noah did was say Okay. He said, Yes.

Success in life has been described as a long obedience in the same direction. That's a good quote, isn't it? A long obedience in the same direction. And I believe that epitomizes the life of Noah, building that ark year after year, decade after decade, to prepare for a flood that seemed completely irrational and impossible.

I read his life and I'm just so inspired. I want to obey God like that, in the days that we're living in, how the whole world right now seems to be spinning out of control. I want to obey God because I know, history shows, that's how we get through this.

Whatever it is that you're facing in life, whatever it is that we're facing as a church, what we're facing as a whole society, it's how we get through this when we obey God. But I'm left with a question. What was Noah's secret? The way he heard God when no one else did, the way he lived by an unreasonable, uncompromising, unyielding faith, what was Noah's secret?

And so I want to read you a verse, a single verse, that I believe gives us the answer. And this could be life saving for you today. Honestly. It's Genesis chapter six and verse nine. This is what it says. **“These are the family records of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among his contemporaries; Noah walked with God.” (Genesis 6:9)**

There it is. Underline it in your Bible, Noah walked with God. That's the key to this staggering faith that Noah had and his long obedience in the same direction. He walked with God. I believe that's the key because that has been the key for many, many people down through history. People who've walked with God. I remember in the book of Daniel, it says *“they that know their God will be strong and do exploits.”* This is the key, walking with God.

You go back one chapter into Genesis chapter five and read verse 22. We hear about a man called Enoch, Enoch was Noah's great grandfather. And the Bible uses exactly the same phrase about him. It says Enoch walked with God. And you know what happened because Enoch walked with God. The

Bible says that God just took him, he didn't die. God just took him, God raptured him home to heaven and spared him a lot of the misery that the world was sliding into because he walked with God.

Now, as I was reading back through the story of Noah again, I remembered that there's another verse later in the Bible that looks back on Noah's life and it gives us some commentary and it is so clear and so illuminating. I want to read this to you this morning. Hebrews 11 Verse seven. **“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7)**

Now, there are a few things in there that I want us to see this morning, three things that you can expect if you walk with God.

1) WALK WITH GOD AND GET A WARNING

Walk with God and get a warning. Look at the words there in that verse. I just read Hebrews 11 Verse seven, **“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen” (Hebrews 11:7A)** God warned Noah, God instructed him. God was talking to this man. How was he talking to him? We don't know. Did Noah hear an audible voice out of the sky? Did he have a vision? Did he have a dream in the night, did an angel appeared to him? We do not know, the story doesn't tell us. God has used all those things in the past to speak to people. We don't know how he spoke to Noah. But what we do know is that no one else was warned by God. No one else was walking with God the way Noah was, and no one else heard from God. But Noah was in that place. He was walking with God.

Psalm 25, verse 14, says, **“The secret counsel of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he reveals his covenant to them.” (Psalm 25:14)**

That word “covenant” is a solemn promise. Did you know that God makes solemn promises. And whenever you read the Bible, when you pick up God's word, it is full of God revealing himself and telling us his promises, things that he has said he will do. He's put his name behind those things, those promises that He will do.

Another man who walked with God was a man by the name of Abraham. In fact, he was known as the friend of God, that was actually the thing that was his epitaph. It says in the book of James, he was known as the friend of God. And when God was about to destroy the city of Sodom in his day because of its wickedness. Here's what God said in Genesis 18, verse 17, **“The Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,” (Genesis 18:17)**

And he told Abraham all about what was about to happen in Sodom, *“Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do.”* Why? Because God talks to his friends, because the secret counsel of the Lord is for those who fear him. Because God speaks and warns his friends, those who are walking with Him. Jesus said exactly the same thing. He was speaking to his closest band on Earth, those who are closest to him, and they were literally walking with Him day by day.

Jesus said this to them in John 15, verse 15, **“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:15)**

God speaks to his friends. It's a wonderful thing, I want to be a servant of the Lord, a good servant, but Oh, to be his friend. And Jesus said, that's possible that we can walk with him that way. God has shown us again and again and again, that he is ready, he is willing, he is able to speak to his people. If you will take the time to read the Bible today, he will speak to you. If you pray and call upon Him, He will have conversation with you.

So God spoke to Noah and he warned him about things to come. It says things not yet seen. Like I said, they didn't even know what rain was. And God just tells him to build an ark. Literally what God was telling him was "build me a big box, a really big box. It's going to take you 70 years, it's got to be that complex, but I want you to build me an ark.

Now a lot of people have ridiculed the whole story of the ark and the idea of a worldwide flood, but it's because people don't realize the facts. And every time you drive past a daycare and it's something to do with Noah's ark and you see a picture of a boat with a giraffe's head sticking out the side of it, that doesn't help. Because that's nothing like the ark that we read about in the Bible.

Did you know that it's not only the Bible that talks about a worldwide flood? In cultures all over the world, not Christian cultures, not even Judeo Christian cultures, in pagan cultures, in different religions. In cultures all over the world, there are ancient stories passed down of a great flood. Now they differ in the events, but there is some kind of collective memory in the human race of this terrible, catastrophic event.

