



Message **Transcript**

God's Dealing with Disobedience

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- Lord Jesus, we give you all the praise, glory and honor for who you are, and Lord, we thank you that no matter where we are in your word, when your word is faithfully proclaimed, Lord, that you have a word for us. We believe that you have a word for us today, and we ask that you would speak clearly and specifically to each one of us, who is listening, that we would believe what you say, and that by faith, we would put into practice what you show us, and that you would conform us more to the image of Christ Jesus. And now for all that are gathered, who desire to hear His word and be changed by our Savior, would you agree with me this morning by very loudly saying the word amen, amen.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- This morning, I wanna talk to you about God's discipline. Now, when we talk about discipline, it's often a painful subject to talk about, whether you've been on the receiving end of discipline or whether you've been on the administering end of discipline, discipline is not fun in any way. And most of us who can think of stories about when we've been disciplined, or if you're older, when you've been involved in disciplining someone else. And no matter what we talk about, when it comes to discipline, usually those are painful situations in our life, even if good came out of it. But it's important for us to know, how does God truly discipline? Does God truly discipline? What is He like? And the reason this topic is so important to discuss, is because everybody has an idea of what God's discipline or lack of discipline looks like. And normally, it is shaped by the people you've hung out with, the churches that you've been a part of, or who you've heard speak. There are some churches that preach only

on the love of God. God loves you. He loves you no matter what. Doesn't matter what you do. Sin all you want, God's still gonna love you, 'cause how can a loving God send anybody to hell. Love, love, love, it's all about love. Don't feel any guilt, just receive the love. Others of you grew up in environments and churches where you were scared-stiffless because you knew if you did one thing wrong, you are going to hell, right? Don't drink, don't smoke, don't shoot, don't play cards, don't watch rated R movies. Don't look at this, don't see that. Don't talk to them, don't do that. Read only from this version of the Bible, if you don't do it, you're going to hell. And God's mean, and He's upset and He's ready to come after you if you mess up just one time. And based upon who we've hung out with and who we've heard shape our thinking on the Word of God, we can get two very different pictures of God. But I wanna talk to you about God's overarching character today, and that's it this, it's His holiness. God is holy, which means he's completely loving, and God is completely just all at the same time. And what we wanna look at today is how does God discipline His people? What does it look like? Is it fair? Is it equitable? Does He actually do that? And to take a look at how God responds to that, we're gonna take a look in Genesis chapter six. I encourage you to open up God's Word, to Genesis chapter six, we're gonna attempt to make it through the entire chapter of Genesis six today, as we take a look at four ways that God disciplines and how He disciplines a disobedient world. And it's important for us to see from God's perspective, how He works, because it's important for us to know what to expect when it comes to our relationship with God. In Genesis six, right after we get through the genealogy, and how God raised up Noah through the line of Seth,

here's what we begin to read. It says, "Now it came about, "when men began to multiply on the face of the land, "and daughters were born to them that the Sons of God, "saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, "and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose." "Then the Lord said, "My spirit shall not strive with man forever, "because he is also flesh. "Nevertheless, his days shall be 120 years. "The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, "and also afterwards, "when the sons of God came into the daughters of men, "and they bore children to them. "Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown." Now, as it starts out here, is some really confusing passages. These first four verses, I would argue, may be the most difficult to interpret in the entire Old Testament. As a matter of fact, normally when I sit down to study for the week, and there's a troubling passage, I think, man, I'm really gonna nail this this week, I'm gonna get a bigger picture of Scripture. I probably studied the Nephilim for 20 plus hours this week, from multiple different commentaries. And let me just go on record of telling you who the Nephilim are. I don't know, okay? And we're gonna give some idea as to who they could be. And if you know you're in a minority, because even the best commentaries that I read, where they're making suggestions for who the Nephilim could be, will all end by saying, and I could be wrong, because these things are wrong with my theory as well. We just don't know. Now, what we do know is that Israel knew who the Nephilim were. I mean, they knew well enough that if they were to read that text, and "Oh, yeah, I know that Nephilim, "there are those minable, there're those giants. "We know where they come from and what they're about." We have a hard time diagnosing, but I wanna let you know this,

regardless of who they were, it doesn't change the tenor of the text. It doesn't change what God is trying to do. So let's walk through this, I'll give you some suggestions. You can work on this on your own. It's kind of a fun, profitable study. But when we get to heaven, one of the first questions we'll probably ask God is, who are the Nephilim? Like, how did they get here? What are they all about? So what we see in Genesis chapter six and verse one, "It came about when men began to multiply "in the face of the land and daughters were born to them." Which doesn't seem like a big deal, because God told us to be fruitful and multiply. So what's the big deal? It says that, "The sons of God saw that the daughters "of men were beautiful, and they took wives for themselves, "whomever they choose." That doesn't seem too troubling either, because guys see girls that are attracted and they get married all the time. Like, what's the big deal? It's only as we continue to work through the text, we see there's some problem here, because it was then that the Lord said, "My spirit shall not strive with man forever, "because he also is flesh. "Nevertheless, his days shall be 120 years." And then it says, "The Nephilim "were on the earth in those days, and also afterwards, "when the sons of God came into the daughters of men, "and they bore children to them. "Those were the mighty men who were of old men of renown." So whoever the Nephilim are, Nephilim means giants that, whoever these giants, these men of renown, whoever they were, we really don't have a strong clue as to where they came. Now, here's some theories just so that you understand. One of the theories is that the sons of God were angels. Sons of God, often in the Old Testament are used to describe angels. And so in this theory, what happened was that there were

