

98-07-19a

For our scripture reading this morning, as we continue our worship, turn with me to 1 Peter chapter 3. 1 Peter chapter 3. As we see Noah and his family emerge from the ark this morning, we find that Peter has that episode in mind as an illustration of a principle that he is covering in his first epistle. And our reading for this morning begins in verse 13 of 1 Peter 3. In the New King James, this section is titled, Godly living before the world for righteousness sake. 1 Peter 3.13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you are blessed.

And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. Which is a quote from Isaiah. Verse 15.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, having a good conscience so that when they defame you as evil doers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better if it is the will of God to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.

By whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who formerly were disobedient when once the divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared in which a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us, baptism. Not the removal of filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to him.

Now upon a first reading of this section, we immediately arrive at the conclusion that we need to read it again because the thought doesn't seem to follow in a nice, even, understandable way. In what way is the death of Christ and his suffering once for sins illustrated in the flood story? Why does this come to Peter's mind under the influence of the Holy Spirit as he writes this letter? He has been talking about opposition, the challenges of life, specifically those that come from people suffering for righteousness sake. You're doing what's right, you're living in a way that pleases God, but people are unhappy with you.

They don't think you're operating correctly. They think you need to change. They think you need to do something differently.

They accuse you of being evil in some cases. They construe your righteousness as evil. Does this happen to us at all today? If we pursue the plan of God as we understand it

from the word of truth, do we find ourselves even amongst our own brethren in Christ accused of failure, accused of being incomplete, accused of not doing what we should? Well, of course, that is true.

There's a big push today to define Christianity in terms of ministry. If you're not ministering, you're not living the life that God has called us to. While that seems valid on the surface, God has called us to love.

People make all kinds of scriptural arguments. If you're not exhibiting love, you must not be fulfilling the commands of Christ. There is a more central truth that is overlooked, and that's what Peter is focusing on here.

No one can harm you if you become a follower of what is good. Now, we don't think that. We think that the opinions and the comments and the attitudes of those around us will harm us, and we get concerned, and we want to correct those.

We want to defend ourselves. We want to explain ourselves. We want to establish our own validity.

This is a big term today, validate. We want validation. When I think of validation, I think of getting out of the parking garage without having to pay cash.

That, to me, is validation. But it's a psychological term now that means that you fall into the I'm okay, you're okay category. But Peter says, stop worrying about what people say and what people think about your life before God.

If you are a follower of what is good, who is he that is going to harm you? If you are pleasing God, if God finds you righteous, if God finds you blameless, if God finds you walking with Him, you can picture this like Noah walking with God, Enoch walking with God. Who do you think is going to run up and do any harm to you while you're at God's side, when you're in God's favor and in the realm of God's blessing? Can someone overcome God? Can someone shove God out of the way and do harm? Well, obviously they cannot. But we have to remind ourselves of that because we unconsciously begin to feel pressure.

We begin to feel the disapproving attitudes of those around us because we are attempting to live in the light of the Word of God. Others do not understand that path and therefore criticize it. Who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good, even if you should suffer for righteousness sake? You say, well, I have suffered harm.

I've been ostracized or I've been cut off from communication or I've been talked about and my reputation has been damaged. I've been abused and belittled in the eyes of people. When you think about the actual suffering for righteousness sake that some have endured in generations where there was physical persecution, imprisonment and

execution for the faith, the fact that someone doesn't like us so much anymore seems very insignificant.

But for us, sometimes that can be a real pressure. It can be a real factor in life. Even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you are blessed.

Even if you suffer, you're blessed. How can we maintain joy? How can we maintain peace under persecution, under suffering? How can we, as we endure and forbear, maintain a happy attitude? By recognizing this fact. Even when this takes place, we are blessed.

Do not be afraid of their threats. This literally means, do not be afeared by their fear. People are putting something out there to try to make you fearful, to try to make you uncertain, to try to make you insecure.

Don't be afeared by what they fear. And in a sense, this can be something that they're afraid of. They are afraid of poor reputation.

