

Leadership And The Covenants (Part Fourteen)

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I feel that the study that I made into the Flood and to Noah has been very helpful to me in a way that I never expected. I want to pass this on to you; it is nothing complex at all. Actually, it is something that is very supportive of our faith in God and His ways.

The Bible is God's Word, we all believe that, but have you marveled at the wisdom of its organization? This is what has really impressed me—the way it is put together, the order that everything is put in. To many who look at it, it is just a big book, a thick book with an awful lot of words in it. Maybe it does not seem to make any kind of orderly sense, but remember our God is highly organized and He put the Book together at *His* discretion, and He put it together especially for His children—those who have the Spirit of God and are able to perceive from that organization things that others do not see, and it will prove to them to be faith-building.

What you will begin to find out very clearly is that God has the same plan from the very beginning until the end of the Book. There is never any break from it and all the while that time is going on He is working out that purpose. People may not be aware, even His own children may not be aware for long periods of time, but when He begins to appear once again He is right on track with what He was doing before.

It has to be that way, if you will just understand that God depends upon us submitting to Him by faith. He will do things so that those who are of the faith will pick up the order and organization of what is going on, and their faith will be increased. They will not be confused by it.

This is something that has impressed me during this study regarding the Flood and Noah. The Bible is a very, very adequate teaching device, and in even this portion of the Bible, only up to chapter 9, He is revealing His patterns that never change. We will see this by the time this sermon is over.

He does this so that we do not get confused, “I am God, I change not.” The world on the other hand thinks that He goes back and forth. “Well, You save people by their works.” No, God has never, from the beginning, saved anybody by their works. It has always been by grace that we are saved. Right from day one, that has never changed. People say there are massive changes in the covenants. I find out that is not true. They put these things together with their own thinking on it. If somebody in the church reads those things it probably will confuse them because it does not fit with what they already know and understand.

God is the author of the Bible. I wonder if you have ever noted the fact that the Bible opens in Genesis 1 with God creating. There is a lesson there and it is a big lesson! Right from the beginning, He put this in right at the beginning, He did not say, “Now pay attention to this because I want this here for a reason.” But His children will begin to see that the reason is actually very simple and it is sustaining to our faith. The major point, to all of His children who are reading, is that *everything originates in Him*. Hang on to that.

So we see Him, at the very beginning, He is making things. What we understand is that He is refashioning and shaping the earth because it became damaged in the war between the demons and Him. He is beginning His spiritual creation and that is what is really important to us. Everything originates in Him. That is important. He first shows us in regard to physical things. This same principle goes over into the spiritual, and everything in the spiritual creation begins with Him. And I mean, *everything*. Nothing precedes our Creator.

We see God at the very beginning in Genesis 1—everything is new, in sparkling showroom condition, including Adam and Eve. They are given life by Him, and immediately they begin to act within and with what *God freely gave them*. Everything begins with God. He created Adam and Eve—that is their beginning. He gave them life, that is where life came from. All the things that He gave them to work with *He gave them* so that they could work with it. *He gave them* a mind, a fabulous tool to begin using what He gave

them so that they could begin to act and interact with what God created. What we see is what they produced does not improve what God gave them, but rather it begins to tarnish, and even destroy.

They had children and the one child killed another child, and the tarnishing destruction is increasing, so God appears again in the story and gives Eve a child (we are up to chapter 5 in the Book now.) God gave Eve a child to replace the one that was killed, and a new family line begins from that gift. That new family line came from God. He thought it out and He started it. This became the family line that produced David, Abraham, Noah, Jesus Christ. But it began in the mind of God and moved forward from that.

As the story continues, this new family line that originated in God's gifts to Eve (she named that gift Seth), and they produced much better works than the other line, the older line that came through Cain.

God makes a little adjustment. God raises up an outstanding leader giving him abilities. Pay careful attention. Where did the abilities come from? The abilities came from God. He gave them to this outstanding leader giving him abilities to frame to the original line that came from Canaan, so that they would be able to understand where their conduct was heading. God was beginning a witness to the world, as it were, as to where this was all going to end for them so that they did not go into their watery grave without having it revealed to them why they were going into their watery grave.