angels that came and procreated with women and produced this super race, men of renown, giants, right? And all of this. There is evidence in the New Testament in Jude chapter six, where it says that angels left their abode, their place of dominion, if and only if it's talking about this section of scripture which we cannot be certain on, it could be that that is a plausible solution. The challenge to this is Jesus said in Matthew 22, when he was referring to marriage and the giving of marriage in heaven, he said, "There is no marriage "or giving of marriage in heaven "for we will be like the angels in heaven "who neither marry nor are given in marriage." So it seems as if the angels do not procreate according to the words of Jesus, or at least they don't procreate in heaven, and if they procreate on the earth, one of the challenges to that theory is this, notice what it says in verse four. It says, not only were the Nephilim here at this time, it says they were also there later, because it says in verse four, "And also afterwards." So the Nephilim were also pre-flood and post-flood, and we see in Numbers 13:33, when the 12 spies go into the land and Caleb and Joshua come back and they're the good spies and say, let's take the land. There were 10 spies it's better that gave a bad report, they spread a bad report. Those 10 spies, one of the things they say is we're like grasshoppers in their sight. We can't take them, they're too big, and by the way, we even saw the Nephilim there. Now we don't know, did they see the Nephilim there? The Bible says there were Nephilim after, or were they just making up that story? Like we don't know. That's why it's difficult to conclude that these were angels procreating with women, but that is a theory. Many scholars would hold, yup, that's what it is. Something a modified version of that theory, which I think may be a little closer to the

truth and they would say this, it wasn't that angels specifically procreated with women, it was fallen angels or demonic spirits that overtook men and they were multiplying these demonic kind of kids. I mean, and so you had these demonized men procreating with women and they were having families that were going against God and that set God off. Could be, may not be. Others say, why not just read the text in the plain way. We've been talking about the genealogy of Cain and Seth, clearly this text is just talking about the genealogies, that the Godly line of Seth started procreating with the ungodly line of Cain, and here's what happens, when you get Godly men and ungodly women, God told people all throughout the Old Testament don't intermarry with foreign wives, don't marry women that don't serve me, why? Because they'll have more of a negative influence on you than you will a positive influence on them, and their argument is this that the line of Seth intermarried with the line of Cain and they produce generations of evil after evil after evil. Here's the tough thing to know. Like how do we know that every single person in the line of Seth was Godly. I mean, people in the line of Seth died in the flood. So certainly not everybody in the line of Seth was Godly. So some people then take a mediating position of that, and it's talking about fallen mankind and men that were evil taking wives that were evil and then they were doing it. I mean, here's what we know. The Nephilim existed at that time and after, that's what we know, and whatever the cause here's what we had. We had the total breakdown of the family unit that was worshiping the Lord, that's what we had. So if you wanna spend time on this and I've spent 20 hours and I don't know that I'm further along than I was before I've done this, and I've studied this for years, we may not ever know on this side of heaven

who the Nephilim were. What we do know is that whoever the Nephilim were and whatever the outcome was that human beings were not walking after God and God was upset because people were not going after him the way that he wanted, and so when it comes to a disobedient world we first see this, that God limits his patience. God limits his patience. God sets a limit to his patience. Notice what he says in verse three. He says, "The Lord said my spirit "shall not strive with man forever "because he also is flesh, "nevertheless, his day shall be 120 years." Now some people think that means that people won't live longer than 120 years. That could be, but that's a difficult one to prove because Abraham was 175 and Isaac was 180 and Jacob was 147 when they died. So that doesn't seem to be what the text is saying. What the text seems to be saying is God is saying this, because of your wickedness and evil, which we're gonna see in this whole context I'm gonna give you 120 years to get right with me. I'm gonna bear with great patience for another 120 years before I send the flood on the earth, and here's what you need to know this morning. Well, God is completely just, He is exceptionally patient. Our God is exceptionally patient, He's patient. All throughout the scriptures we read about the patience of God. You can write these verses down and look them up later. 2nd Peter chapter three and verse nine we read about his patience. 2nd Peter chapter three and verse nine it says this, "The Lord is not slow about his promise "as some count slowness, "but is patient toward you "not wishing for any to perish, "but for all to come to repentance." You hear that? Why is God patient? Because he doesn't want anybody to have life without him. He doesn't want anybody to perish apart from him. What does he want? He wants all people to come to know him.

What is he? He is patient, he is long suffering, why? Because he loves his created beings, specifically His image bearers as men and women. He loves you, He loves you, He loves you, and the reason that God has not returned, the reason Jesus Christ has not returned to planet earth yet is he is bearing with great patience for all those who don't know him, and he's still waiting and enduring, and waiting and enduring and hopes that one thing would happen, that the whole world would worship him. He's patient, that's who our God is. We read this in other places. Paul talks about this not just Peter in 1st Timothy chapter one and verse 11. I'm sorry, 1st Timothy chapter one and verse 15 we read about Paul saying the same thing when he's describing his own personal testimony. 1st Timothy 1:15, he says "Here's a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance "that Christ Jesus came in the world to save sinners "among whom I am foremost of all." See Paul understood, I want you to do this for this morning. I mean, think about who the most evil wicked person is that you know, just think about that. You got it in your head? If you're not thinking about yourself you missed good theology. I mean, that's what Paul says. Of all people I know because I'm most acquainted with my sin, and yet there may be evil people out there, but when I see who I am and the patience God's given me I know I'm the worst of all, and he goes on to say this, "Yet, for this reason I found mercy "so that in me as the foremost, "Jesus Christ might demonstrate his perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. What's Paul saying? He's saying if God could save me, He could save you. What am I saying? If God can save me, He can save you. What should your testimony be? If God can save me, He can save you. I mean when we truly understand the