They're afraid of not being accepted. They're afraid of not having some form of righteousness. And so they put that out and try to put that on you.

This is my fear and I'm going to share it with you. Don't be afeared with the fear that they put forward, whether it's their own fear or a fear that they try to instill in you. I've seen, and I don't understand, somebody will need to explain to me what the origin of this is, but sometimes when you get behind some of the newer Chevrolet trucks, the little pickup trucks, it has a little sticker in the back window and it says, fear this.

I don't get that. I don't know what that means. But that's what people try to say in the Christian life.

Fear this. Fear my disapproval. Fear my talking about you behind your back.

Fear my opinion that you're unproductive and not pleasing to God. My judgment is that you're lacking in some respect. You should be afraid.

Peter says, don't be. Don't be afraid. Don't let anyone instill fear in you with their fear.

Do not be troubled. Same thing Jesus told the disciples on the night before he was crucified. Let not your heart be troubled.

Believe in God. Believe in me. Put your faith.

Focus your attention in the right direction. And Peter echoes that thought in verse 15. Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.

Set him apart. Meditate on him. Put him in his place.

We can sanctify people in our hearts. We can think, well, this person is high in my

estimation. They're up there in the Christian world or they're up there in somebody's estimation.

Their opinion counts. Peter says, no. Put Christ in his place.

Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you the reason for the hope that is in you. This means that we have a responsibility to understand our faith.

One of the things that has happened in our particular strand of Christian thinking and practice, our tradition, if you will. It's been called different things. I'm not sure how accurate those labels are.

But many of us in groups and churches and having a history of strong focus on the Word of God naturally have also come to appreciate those who bring it. The pastors and teachers who spend their time and their spiritual gift and function is to communicate the Word of God. And they acquire an authority in our mind.

We say, well, this teacher who has been accurate in so many places in Scripture says that this is the way things are. This is the way things should be. This is what the Bible says.

And we start to rest our understanding of Scripture on what pastor so-and-so says or what doctor so-and-so says or what this author says. And we begin to rest our confidence that these things are so on the person who communicated it. Peter says, you need to know the basis for what you believe at first hand.

You don't want to be standing at the judgment seat of Christ defending your priorities and your understanding of the Christian life on what your pastor said or on what some guy on tape said or what someone on the radio or someone in a book said. Or, you know, I went to the seminar and these were the seven steps they said to follow. God is not going to accept any footnotes in our answering for our thoughts and our deeds at the judgment seat.

The only reference that he will accept is his own word. So we have to know what our faith rests on and what our hope rests on. Be ready always to defend your hope.

And it is not a valid defense to say, well, you know, my pastor says so-and-so down in such-and-such a city at such-and-such a church says. That's insufficient. It doesn't carry authority.

The words of a man depend on how well he did his work. The word of God depends on God himself and isn't subject to question in terms of authority. Not only that, but if you are speaking the truth to someone in love, you want, when you speak, you want your speech to be beneficial.

You want the things that you say to be meaningful and hopefully be a source of blessing and encouragement and perhaps a source of challenge and correction. We can speak the truth to one another in love, but we speak the truth. The word of God is what has the power, not three points that were made by a human communicator.

If you're going to speak, if you're going to defend your faith, speak the word of truth. That's what is alive and powerful. That's what the Holy Spirit can use in the soul of that fellow human being or that fellow believer to make a difference.

Referencing what somebody said doesn't carry the power that the word of God, which is living and abiding, has. So Peter says, be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you. Notice he doesn't say, go forth and publish your defense.

Force your defense of your hope on others. Stop passerbys. Shove it into their hands in the form of a pamphlet.

Accost them in the streets. Stick your nose into their business. Bring it up in conversation.

When is it that this defense of your faith and your hope is given? When they ask. If they're not asking, don't push. Peter understands this.

Now, Peter is the man of initiative, isn't he? He is the first one to strip to the waist and jump into the water. He's the one to rush in where angels fear to tread. But Peter, by this time, has learned this lesson.