They had been warned. That is why God says way back in Romans that mankind is without excuse. That warning came from God. Everything begins with God. Why? Because He is the Creator. It is His creation, He is overseeing what is going on and we are driven, if we are thinking right, that everything from the very beginning has flowed from the mind of God through those that He has sanctified to work under Him. God has had the same plan from the beginning, all the way down and it will not end until Revelation 22 is over with.

I will go back just a little bit to pick up the flow. God raised up an outstanding leader, gave him ability to frame where this other line of peoples' conduct was leading them. He did, I am sure, in vivid terms that so that the other family line had no excuse for not knowing. What that leader—

Noah—referenced occurs and, just like we are watching a movie, an entire world disappears. Was God's failure? Not at all. But an entire world disappears, and this is what I want us to understand and carry in our minds, we are without excuse. He is making a witness to us that our flood is coming. Are you aware of that? He does not call it a flood, but it is, in a sense, a flood—a flood of evil.

We are only into the end of the chapter 8 of Genesis. Within nine chapters we have an overview of God's entire plan of salvation. All you have to do is fit the characters in. Noah is the Christ figure.

I want to conclude today the study of Noah and the Flood. I will do so with an overview as to why this particular study is of more than normal importance to us in our time. The first reason is because Jesus mentioned the Flood directly in His important end time prophecy given in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 as being in several ways a preview, a pattern, for the times that we now live in. The times that we are living in are patterned, previewed by the Flood. Therefore, because it is somewhat of a preview of Noah's conduct and accomplishments, it should become of special interest for us, because Noah's calling and his conduct of life in his relationship with God as God was preparing for the Flood, is a major example to us. Noah becomes the Bible's first great hero of faith.

Abel did something and it was notable, but he was nothing, in a way, compared to what Noah did, as we shall see.

We need to ask: what does God say in His evaluation of how Noah conducted himself? Should Noah be someone we should attempt to emulate? Consider a thing or two regarding him. There are reasons why the Bible is organized as it is. One reason is because Noah is a superior example of living by faith, especially taking into consideration what he and his family accomplished with the unusually difficult times he accomplished them in.

Consider these things about Noah and his family. People refer to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as being the fathers of Israel, thus they are dignified with a very high honor for being what people hold their reputation to be. We will make an evaluation of Noah, how does that compare with Noah literally being the father, not merely of Israel, but of all the Gentile nations as well.

He is *literally* their father, the father of all mankind. You think he should not be honored? That was not an accident. God chose that man to be the father of all of mankind following the devastation of the Flood.

Second, consider how much hinged on what Noah and his family accomplished. Did any of Israel's later greats spend one hundred and twenty years of their lifetime building a structure as Noah did with the ark? Abraham did nothing like that, Isaac did nothing like that, Jacob did nothing like that. Only Noah accomplished such a massive goal in his lifetime.

Here we come back into the picture again. What he built became the very means of the salvation of his family's lives. What he built was established at the same time by the Creator Himself, that all this while he was righteously faithful as well. God says that. Was Abraham righteously faithful for one hundred and twenty years? How about six hundred years. We are not talking about somebody who was a nobody. This was a real *titan of faith*.

How many others of these people did Israel hold to be great? I do not mean to take anything away. We are just comparing them with Noah. How many others of those people were preachers of righteousness at the same time? There is hardly anyone in the Bible who can hold a candle to this man in terms of spiritual accomplishments, yet his life for most people is just passed over. "Well, it just happened." No, it did not *just happen*. We are going to see how it happened in just a little bit.

I propose to you that this is a man to admire and follow, as it were. To be like him as someone who led, and follow.

Now here is an evaluation by God of Noah. It is not real complex but a simple evaluation.

Genesis 6:22 Thus Noah did; according to *all* that God commanded him, so he did.

What an evaluation from the Creator! I believe if there is a single verse that catches the essence of Noah's character and relationship with God, this is the one. Though there is not much in the way of detail given, it generally shows how he dealt with the times and the carrying out of his responsibilities. This

verse is not intended in any way to convey the idea that he was absolutely perfect in his conduct at all times and under every circumstance he faced, but considering the times that he lived in and the monumental size of the job that he was given to do, it was undoubtedly a monumentally, tumultuously, stressful time.