patience of God and who we've been from the time we're born and the ways in which we rebelled, either overtly or covertly, and by that, I mean, either in blatant sins that we've lived or in just prideful iniquity that we've had in our heart, thinking that we're better than everybody else. We've rebelled against God. And yet, what has God been? Patient, he's patient, he's patient. Paul says it again in Romans 2:4, he says, "Or do you think lightly of the riches of his kindness "and tolerance and patience, "knowing that the kindness of the Lord "leads you to repentance?" I mean, all throughout the scriptures, we see God's patience, he's patient, even when we talk about the fruit of the Spirit. Love, joy, peace, patience. We think patience is the opposite of impatient. Like, ah, I need more patience. Patience really means longsuffering. Patience is used, oftentimes, in the New Testament, as the word endurance. What has God done with us when it comes to salvation? He's endured with us for a long time. He's longsuffered with us for a long time. Now I don't know about you, but when I read marriage books and parenting books, sometimes, you can glean a few things, but it's really interesting, especially for the ones that write as if they're experts at marriage or experts at parenting, 'cause I've never met any experts at marriage or parenting. We're all in process together, but sometimes, when I read parenting books, there's this idea that there's this perfect way to raise kids, and you'll hear statements like this that sound really good. Delayed obedience is disobedience. If your kid delays at all, just punish them right away, 'cause that's what God would do. And I think to myself, have you ever read the Bible? Have you ever read the Old Testament? I mean, how long did God wait to mete out judgment? Long time,

sometimes hundreds of years. Here, he's gonna wait 120 years, because he's enduring with great patience before he brings judgment, but mark my words, and mark his words, judgment will come. Just because God is a God of patience doesn't mean that his judgment is not eminent. God is holy, so he knows he must punish sin. So he has a limit to his patience, and we don't know what that it is. See, some people feel as if God, one day, is gonna get really, really, really, really, really mad, I can't take it anymore, and he's gonna come back and destroy the world. No, God's already set a day in the future. He knows exactly when it's going to be. It's gonna be very measured, and it's gonna be very calculated and he's gonna be very strong in what he does, but he's already decided the day that it is, and no man knows the day or the hour, right, but we know it's coming, so there's limits to God's patience, so we can't just sit here and say, well, he's patient, I can do whatever I want. One day, I'll get right with God. There's a limit to it. God told Noah's generation, 120 years, and what's he gonna do in 120 years? He's gonna send a global, worldwide flood to destroy everything that breathes. That's what he's going to do. When's God coming again in the future? We don't know the exact day or hour, but know this, his patience will come to an end. He's going to endure, endure, endure, endure, until that's it. And some of you may remember, as kids, with your parent, or as, with a coach, or with a teacher, where you poked buttons, or you did something, am I the only one that did that? Right, where judgment's coming. It's over now, like there's no chance. That's what it's gonna be like when Jesus comes for the second time. There's limits to his patience. Psalm chapter 103 talks about this. Psalm 103:8-9, we read this. Psalm 103:8-9, you see the contrast

of what God is trying to say. It says this. "The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, "and abounding in loving-kindness," and we say, hey, man, I love that about God. He's so slow to anger, he abounds in loving-kindness, even when I mess up, he bears it with great patience, but notice what it says in the next verse. "He will not always strive with us, "nor will he keep his anger forever." There is a day where God will mete out his judgment on all mankind, in the same way that he did with Noah and his generation, he will do in our future generation, as well, to all who don't know him. Matthew 24:38-39, part of the Olivet Discourse, which we'll study when we do the book of Revelation, 'cause it pairs with Revelation better than any other passage in the New Testament. Notice what it says. It says, "For in those days, before the flood, "they were eating and drinking, "marrying and giving in marriage, "until that day that Noah entered the ark, "and they did not understand until the flood came "and took them all away. "So will the coming of the Son of Man be." What were they saying? Even though God gave them 120 years, 120 years, you got 120, I mean, God was clear, you can get this thing right, just come to me. Nobody except Noah and his wife, his three boys and their wives got right with God. Nobody. And what was going on the day that Noah entered the ark and the flood came? What was going on? Everybody's living their life as everything is good. They're getting married, there's wedding ceremonies, they're at the reception, they're getting ready for their honeymoon. I mean, everything's going on per normal, and God's ready to pour out his judgment. He said, that's exactly what's gonna happen in the coming kingdom, right? There's limits to God's patience, so what do we need to learn from this? That God will not strive with you forever. God

loves you with an unconditional love. He loves you, he created you, you're his image-bearer, and as much as you've wandered, he still bore, with great patience, in your life, but there's an end to that coming, and there's a time now, where you need to turn to him and give your heart to him, and give your life to him. That's what he was telling the people of Noah's days. He said, "My heart will not strive with you forever." He goes, "My Spirit shall not strive with you forever, "because you're also flesh, "nevertheless, his day shall be 120 years." God limits his patience with a disobedient world. So understand this. Yeah, God is completely patient, he's completely patient, he's longsuffered with each one of us, he longsuffers with you, he's still in patience mode with you. But guess what? There's coming a day where patience is over, and judgment is eminent. Second thing we can learn when it comes to a disobedient world, how God's gonna respond is that God laments the sin of his people. God laments the sin of his people. Notice what it says in verse 5. It says, "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man "was great on the Earth, and that every intent "of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Now here's why I enjoy seeing that verse in here, because for most of us, in our generation, here's what we'll say. If you watch the news or social media, here's what we'll say. The world is getting horrible. It's more and more evil by the day. I mean, do you see where this is going? Do you see where it's heading? God said, well, look back in the beginning. I mean, look back just a few hundred years after I created the world. "The wickedness of man was so great on the Earth "that every intent of the thoughts of his heart "was only evil continually." Where does evil begin? It doesn't begin outwardly. It begins in the heart. Everything that gets