But people ask, "How would that even be possible? Where did all the water come from to flood the whole world?" Well, listen very carefully to the Bible. Because the Bible says it didn't just rain, it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, it poured! But it also says the fountains of the deep were broken up. All of the subterranean reservoirs, and you know there's a lot of water down in the earth, and God released those waters.

Just think about our planet for a second, we're sending spacecraft out to go to places like Mars and elsewhere and putting down probes. We are searching for a single drop of water in our solar system somewhere else. We're looking for water anywhere because water is absolutely essential to life. But our planet, this only planet in our solar system, it's the one planet we've ever been seen like this in all of our telescopic journeys, we are called the Blue Planet. Almost three quarters of the Earth's surface is ocean, 71% of the Earth's surface is ocean. So we have all this water and there's water down below and God caused rain to fall.

And while we're talking about our planet, what about that fossil record that we have? This thin layer, a remarkable layer that doesn't get talked about enough. There's this whole layer all over the world, the fossil layer, fossils are not easily produced. If your dog dies, and you bury Fido in the backyard, what happens to Fido? Does he fossilize? No, he decomposes and he decomposes real quick. And that's what happens to most things that die in this world. They just decompose, right?

It's not natural or normal for something to become a fossil. It takes something extraordinary. It takes intense pressure or volcanic activity. And yet we have all across the earth this thin layer of fossils. It is a record of cataclysmic death. That's what it is. A worldwide flood also explains why you have fossils of saltwater squid in the Grand Canyon. How'd that happen? Because the Bible says there was a great flood.

Noah was walking with God and God warned him about this impending catastrophic judgment. Listen to what it says in the same chapter, Genesis six. But going back to verse five, it says, **“The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.” (Genesis 6:5-6)**

What a horrific, terrifying description of what humanity had come to in that time. Violent days, wicked days, those were the times in which Noah lived, but despite all of that, Noah walked with God, he lived a godly life in an ungodly world, and he was marked as different because of it. He stood out from the crowd.

Keep reading in those verses, verse seven. **“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.” But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.” (Genesis 6:7-8)** This relationship that he had with God, he found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was walking with God, he was a man of prayer, a man who communed with God, he tuned his ear to listen for God's word and so he was prepared.

But you can open up the pages of God's Word and he explains the history of the world. And he tells us what is coming. If you're not walking with God, it is terrifying. Things are only going to get worse. But if you are walking with Him, you have good news. Listen, there is an ark. God has a plan for his people, if you obey Him, and if you get in the ark, oh, there's a better world coming. I'm going to talk about that ark before we finish this morning. The ark that God has today. But if you obey Him, if you get in the ark, God knows all things coming. As he renews everything. Are you hearing God today? Walk with God and get a warning.

2) WALK WITH GOD AND GET WISDOM

Walk with God and get wisdom. Look again at that verse in Hebrews 11:7

“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7)

In reverent fear. Some translations say “Moved with godly fear.” That's the next phrase about him, moved with godly fear. Noah was moved with godly fear. Now that word fear doesn't mean that Noah was terrified of God. He was walking with God. And it doesn't mean that he was a crazy conspiracy theorist. I've seen some ideas of Noah that he must have been viewed as some crazy conspiracy theorist, afraid of everything. No, he wasn't afraid of everything. The word means that he had a reverential awe of God. He walked with God holding God in reverence.

Proverbs 9:10, you probably know this verse so well, **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” (Proverbs 9:10 CSB)** See the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of God go together. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

What wisdom Noah had first by walking with God was he had the wisdom to obey God. And then he had the wisdom to follow God's blueprint and build that amazing ark. I couldn't have built it not in a million years, you could give me all the plans you want. Noah spent seventy

years constructing this amazing ark. Why? Because God gave him the wisdom. God gave him all that he needed.

How would you like to have the wisdom of the Creator of the universe for you and your family as you go through 2024? In the next 331 days, how would you like to have the wisdom of God, the Creator of all things? You can! Because the Bible says this, **“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” (James 1:5)**

God is no respecter of persons. He doesn't look at you with fault. If you come to God sincerely and say, God, I want your wisdom. God will answer that prayer. It says that in James one verse five. But it begins with the fear of the Lord, it begins with honouring him. It begins with putting him first, you've got to walk with God.

Noah wasn't afraid of judgment. Noah wasn't afraid of floodwater. Noah had a reverence for God Himself, this man loved and he served God, and that delivered him. This is so important. The fear of God delivered him from the fear of everything and everyone else. When you really get to know God, there's no person who will ever make you afraid. There's no situation that could ever terrify you if you really know God. And this is Noah, he's not afraid of anything except he fears the Lord. All of those years, while Noah was building the ark, there was still no signs of the coming storm, none. For year after year, the skies are blue, the sun is shining, it's hot in that part of the world. People laughed at him. People mocked him, they scorned him.