He was not Jesus Christ, but I believe that it is intended to convey an important truth. He was a very unusual person, he was one among billions, as a leader of a family, and leader of a responsibility to carry out.

What does this verse tell us? He was, in short, humble before God, dependable in carrying out responsibilities—he could be trusted, he could be relied upon to do what God says. The wording tends to indicate that he did not deviate and add his own thoughts about things in a sort of, “Well, here’s the way I see this matter.” He humbly did as he was told despite all of the social pressures against him, and he did what he did with class.

A conclusion can be easily reached by combining the literal pre-Flood record given in the Bible, with our daily news reports that clearly and strongly suggests that we are experiencing times similar to those just before the Flood, the kind that Noah did his work in. We are led to this clear and unavoidably conclusion. The lesson for us is: *what God did through the Flood proves that it did not solve the problems that reside in the hearts of mankind*. That is God's point.

That is a special lesson for us, because here we are, coming toward the end of this era, in a period of time that has very close similarities to the Flood times. We can look at the Flood, the things that Noah built and did, and still understand it did not solve the problem. That is the lesson for us. The only thing that solves the problem is conversion. God was not moving to convert the people at that time. That is the overall lesson. Despite all that Noah did, nobody was converted except for his family.

The Flood did clear the population of a vast number of trouble makers, by putting them death, but only conversion by God's generous grace as Noah and his family received, does change one’s heart and thus one’s conduct. Conversion by God is the solution that we are to look for as we go through our pre-Flood calling. That is the important thing for you and me.

What impact does that have on your mind and on your resolve to follow through on your calling? The emphasis is different for us than it was for Noah, as great as he was. In terms of conversion, it produced nothing, it did not solve the problem in people's hearts. We are in that period of time where the conversion has been given to us and it is going to be solved in us. Hopefully it is solved before the flood for our time comes.

In short, we are led to the conclusion, and we are not even through chapter 8 yet, that our salvation is to yield to God's guidance given in the story thread concerning Noah. Noah's attitude and conduct becomes our practical, *spiritual* guide.

Let me add one more thing here. Do not overlook that the church has become our ark—our spiritual ark. Here is a question to ask yourself: Are we helping to build the ark, or are we privately just watching others build it? We have our choice.

Genesis 7:1 Then the Lord said to Noah, “Come into the ark [In our time that might be our invitation into the church.], you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.”

Do you see what God did there? This clearly states the qualifications to safety is to meet the spiritual challenges that are before us, being brought into the ark (church). God takes care of those challenges that are beyond our control, as He did for Noah and his family. The flood in our day is on its way and as far as can be seen nothing will turn it aside, even as nothing turned aside the watery flood that Noah prepared for. The flood that is coming toward us, there is no indication that God is going to turn it aside either. In fact it is already named in the Bible, it is called the tribulation and the Day of the Lord. It is a spiritual flood.

Genesis 7:7 So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood.

See the analogy. The flood waters for us is the violence and sinful world that we live in, and it is increasing toward a place where it will take us away if we allow it to do so.

Genesis 7:5-7 And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. Noah was six hundred years old when the flood waters were on the earth. So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood.

Genesis 7:13 On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark.

Genesis 7:16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.

There is a pretty good indication that if we are in the ark when the flood really hits we will indeed be protected as Noah and his family were. Not from the waters of the flood, but from what is going on outside the ark, the spiritual ark of God, that is, the church.

Genesis 8:1 Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.

God sealed the door to protect them from the ravages of their flood. He did not forget that they were there, and if we are reading with understanding this verse here is given to reassure us should we get the opportunity to go to that place of safety, because God does not change His character. This is what is so reassuring to us.

We are not even through eight chapters yet, and the overview of the whole plan is being laid out for us, if we can just put in the spiritual reality where these physical types have been given to us for our understanding so that our faith is strong. If we believe God, we will know that because He does not change He will do the same thing with us that He did with Noah and his

family. Our safety as we can understand now is, to take care of the spiritual righteousness, God will then watch over us so that this flood does not get us.