fleshed out in your life as sin begins in your heart. Every evil thought that you have, every lustful thought that you have, it all begins in the heart. What was mankind thinking about in the days of Noah? Every single evil thought. Well, how often did they think about that? All the time, that's all they thought about. All they thought about was themselves, all they thought about was violence, all they thought about was getting ahead. All they thought about was this is my world, it's not God's, I'll do whatever I want, whenever I want, however I want, that's my life. That's when God looked at the whole world, that's what he saw. It was evil continually in the world. And God is able to see the heart of every single person, and so, notice what it says in verse 6. "The Lord was sorry that he had made man on the Earth, "and he was grieved in his heart." The Lord was sorry. Why'd I do this? Now, we've been studying the fact that God's eternal. So he always dwells in eternity past, he always dwells in eternity future, and he always dwells in the present. So how could he become sorry, like didn't he know this was gonna happen? Like, how can you be sorry about what you already know? What the scripture is revealing to us is how God's feeling in the present. God knew what was gonna happen. God's talking about his heart, because when God has a creation and God creates humankind, which is the crown of his creation, and humankind rebels against him, it grieves the heart of God. God is grieved when the human beings that he created, that he breathed the life into turn their back on him. God is grieved in his heart when people that he knows will only experience the fullness of life by worshiping him, worship something else in the world. It grieves God's heart. Here's what it tells me. God has feelings. It says in the book of Ezekiel, God takes no delight in the death of

the wicked. When the most wicked person on the planet dies, God is not up in heaven saying, "Yeah! I told you! "I'll show you. "You're gonna burn in hell." That's not our God, because why? 'Cause God created everyone. And sin is a perversion to what God intended. And even when evil people die, it breaks God's heart. God's desire would be that they had repented and trusted in him. Listen to me. God's desire for you is that you'd have a relationship with him. God does not hate you, God loves you, but God is just, and he's holy. It's who our God is. And this is what we see all throughout the scriptures. I don't know about you, but when I went into the ministry, about 30 years ago, 25, 30 years ago, I remember having a real hard time with the justice side of God, because all throughout the New Testament when you read about hell, it says, like eternal hell's as long as eternal life is. Like there's outer darkness, and these words kept coming to my mind all the time when I'd read the scripture, weeping and gnashing of teeth, weeping and gnashing of teeth, weeping and gnashing of teeth. I see anger, I see hurt, I see tears, I see all this, and I think God, you're gonna punish people forever? Like that was really hard for me to grasp, still a hard concept to grasp, honestly. It just happens to be true. And I remember wrestling with God and walking with him and saying, God, how can this be? And how can this be? And why would the people that you create, why would you send them off to hell, and just have them weep and gnash their teeth and be angry and weep and gnash their teeth and be angry? And I remember one time I was praying. I just heard the Lord kinda speak to my heart and say this. Jeff, I'm gonna weep, too. Now you might say, well, where in the Bible does it say that God weeps? I'm glad you ask, because it really doesn't

matter what God spoke to my heart, because if it doesn't align with scripture, it wasn't God, right? Do you remember when Jesus' best friend died, by the name of Lazarus, and Jesus gets to the tomb, and he sees Lazarus is dead, and he's all wrapped up, and he's been there for four days, and he sees his sister, Mary and Martha, and they're bawling, saying, "Jesus, if you had been here, "you could've done something," and what does he say? "I am the resurrection and the life." Yeah, yeah, we know, but four days ago, that would've been helpful. He goes, no, I am now. Do you believe this? And when Jesus sees all these people gathered, and sees his best friend dead, what does he do? The Bible says this, "Jesus wept." Why'd he weep? He knew Lazarus was dead before he got there. He knew sin killed people, but what? When Jesus saw the culmination of someone that he loved who had died, and saw that pain that it caused everybody else, what did he do? He wept, too, he wept, too. God takes no delight in the death of wicked people. God desires that they would turn and repent. God's not in up in heaven saying, "Man, when they die, when they die, "they'll know, they'll know." That's not the heart of God. The heart of God is a heart of love, that would want all people to come to a relationship with him and all people to know who he is. Right, but God loves us enough, he laments over our sin, because God knows with sin, he ultimately has to act. For those of you who are parents or coaches, or you lead in somewhere, you know there's times where you need to discipline or bring it. But there's this thing that can sometimes go off in your heart, like, I don't wanna deal with that now. I'm gonna let this one slide. It's just gonna cause too much, I don't want to deal with this right now. I'm too tired, I've had a long day. I don't want to get involved in

that, I don't want to... God doesn't have that option because God is holy, so he has to deal with injustice all the time. And we know that to be true, just as human beings. As the illustration goes, that you've heard many times, I mean, if one of your best friends or your spouse or one of your kids were brutally attacked and murdered and the person that did that came before the trial, before the judge and the judge said, "How do you plead?" and he said, "Guilty, I did it, I know I did it," and he said, "Do you have anything to say for yourself?" He's like, "Yeah, I shouldn't have done it, "I was having a bad day. "If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't have done it." If the judge were to say, "Well, thanks, don't do it again, you're free to go," everything inside of our heart would say, that's not fair. That's not right, he can't just kill him and get away with it. And the same is true of you. You can't rebel against an eternal, holy God and get away with it. Every single one of you will stand before the face of Jesus, and you're not getting away with anything. God knows all your sin and your sin will find you out. That's what the Bible teaches. And God laments the sin of his people. It breaks God's heart when you sin, because God knows you don't have to sin. But now that you've chosen to sin, you distance yourself from the Lord. You're living for yourself, and it grieves God's heart because it's not what he created you to be, and it's not what he created you to do. And God is grieved over our sin, and some of you may have heard this statement growing up. I know I did. This is gonna hurt me more than it's gonna hurt you. I always thought that was a stupid statement then, I think it's a stupid statement now. But the point is, God can say it and mean it, right? God knows, it hurts God to discipline us. He has to because he loves us. It's who he is. Now you might ask the