Be ready to give an answer when they ask. If they're not asking, you're wasting your time pushing an answer at someone who doesn't have a question. Bill Gaither recently has written a song about this very idea.

He says, I don't want to be writing songs to answer questions that nobody's even asking anyhow. If people aren't asking, don't push the answer. You're wasting your time.

And this is the principle Jesus taught in the parable of the pearls and the swine. Remember that? We covered it not too long ago in our study of the parables. One of the interesting things we noted in that connection is that Jesus said, if you cast your pearls before the swine, they will turn and gore you.

They will turn and tear you to pieces. And the fact that that verb there, to turn, is present, means that the hogs were going a different direction. The swine were leaving you.

And you're casting the pearls in front of them. They're not looking at you. They're not coming to you for anything.

They're going a different direction. You're saying, wait, let me get your attention. Let me

give you these pearls.

And you're throwing the pearls in front of the swine. And that just annoys them. They weren't looking for pearls.

And so they turn to see where the pearls are coming from and come back and tear the casket of pearls to pieces. Jesus said, don't do that. Do not cast your pearls before swine.

They will turn and tear you to pieces. So we have to be careful. There is the gift of evangelism.

There is a time and a place for all of us to do the work of an evangelist, to share the good news of Jesus Christ and what he has done. But it is done with discernment. It's done when you sense that someone is seeking.

When someone comes to you and asks a leading question, and someone asked me the other day, out of a clear blue sky, I was in the middle of working on a computer, and someone came up and said, is there any physical evidence that Jesus was really here and really died on the cross? Well, that's a question that indicates that someone is thinking about Christ and figures you must know something about him and wants some information. Is there something there that can be convincing to me? That's a suggestion. That, in a way, is someone asking, why are you so confident? How can you put your trust in Christ? I'm not aware of any physical evidence.

What convinces you? That's what's behind that question. That's an opportunity. That's an opening where you can carefully and gently and in love communicate truth.

But when we start angling and pressuring and trying to push truth at people who aren't asking, we're wasting our time and theirs. Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Squaring ourselves away with God always comes before trying to square others away who are in our periphery.

Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. That's the priority. Then be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you why you have the hope that you have.

What is the reason for the hope that is in you? You're not prepared, even if someone asks good questions and indicates that they have a desire. If you haven't sanctified the Lord God in your heart, you're not the person to give them the answers. You're going to make them two-fold the child of hell that you yourself are, which is what the Pharisees did.

The people who were questing for God, the Pharisees took them and diverted them into error. Be ready to give a defense with meekness and fear. Not, let me be your mentor, let me disciple you, let me show you the way, let me do the work of an apostle.

The apostles were commissioned to be examples. That's why Paul can say, follow my example. We are not apostles.

There is no warrant anywhere in scripture for us to say, let me be your mentor, follow my example, let me disciple you. This whole discipleship, mentoring, accountability movement in Christianity is a huge exercise in subjectivity. We claim to be helping someone grow in Christ, and we in fact are getting their eyes on people.

That is a distraction. If someone wants to put their eyes on Christ, they have the word of God, they have God the Holy Spirit, they don't need us saying, let me be your mentor, let me be your priest, let me hold you accountable to me, let me ask you questions, have you had lustful thoughts about your secretary this week? This goes on every day. There are morning prayer meetings and little discipleship sessions every day in this city, and this is what people do.

They poke their nose into each other's lives, they cause people to lie and deceive and wonder what they're going to be asked tomorrow. It's a huge, terrible evil that is done in the name of Christ. Do these things with meekness and fear.

If you find yourself with the opportunity to communicate the truth to others, be meek. Be fearful. Because you are treading on ground where the Holy Spirit is at work.

You are invoking the word of God with its power and with its life-giving strength, and it is a time for humility and it's a time to recognize what place God has with his word and his spirit, and what place we have as earthen vessels in which that treasure can be conveyed. The same thing is true, of course, for us who have a regular obligation to communicate the word of truth. Some of us are not all that meek and not all that fearful when we communicate, and we will answer to God for that failure as well.