I want to back away from the personality of Noah for a while to help us grasp with more understanding, what God 's sanctification of Noah should mean to us personally. To me this is so encouraging. I want this so that our gratitude to God, and our faith toward Him is significantly increased, because we share similar times with Noah and we can learn from him.

Genesis 6:6-8 And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Genesis 9:18-19 Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.

Here is an awesome truth. Only those who received grace in this context were also the only ones on earth who were set apart from the violent churning mass of humanity, and they were also the *only ones* who survived the Flood. Take notice of when this grace was received by them. Please turn to Genesis 6. The flood had not begun yet.

But first this thought: do you not think the grace that they received placed them into a favorable, in fact, considering what they had to go through, an enviable position? Do you have faith that God has put you in an enviable position by giving you grace to be able to understand what is being worked out here in this period of time that is similar to what Noah and his family went through?

I will tell you this. There is absolutely no question that it has put us in an enviable position, and thus grace, including its direct connection to

sanctification, becomes the starting point for encouraging, stimulating thoughts because this particular grace is given in the midst of a life-threatening situation.

The first thought is that as the Flood story unfolds, a devastating flood actually comes as God said it would, it becomes clear that Noah and his family were specifically sanctified for deliverance by our Creator *before* the Flood literally occurred. I want you to think about that—that was before they did any work on the ark.

Remember I told you right at the very beginning that one of the major things Genesis 1 tells us is that everything begins with God, including even the salvation of these people. He chose *them* to build the ark, He chose *them* to be the ones who lived through the Flood. He chose them, He sanctified their lives, and at least in type did it so that they live eternally.

Apply this to yourselves and the times we live in and what is happening all around us. We too have been sanctified like Noah and his family were. We have been, as I told you so many times, that Ephesians 1 and Romans 9 tells us that we are sanctified, called of God—specifically, individually. Let that warm the cockles of your heart or maybe to shake us. What a gift we have been given! What an enviable position we have been put into by our Creator. He expects us to follow through like Noah did.

We will go further with this story to show that whether you realize it or not, you are being equipped the same way that Noah was so that you can build your place in the ark. We have no excuse for failure. *Everything begins with God*. I will tell you, that rattled me. That He did that for me.

So the significant words that I gave to you are *specifically* and *before*. Specifically set apart to receive deliverance from certain death in the Flood. Please do not misunderstand. Turn to Philippians 2 to get pure clarification here.

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you. . .

Hang on to that! Do you think that God was not working in Noah, Mrs. Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth and wives? God was in them too! He gave them grace and gifts so that they could carry out their responsibilities, and that is what He is doing for us. He called us to a similar situation, where we are not building a literal ark, but the church is our ark, it is the means of our salvation under Jesus Christ and God expects us to work out our salvation in fear and trembling.

Philippians 2:13-16. . . both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world [In a little while later we are going to go back to Genesis and see that God said almost the same thing word for word to Noah.], holding fast the words of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

What is being worked out in our life is awesome, it is being worked through grace, grace is not a get out jail free, do nothing ticket to life.

This admonishment here in Philippians 2 is not written in the sense of working for salvation, but rather continue on with what you have begun. He called us, He gave us the job, that has already begun, and we have to carry through in our lives. We have to learn to be a witness before others of what we have received. That is what Noah did. He built the ark; that was his witness. And besides that he was a preacher of righteousness. He talked about God's way. How in the world could he have talked about God's way if he did not know it? He knew it because God had told him, even as He is telling you what His witness is, that He wants you to witness for in your life.

Noah and his family had to faithfully face the responsibilities which the grace given them enabled them to accomplish. They clearly built the ark, thus giving witness to those around them. They carried out their responsibilities because they lived by faith. In the midst of all this we do not want to lose track of this: they believed what God told them.

In like manner, as time and God's purpose has moved on, we now understand that we too have received grace and are, like Noah and his family, specifically sanctified by God for our calling into the church and salvation from what lies ahead. We too have not received a free ticket to everlasting life. We too bear responsibilities contained within our calling. We too must faithfully live God's way of life, glorifying Him by our life.

God knows how to deliver us out of temptation, but He will not necessarily draw us away from those temptations. We are already beginning to face them as time moves on toward Christ's return. What does this mean to us in a practical way?

Genesis 8:1 Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing [not just Noah], and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.