question, well then, why did God create the whole world anyway? We've been over this. I mean, God was self-sustaining. God was pleased in himself. He could've kept it from not creating a world. We said, he could've said no world, I'm not creating a world. He could have said no morals, I don't want a moral world. Just do whatever you want, whatever's good for you is good for you, or he could've created a world where there was no choice. I'm just gonna make you do what I want you to do all the time, and that way, I'll never be surprised when you do something wrong, 'cause you're always gonna do what I said, 'cause I programmed you to do that. But instead, God created a world that was moral, and that had choice, because that's the only world that there could be love. And that world showed how God could love us, and that world also showed us how we can love God back, all right God weeps over our sin because He knows how much He loves us, and He knows our sin is only killing us and hurting us even when we think our sin is fun, it's really taking us away from being our best for God. God weeps over our sin. God limits his patience. He laments over our sin. Lord does this. "He lavishes His favor on the righteous." God lavishes His favor on the righteous. Notice in verse seven, the Lord said, "I will blot out man, whom I have created from the face "of the land, from the animals to creeping things "and to birds in the sky, "for I am sorry that I have made them." This is grieving my heart. Notice verse eight. "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. I mean, that's a great verse. God lavishes His favor on those whose hearts are rightly related to Him. You can write this verse down, it comes out of 2 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles 16:9. It says, "For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro" "throughout the Earth that He may strongly

support those "whose heart is completely His." What is God doing? God can look down and see a whole world that's wicked, and what's He doing? He's looking He's peering around, He's trying to find "Who wants Me? "Whose heart is Mine? "Who can I strengthen? "Who can I favor? Who can I come behind?" God is always looking. So even in the midst of a crooked, and depraved, and messed up, and wicked and evil world, what is God looking for? He's looking for men and women and boys and girls who say, "God, I want you. "I wanna have a relationship with you. "I wanna live my life for you." And God notices that. We see it all throughout the New Testament. You know, the woman who was caught in a bleeding condition that touches the hem of Jesus' garment while everybody's touching him. And Jesus can distinguish between a touch of faith and just a bunch of people bumping into Him. Jesus can see the heart of everybody. God lavishes favor on the righteous, He looks for them, He searches for those. And righteousness is what God wants us to live. Now here's the challenge that we have. For many of us church has just become a place to get saved and let me just tell you this. Knowing the Lord, Jesus, that He died for our sins according to the scriptures, that He was buried, and that He was raised according to scriptures is foundational to everything else that we teach, and it is central to everything else that we teach. And I'm not playing it down, I'm saying we need to do more evangelism not less evangelism. We need to tell more people about Jesus not less people about Jesus. But when you're born again, that's the beginning not the end. When you are freed from the penalty of sin, when you surrender your life to Christ, that's the beginning, it's not the end. God wants to free you from the penalty of sin. But, you

know what else He wants to do? He wants to free you from the power of sin as well. He wants to free you from the power of sin and that happens when you walk with Christ. Notice verse nine in Genesis chapter 6. "Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." It says, "These are the records of the generations of Noah. "Noah was a righteous man blameless in his time." Watch this, watch this. "Noah walked with God. "Noah walked with God." Have you heard that anywhere else before? Think back to Genesis 5:24 about his ancestor, Enoch. "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him". What does it mean to walk with God? Galatians 2:6 says, "So, in the same way you receive Christ as Lord, "so also walk in Him." The Christian faith is not just about being saved so that you can go live however you want. The Christian faith is about being saved, so you can be indwelt by the Holy Spirit and walk with Him. Walk with Him. Now in our family, if you saw my family from time to time, if we were at the airport and Kim and I were together, and we were walking because we needed to be somewhere on time, you would see me walk ahead of my wife. That would not be that uncommon. Anytime we're time is involved and urgency's involved, I'm usually ahead of my wife. Now, if it's fun that's involved, if we're on vacation and we're like at Disney World or something like that, you would notice that my wife is ahead of me, and I'm just tagging along, having fun with my wife. But if you saw my wife and I and we go on a date and we go on a hike, you'd see us walking together. See, God wants us to walk with Him. He doesn't wanna walk out in front of us and He doesn't wanna lag behind us, He wants us to walk with Him. Now what's a walk? Now watch, it's not complicated, it's just this, one step and then another step and then another step, and

then another step. That's how we walk with God. It means this, no matter where you are in your life, you bring God into that equation because here's what the enemy tries to do. If you're steeped in sin, and you're listening to my voice right now, and you're uncomfortable 'cause, "Why did I even come to church, "I'm feeling so much conviction." That's a chance for you to call it the Lord and say, "God, I know You still love me, "and thanks for the conviction, "I wanna walk with You through this." Or if you're living in a time where you're spiritually doing well instead of, "God, I don't need You anymore, "I'll walk ahead of You now." Instead of letting pride come before the fall, you're like, "Lord, thanks for where you brought me. "Lord. I wanna walk this season with you." Or if you're just kind of in mediocre land, it's just not great not bad, "God, I just wanna invite You into this situation. "God, I want to invite You into that situation. "God, I want You to invite you in this." Why? Because God wants your heart in every way. How did God notice Noah? Because Noah wanted to walk with Him every single day. Noah's heart was, "God whatever you have for me, that's what I want. "God, what should I do? "Lord, I'm living in a nation and I'm living in a world "where everybody's completely deprived." Can you picture that? Your barber's depraved, your banker's depraved, your attorney's depraved, your coach is depraved, every one of your neighbors is depraved. Everywhere you go, they're only evil thinking everything evil. You think you got it bad? He didn't have any breaks other than when he got home. But what was he doing? He's saying, "God, this day and every day, I wanna walk with You. The challenge that we have many times as Christians is we think that once we're born again, that's the end, it's only the beginning. What does that mean?