In all those decades of preaching, Noah did not convert a single person outside his own family. Think of that. The Bible calls him a preacher of righteousness. He warned people about the coming judgment. But he didn't convert a single person except his own family. But think about this. Every person alive on planet earth today, in fact, every person right down through history since owes their life to the wisdom of Noah. He didn't have any response from his own generation, but every generation since has thanked God and should thank God that Noah was walking with the Lord.

3) WALK WITH GOD AND GET AWAY OUT

Walk with God and get away out. How many of you need a way out of some situation. You need a way out of something that's pressing in upon you. I tell you the answer is walking with God. Walk with the Lord; he will get you a way out. Look one more time at those words there in Hebrews 11 Verse 7:

“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household.” (Hebrews 11:7)

He prepared an ark for the saving of his household. He prepared this ark for the saving of his household. Because he got God's warning and God's wisdom, Noah stood between his family and the flood. And they were saved because he walked with God and God gave him a way of escape, that ark. God showed him how they would be saved.

Here's another question that that people often ask about the ark. They say *“How could all those animals fit on the ark? That seems ridiculous. How could all the animals in the world have representatives on that ark?”* Well, first of all, you have to read the Bible carefully and see the size and scale of the ark. This was a huge vessel and yet remarkably realistic compared to

the largest wooden ships of history. And its design was very, very buoyant. The proportions are very much like a modern cargo ship. What God told this man 1000s of years ago to build with, we don't know what tools he had. But he built this thing.

And then you've got to know about the animals. God told Noah to bring a number of every kind of animal. Now, there are more than 1 million species on planet Earth. But it's a mistake to think that they were all on the ark, because they didn't have to bring any fish on the ark. He didn't have to bring any kind of sea creature on the ark, he only took air breathing land animals, so that excludes sea creatures, insects, invertebrates. Of the land vertebrates that would need to come on the ark, there are around 33,000 named species, but you know, most of those species are derivatives of kinds. There are in fact, only 938 families or kinds of species on Earth. 938!

Noah had prepared an ark for the saving of his household. God saved the animals, Noah was worried about his wife and his three sons and three daughters in law. He prepared it for the saving of his household and God did so much more. Noah and his family went into that ark with the sounds of mocking in their ears, and they went in as a tiny minority in the world. But when they stepped out of that ark again, a year later, they were the absolute majority. Because Noah was walking with God. He had a way out. God provided it for him.

I believe the God has provided Christians with a way out over and over again when we walk with the Lord. So my challenge to you this morning is to walk with God for the remainder of this year. Every day this year, give yourself to this one priority, walking with God. Your job might be important to you, your possessions, I hope they're not that important to you. But you know, there are realities, we got to take care of those things. There's other stuff in our life that we think about, but make this your focus. I want to walk with God.

We are living in such tumultuous times. We're living in days that are so very much like the days that Noah lived in. And Jesus himself prophesied this. **Matthew 24:37 - 39** **“For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. [38] For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, [39] and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.”**

Do you hear what Jesus is saying there? Number one, he believed in Noah and the ark. He knew it was true. But he's saying this, coming to the world very soon, Noah Part 2, this great judgment is coming again, in a different way, this time, but judgment is coming to the world.

Now remember, we don't know how God spoke to Noah. There was no Bible yet so he couldn't have a Bible to read. But God spoke to him somehow. We are privileged beyond anything that Noah ever imagined. Because not only has God spoken clearly and exhaustively, but he has written it down for us. We have God's word, but that means we have all been warned. That God's warnings are within all of our reach. God has written it down and he does not lie. Just as Noah lived in godly fear, it is high time for every one of us to be serious about being people who walk with God. Number one priority, walk with God.

If you read 2 Peter chapter 3, it says that in the last days before Jesus returns, people will scoff at the idea of Jesus coming back just as they scoffed all those years that Noah was warning of the coming judgment because the skies look blue. But Peter warns, as he says, Look, God has said this, and God is never slack concerning a promise. He always completes what he has said, everything that the Bible has foretold He will do. And in that chapter in Second Peter chapter three, Peter talks about Noah and the flood and how it's just like the judgment that's coming.

Now look at verse 10. **“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. (2 Peter 3:10)**

God is going to destroy this world. People all around us talking about global warming, you're worried about global warming. Now wait till you see what God does to this planet. He's going to do more than warm it, he's going to destroy it completely and start all over. But let me tell you the good news today, you don't have to build an ark. It's not going to take you 70 years to get ready. God has already built one. He has built an ark and it's a far better ark and it wasn't just 70 years in the making. God was planning this from before the world began. This was an eternal plan that God had.

He's always had the blueprints for this ark. And do you know what the ark is? The ark is his son, it's the Lord Jesus who came and gave his life in our place, to wash away our sin. No matter how dark this society gets, the blood of Jesus is stronger than any sin and he will wash it away in your life if you walk with him. The moment you come to him and call upon the name of the Lord, he says in that moment, he will forgive your sin. He can because Jesus paid for it on the cross. He died your death so that you might live. Jesus is the ark of God and God's plan of salvation isn't just for two of every kind of animal and eight human beings, it's for all who will call upon him, his arms are wide open. He says “Come. Come, walk with me.”