We must know that even while the devastation of the Flood was yet in progress God confirms that He remembered Noah. This is written as a reassurance to you and to me. Not Noah, he already experienced it. This is written for you and me now.

Despite circumstances I think we understand God never forgets anything. So why is this here? The marvel is not that God remembered; it is that *Noah* remembered. He never forgot where that grace came from, he never forgot the appreciation that he had witnessing what was going on through one hundred and twenty years of building the ark. How time consuming was that?

We do not know whether they had electric saws, drills, driving materials, we do not know what all they had but it took them one hundred and twenty years of building the ark. That could get old in a hurry, working on the same thing over and over and over again. Then after entering the ark the rains came, the fountains of the great deep erupted with gigantic earthquakes, spouting huge gushes of water with powerful force. He and his family were being pitched about in a tremendously boiling sea, and for a year and ten days they had to look at the same view—a tumultuous boiling sea—wondering whether they were ever going to tip over! How quickly it would be easy to lose your faith.

The amazing fact is that Noah remembered. The first thing he did upon leaving the ark was to sacrifice out of thanks to God. Like God, Noah had not forgotten either.

Do you see the test? When we look out into this world, where is our mind? Instead of looking at water there is a lot things out there that look pretty good to do. Should we really be involved in those things? Those are decisions, choices that we have to make. How time consuming are they? Are they things that draw us away from the calling that we have been given, the sanctification of our life? Do we remember as each day goes by to pray, give thanks to God, to serve our brethren, to glorify God in our lives?

We have something here that is good, something helpful. God is still right with them on the boat, if you understand what I mean. To keep encouraging them and to help them through as they bore the events that they were carrying out. And because He was there, they were saved. It was He who saved them on the ark, it will be He who saved us in our ark.

It begins to come clear that grace (remember that is what started everything, Genesis 6:8), given in the process of sanctification is the first step toward salvation. There is a simple, very clear, and true formula. We will not go through describing the entire process because I believe you clearly see the picture unfolding before you.

Ever-so-briefly, here is the summary. God's calling and sanctification is what directly leads us to Jesus Christ. Not merely to Him, but also to repentance, to justification by the blood of Jesus Christ. It leads us to baptism, the receiving of the Holy Spirit, the overcoming, the producing fruit, and glorifying God through living by faith, and finally resurrection.

That is a simple overview of the formula, and there is a lot of events that are within each and every one of those things. But they are directly tied to what I said at the very beginning, everything begins with God.

If you do not get anything else out of this sermon, understand that. This is so very important. (We will get to one reason why it is very important.) I just gave you a chain of events in our spiritual creation and it began with God deciding to call us. I want to repeat a statement concerning grace that I made

two sermons ago, “The expounding on grace is much needed because everything, and I mean *everything*, in God's plan of salvation for us hinges on God's loving and merciful generosity. Grace must be greatly appreciated in order to help establish and strengthen humility within us.”

Why would that be so important? Because it was through a lack of humility that God lost Satan. It was pride that destroyed him.

If there is any characteristic that I personally can point out to you that may be the most important one of all in our relationship with God, it is that we must be humble before Him. That was Noah's outstanding characteristic.

Whatever God said, he did. He did not argue with God, he just did it. He is going to be in God's Kingdom because he is a humble man. Even the Bible does not blow Noah's horn for him. He almost gets lost in all of the other great people out there. Noah did one of the greatest works ever done under God. It took him one hundred and twenty years for him and his family to do that. That was no little job at that time. He just kept pecking away at it and he got it done, because he was a humble man.

In its biblical usage the term “grace” essentially indicates either a freely given act by God in our behalf, or the gift itself. What we need to grasp and appreciate is that within God's spiritual purpose everything we have ultimately comes from Him as an enabling gift.

This next section of the sermon is also pretty important regarding our relationship with Him, that we understand it. Grace, or the gifts, are those things that enable us to carry out our responsibilities. That is all they are. God gives us the tools to work with. He is an employer. He puts us to work. He gives us the tools to do the job. That is what He did with Noah.

Gracious gifts that enable us to carry out our responsibilities. In blunt terms God's purpose is the increasing of His kind, the Godkind. He is the Creator and He is the model that He is following. “Let Us make man in Our image.” The Father and Son are the model that They are creating us in.