What do I mean by that? God wants you to walk with Him. It means when you're saved all your sins are completely forgiven from that moment on. The Bible says no one can snatch you out of His hand. When you've trusted in Christ and you've exchanged your sin for His life you belong to Him and nobody can take you out of His hand. However, that's just the beginning. God not only wants to free you from the penalty of sin he wants to free you from the power of sin. Which means in all of our lives there are still things that are not fully aligned with God for the rest of our life. And so what does God want? He wants us to walk with Him. So as we get closer to His holiness He shows us the areas of our life that we need to change. And when He shows us what we need to change it's not so that we go changing them. "Okay, I'm an angry person. "I'll work on that. "Yeah, probably drink too much. "I'll work on that. "Yeah, I shouldn't be an addict. "I'll work on it." It's not about you working on it. It's about you repenting and turning to Christ because you can't fix it. It's about you saying to the Lord, I can't be freed from this chain, but I know You can free me from this chain cause I know when You died on the cross all my sin was forgiven and You came to destroy the works of the devil. So I can't change myself, Jesus I know you can and I'm coming after you. Until you break this, I'm hanging with you. And as Christians, we should see that over and over and over and over again that never stops on this side of heaven. He not only wants to free you from the penalty of sin, but the power of sin, which means this; there's nothing in your life, there's no sin in your life, that you are destined to repeat. You don't have to. Well, the devil made me do it. No, you chose it. Well, I don't really like that sin. Yeah, you do or you wouldn't do it. Well, I'm stuck in it. Yes you are, but Jesus can free you

from it, right? And so as Christians, instead of trying to hide our sin and work on it, God wants us to bring it into the light and confess it forsake it so that he can cleanse us and grow us, right? And then ultimately not only do you want to be released from the penalty and the power of sin, but ultimately we're going to be released from the presence of sin, glory, Hallelujah. I mean, there's a day coming when you will not have any sin on the inside, on the outside, nobody that you know will have sin and you'll be in the presence of God forever and ever, Amen. That's going to be a glorious day, Amen? But until that comes, God wants you to be righteous. Now, what does it mean to be righteous? It doesn't mean you practicing new behaviors. The Bible declares this, that when you trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, you're declared righteous. You're justified. God sees you at just as if you've never sinned. God sees you as if you've always been righteous. That's how he looks at you. So how could he see me like that 'cause I know my past? He knows it too, but through his son that's how he sees you. That's who you are. That's your new identity and being a new creation. And he lavishes his favor on you when you go after him and living out the righteousness that he gives you is so important. A few years ago, my grandma died at the age of 104. I remember when she turned a hundred, she still had all of her capacity. She was still walking around. I was asking her a question and grandma I'm like, why do you think it is that you're still in great health and you're a hundred years old and she didn't even bat an eye she goes "Righteous living." I'm like, okay grandma, good way to go, grandma, right? There's something that God favors about those who want him. There's something we see in the Bible when the Lord was with him. The

Lord was with him. The Lord was with him, why? 'Cause he was living out the righteous life that God had declared that they were. You have the opportunity. If you're a believer, you don't have to continue to sin. If you're a believer you can confess and forsake sin. And if you're not a believer, God's patience is so great with you that you can give your life to Christ at any time. And you can turn from your sin and turn to Christ and exchange your sin for his life and glory, Hallelujah. Right? But understand this about our God. He lavishes favor on the righteous ones. Noah walked with God. Verse 10 says he became the father of three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. We'll be talking about them in the coming weeks. It says verses 11 and 12 are really a reflection of verse five. It says, "now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God. And the earth was filled with violence. God looked on the earth and behold it was corrupt for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth." None know how many of you are artists. I certainly would not include myself in that category, but perhaps there's something you've created before. Maybe it was some artistic piece. Maybe it was some paper that you wrote. Maybe it was something that you worked really hard on in the garage. Maybe there's something that you've done. Imagine doing all that hard work and getting ready to present it or finish it only to have it destroyed. How would you feel? God created this perfect world. He created a perfect planet to be inhabited by people who were sinless. And now what's God watching. He's watching the image bearers that he created to worship him who would be most fulfilled and satisfied in him, live their own way and destroy the very world that he created for them. Except for one guy and one family. And what does he do? He lavishes his favor on that individual. Let me

tell you this in our world many times, we're like, where's God and where's he at? If you will walk out the righteousness he has for you, you can experience God in the midst of the depraved world. I mean the good news is God hasn't gone anywhere. The good news is Jesus Christ is always now and ever will be on his throne forever and ever, Amen. That's who we worship. And God wants you to know, don't look around the world. He's saying, look to me because I will lavish favor on my righteous ones. And then finally, when it comes to a disobedient world or a sinful world, God always leads a remnant away from his wrath. God always leads a remnant away from his wrath.

Notice what he says to Noah in verse 13, "then God said to Noah." He's not speaking to anybody else on the earth. He's speaking to Noah. "The end of all flesh has come before me and the earth is filled with violence because of them and behold, I am about to destroy the earth." So he provides a provision for Noah. What's gonna be Noah's provision to be delivered or saved from God's coming wrath? Here's what it is; "make for yourself an Ark of gopher wood. You shall make the Ark with rooms and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you shall make it. The length of the ark should be 300 cubits, its breadth, 50 cubits and its height 30 cubits. You shall make a window for the ark and finish it to a cubit from the top and set the door of the ark in the side of it. You shall make it with a lower second and third decks. Behold, I am bringing a flood of water upon the earth to destroy all flesh with which is the breath of life from under heaven. Everything that is on the earth will perish." What does he tell Noah? Here's your provision, build an ark. A specific ark, an ark of gopher wood. He gives him the exact cubits. A cubit is really the length on a man's arm between his elbow and his

middle finger, about 18 inches. So how long is this ark? It's 450 feet long, it's 75 feet wide and it's 45 feet high. I have not had the privilege to go to the ark exhibit in Cincinnati, Ohio, but I'm looking forward to the day. Some of you will probably be there and seen it looking forward to seeing that someday. Huge, I mean a football field, a hundred yards, that's 300 feet. This was 450 feet is a football field and a half long, right? This is 75 feet wide. This is 45 feet tall. Why does God tell him to do that? Because that's God's plan for Noah. That's how Noah is going to avoid wrath because God's gonna pour out his wrath in the world. What's he gonna do? He's gonna send a global flood. Now, it's really interesting because the very next verse, God tells Noah what he's going to do after he sends the flood. And we're going to see it played out later. It says in verse 18, "but I will establish my covenant with you. And you shall enter the Ark, you and your sons and your wife and your sons wives with you. And every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the Ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female of all the birds after their kind and of all the animals after their kind of every creeping thing on the ground after its kind. Two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive." We'll see in verse seven, where he's gonna take seven pairs of clean animals, we'll explain that next time. "As for you, take for yourself some of all the food which is edible, and gather it to yourself, and it shall be for food, for you, and for them. Now, before we read the next verse, just think about this. Noah's the only person walking with the Lord. Here's what God tells him. "I'm about ready to unleash a global flood." Noah doesn't know what a global flood is. Never seen a global flood. I've never seen a global flood. Noah may likely have never

even seen it rain. I mean, and God tells him to do what? Build an arc out of a specific kind of wood to specific measurements, and then God's gonna bring the animals he wants to Noah. He has to load 'em all up, then God's gonna shut the door, and they'll be safe. What would you do? What would you say? Gopher wood? For real? I mean, what's gopher wood? Hey, where am I gonna get tools? I mean, Home Depot and Lowe's, I mean, they're not even open yet. I mean, my kids aren't very good builders, I mean, where am I gonna get the help? I mean, you're giving us 120 years, I don't even know if I can get it done in 120 years. I mean, he could complain, he could whine, he could say, "Why a boat? Can it be even smaller? I mean, do I need to build it that big?" Notice what Noah says. Then Noah did, according to all that God had commanded him, so he did. I mean, he did it. All that God commanded him? He did it. What's the Bible trying to say? When God said, "This is my provision," he said, "Done. I'll do exactly what you say. I'll do it any way that you want. This is what you wanna do? That's what I'll do." And what's God gonna do? He's gonna bring a global flood. Now, this is important, because he's gonna establish his covenant with Noah after the flood, and tell him he's never gonna flood the world again. Some people are like, "Yeah, it wasn't a global flood, it was a local flood." If it was a local flood and God promised, "I'll never send another local flood," then God's a liar, because in every generation, and every seems like every year, there's a flood somewhere. This was a global flood! We're gonna take a look at the flood the next time we get into Genesis. You're gonna see what happened when the world, the entire world, was flooded in a way that it had never been flooded before, and in a way that God promised it will never be flooded

again. And God made a covenant to Noah, "I'm destroying everything, but I'm gonna save you, and I'm gonna save your wife, and I'm gonna save your three boys, and I'm gonna save their three wives. That's what I'm gonna do." And Noah doesn't question God. See, we have people that when God provides provision for us, we want it another way. God says he knows the way of the righteous in Psalm 1:6, but the way of wicked will what? Perish. God wants all people to come to the knowledge of him, but there's a limit to his mercy. There's a limit to his patience. There's gonna come a time where God is going to pour out his judgment on the world, and even though he laments the sin of his people and pours his favor on the righteous, God's leading a remnant away. He's always lead a remnant away. There is a remnant in the Noah story. There's a remnant in the Elijah story in "1 Kings" 19, where Elijah and 7,000 that hadn't bowed their knee Baal are still living for God, and there's a remnant in the "New Testament" as well. If I were to ask you, "How many people in our world are really, truly saved, born again believers?" What would be your answer? It's tough to know exactly, but I know the percentage is not high. I mean, every study that I've seen of people that truly believe that Jesus is the way of the truth and the life, that he's the only way to the father, that all apart from Jesus will perish eternally, that God's word is completely true, that he was born of a virgin, that he lived the perfect life and fulfill the law, that he died on the cross and rose from the dead, and in him and him alone is life and life in his name, and what percent of the world actually believes that? Every study I've seen says seven to 11%. I don't know. I don't see the heart of every human being. I don't know. It's a smaller percentage. I mean, Jesus told us that there would be a remnant that