In order for us to become a completed product He must add to what we presently are. He is the manufacturer. He is producing a product. In order for us to be like Him He has to add things to us so that we become more like

Him. Like, if you are buying a car and you want to make it better, God adds a motor. You get the point? God adds something to us in order that we fit better into what He is producing in terms of His manufacturing plant. It might be kind of crass but logically it fits right in. But we have a very small part in His purpose by responding, using the gifting that He has added. He creates and He prods by mercifully gifting us.

Never forget for even one second that He is the Creator, we are the clay. In order for us to be in His image, in order for us to be enabled to respond by faith, He, our Creator, must gift us in order that we be empowered to fulfill our responsibilities.

I Corinthians 10:12-13 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation [no trial] has overtaken you. . .

After God calls us, after He sanctifies us, after He begins to give us gifts, what is He going to do? When He gives us a gift, He is going to test us in order to see that we are using the gifts in the right way. That we are producing the right thing.

I Corinthians 10:13 . . . except such as is common to man; but God is faithful [This is the important thing.], who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

We have to more fully understand that our Creator God is not in the business of making us *fail*. That is the last thing in the world He wants. He gives us gifts so that we will succeed, He does not give us gifts to trip us up and make us fail. He is *adding* to our abilities, He is *adding* to our beauty, He is *adding* to what we look like in terms of being more like Him when He gives us a gift to enable us. He does not want us to fail. He is a creator. He builds, and what He builds He must test to see whether it is working. Is this not common in business? That is what God does, too.

Have you ever heard of clay shaping itself into a thing of beauty? It just does not happen. It does not happen in manufacturing plants either. Engineers design something, they add it to the product, and then they test it to see whether or not it is working the way they have designed it to work.

Here we can reach a conclusion, another one that is important to remember. That grace, the gifts from God, the powers that enable us to do what is righteous, *always* precede what is righteous in terms of what His human creation can do. You got that? The gift always precedes what the gift produced. We cannot do something that we are not designed to do. Does that not make sense to you?

That is the way it is with manufactured products. We are a manufactured product. This is interesting. All the way back in Genesis, it says God created Eve from out of Adam. That word created literally means God *built* Eve. Just to put it in modern terminology, that is what it says. God built Eve. It sounds more spiritual, more biblical, to say God created Eve. There is nothing wrong with that but the literal word in Hebrew means that He built her.

I am trying to shape these things into concepts that we are familiar with from our world so that we see that the lessons are there, and what those lessons are. God is reproducing Himself. He is the model, and in order to bring us around to what He is, He has to give us things for us to use and practice with so that we have experience in being just like God. Remember the song? "I'm going to be like you dad." That is our goal, but before we can be like our Father, He has to give us the ability to do it, and that is what grace is.

One of the problems that we may have is that we apply grace only to salvation itself. But you see where I am leading. That is, that the grace begins at the very moment that God decides to sanctify us. Grace comes into play every step along the way until we are a finished product.

I was going to take you back to Noah and show you what God did with Noah. Noah was a righteous man. It also says he was a just man, it also says, he was a blameless man. Did God give him the grace before those things were ever accomplished? Absolutely not. Noah did not have it in him to produce the righteousness, be just, the faith, the blamelessness, he did not

have it as an unconverted man. What God did was He gave him grace in order that he would be converted and then he began to produce the kind of works that led to the salvation of him and his family through the Flood. You got it?

Noah was saved because of what God did. As great of a man he was—he was a faithful man, a humble man—but in order for him to do that God had to first equip him so that he would be enabled to do it, and the wonderful thing that Noah did was he believed God and did it. That is awesome! That is what God is aiming for with us.

Now it is easy for me to say these things. I can teach them to you, you can accept them, but just understand that does not mean that makes our path any easier.

God will gift us with what we need to carry out what He wants us to do. This is what Paul covers in I Corinthians 12. Everybody in the body receives gifts. Paul also says it all comes from the same Spirit. Do you know why it has to be that way? It has to be that way or there would be no uniformity. We have the same Spirit that God gave to Noah. Chew on that a while.