would be saved. Here's what he says in Matthew chapter seven, 13 and 14. He says, "Enter through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it, for the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are a few who find it." Now, I don't know many means, and I don't know exactly what few means in terms of numerically, but few is a lot smaller than many. There are more people on their way to hell than there are on their way to heaven, and it is not because God is unloving, and it is not because God does not have a desire to have a relationship with everybody. It is because in man's sinful state, they refuse to turn and repent. That's why Romans 1:20 says that men will be without excuse. God would desire that all would be saved, and all come to a knowledge of him. That's who our God is. He's merciful and he's gracious, but he's saving a remnant, which means if you're still alive and you're breathing and you haven't trusted Jesus, he's giving you great patience, and I'm telling you, you don't wanna wait any longer. Because when he comes, you will not have time. You will not have time to wait. God made the promise in "John" 3:16, that he'll still loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him would not perish, but would have eternal life. It tells us, in "Romans" 6:23, that the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus. It's as if God, through the scriptures, is screaming at us, telling us, "Hey. I know you failed, and I know you're sinful, and I know all that, but I love you enough to redeem you. I love you enough to purchase you. I love you enough to buy you back. Will you repent and give your life to me? Will you change your sin for my life? Will you come after me? I want to give you my life. Please, please,

please, please, please!" But yet, God gives us the choice. He allows it to be your choice, but you need to understand that when God comes back, and when he came the first time, I mean, we celebrated Christmas, Jesus, meek and mild in a manger. He's the one that created the heavens and the Earth. He's the one that rained down fire at Sodom and Gomorrah. I mean, he came in humility. He grew in humility. He allowed people to pull his beard out. He allowed people to smack him. He allowed people to punch him in the face. He allowed people to put a crown of thorns on his head. He allowed people to beat him on the back. He allowed people to pin him to a cross. He allowed people to mock him and spit on him, and, in obedience to his father, he allowed all the sin of humanity to be poured upon him, and he took that to the grave, but he rose in victory. He's alive as he's ever been. He's been offering life to all humanity. He's sitting at the right hand of God, the father almighty, and when he comes back, make no mistake about it, he will come back in judgment and it will be swift. You will not have time to repent when he comes back. I mean, when I read through the "Old Testament" scriptures, like in "Isaiah" 63, where Jesus has gone out in the day of the Lord and started meeting out judgment, and people are asking, "Why is your garment red? Like, what's going on?" And Jesus is like, "Well, I've been to Eden and I've been to Bozrah, and I've been stomping on my enemies, and their blood has come up and sprinkled my white raiment." And I read, in "Revelations" 19, when he brings all of the church back with him to establish his millennial reign on planet Earth, what is his robe dipped in? It's dipped in blood. Why? Because while Jesus is full of love and his love never changes, he's also fully just because he's holy, holy, holy, and He will meet out

judgment against those who have not trusted in Him. That's why, when you get to Revelations 6, and the Kings of the Earth are calling out to the rocks, "Come fall on us, hide us. "It would be better to be crushed by a rock, "than to see the Glory of God. "Kill us." For those of you who feel terror in your sin, you know if you stood before The Lord today, He would say, "Depart from me, worker of iniquity, for I never knew you." I have really good news for you. It's not too late. Jesus Christ loves you with an unconditional love. He cares for you. He's been bearing with great patience. He created you. You're His image bearer. He loves you. He wants a relationship with you. It involves you turning from your sin, and turning to Christ. It involves you saying, I don't wanna live for myself anymore. I wanna live for God. And when you realize that God has a limit to His patience, that He's given you grace, then you'll say like the Scriptures say, "If you hear the Lord's voice today, "do not harden your heart." You'll hear that He laments your sin, but He still loves you anyway. 'Cause He's an incredible God of love. He's wants to lavish his favor upon you by making you righteous, not because of good deeds you've done, but because of who He is. And he wants you to be part of the remnant that He's gonna take to be with Him forever. That's who you are. He's the Great I Am. And He loves you. Which means this: If you're hearing my voice today, and you've never trusted Christ, today is your day to come home. Today's your day to give your life to Christ. I'm not asking if you prayed a prayer of salvation. I mean I find that most people that have gone to church and grew up in a Christian school pray that like 480 times. I'm asking, have you ever given your heart and life to Jesus Christ? And if you have, then how has God been nudging you today, where maybe you know Him, but

you haven't been walkin' with Him. Maybe you've been walkin' ahead of Him. Maybe you've been laggin' behind. And He's sayin' right where you're at, today, I wanna walk with you, walk with me. See that's what God wants for each and every one of us.

Amen? Would you stand as we pray? Lord Jesus, we give you praise for who you are, and Lord, it's tough to preach on your judgment. It's tough to preach on your discipline. But Lord, you are a loving, patient, good God. If you're listening to my voice today, and you know that Jesus Christ is not the Lord of your life, but you're convicted of your sin, and you want Him to be, here's how you can pray: Jesus, I know I'm a sinner. I know I'm separated from you. But I believe you died on the cross for all my sins, that you were raised from the dead in glory, and right now, I invite you to come into my life. I wanna turn from my deadness, and my sin. I wanna exchange that for the life that you offer. I want the eternal life of Christ in me. Give me that life. And Lord, for all those who are responding to you, we give you glory, honor, and praise. And for those of you who are Christians today, say I got that one, I know for sure if I died today, 100% sure I'm going to heaven. Lord, show us where we're not walking with you. Show us the area of our life that we're like, oh I'll deal with that later, or, I'm workin' on that. Lord, invade our hearts in a way where you can be the great I Am for every area of our life. Lord of all sinners, we would admit individually, we're the worst, 'cause we're most acquainted with ourselves. And yet, by your grace, Lord, we've been made alive for your great name. Honor yourself as we sing glory, honor, and praise to you. In Jesus' name, amen.