Having a good conscience. Not feeling guilty. Not feeling oppressed or troubled.

How can you have a good conscience? You find this over in Hebrews chapter 10. Our hearts having been sprinkled from an evil conscience. It's the application of the blood of Christ.

If you go before God and acknowledge those things that you know to be sin before him, that's the sprinkling, that's the sanctification of our hearts. The sprinkling of blood was symbolic of the remission of sin. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission.

And the invoking of the blood of Christ when we acknowledge our sins. If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. And he does that in the spiritual sense through the blood of Christ.

We have a good conscience. And it's based on God's estimate. We talked about this on Friday night.

It's not man's measure by which we establish our confidence. It's God's measure. If God says you're righteous, you're righteous.

Nobody's going to go up to him and say, excuse me God, but I think you've overlooked something here. Let me tell you what real righteousness is. This person isn't out there doing certain things that are a part of my measure of righteousness.

Have you thought about this God? No one is going to dare do that at the judgment seat. But they often dare do it today to our shame. Having a good conscience so that when they defame you as evil doers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

They may not be ashamed now, but they are certainly going to be ashamed when all things are revealed. The things that are done in secret will be made manifest. The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

And people who threw rocks at the righteous are going to be exceedingly ashamed. Will there be shame at the judgment seat of Christ? Yes, there will. And this is one of the passages that tell us so.

And also the basis for it. Being busy judging others instead of looking to ourselves to see if we are in the faith. We don't want to do that to others and we should not let others do that to us.

We're going to see a very strong teaching on that subject from Paul in Colossians as we move forward. Paul says, do not let others construe your good as evil. Don't let that have an impact in your mind.

They will be ashamed. It is better if it is the will of God to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. And many of those who think they are doing good are in fact doing evil.

And they are going to suffer in a much more significant way than we might in this short life. Then he goes on in verse 18. Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.

What is the purpose of Christ's suffering on the cross for us? What's the purpose? Does it say to deliver us from the lake of fire? It's the positive side that is stressed so often in scripture. Why did Christ die? To bring us to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive by the spirit.

And he went and preached to the spirits in prison who formerly were disobedient when the divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah. What is that all about? Are these the people who were washed away in the flood? The more you think about that idea, which is very common, the less sense it makes. The whole reason God judged them is that they had the message, those human beings, they had the message of God's will and God's

righteousness and rejected it.

And the thinking in their hearts was only evil continually. That's why they were judged. That's why they all died.

So why would Jesus go back to these people who have already had the message and rejected it and try to present it again? Is it like, well, now that they've died, they'll listen better and maybe they'll accept it this time? It doesn't make any sense. Do other people get that same chance? You die as an unbeliever, you die as a reprobate believer, and now Jesus will come and preach to you and maybe he'll respond this time? It's not a scriptural concept. What is a scriptural concept is what we've already seen in Genesis chapter 6. There were angelic or heavenly creatures who were sent here to administer the human race who were disobedient in the days before the flood, in the days while Noah was constructing the ark.

They perished in the flood and were not of human origin but were of heavenly origin. They have been imprisoned for their disobedience. We've seen the other passages related to this.

And Jesus Christ went and preached to them after his resurrection. There are many who think that he preached between his death and his resurrection. But that misconstrues the whole idea of death and resurrection.

If you're not dead while you're dead, then what do you need a resurrection for? The sequence here is significant in that regard. When you look at verses 18 and verse 19, he was put to death in the flesh but he was made alive by the Spirit. And by that same Spirit, he went and preached to the spirits in prison.

The Spirit made him alive and then he went and preached. We know that there was an interval of many days from the resurrection until the ascension. And Jesus Christ did a lot of preaching.

He appeared to the disciples several times. He appeared to upwards of 500. He also appeared to these disobedient angels and communicated that they are in prison.

They're in chains of darkness. They didn't see his victory on the cross. They didn't see the resolution of the whole issue between God and the angels as well as God and mankind.

Jesus went and communicated this to them. And that's a subject unto itself. But it is apparent that these angels have a different issue with God than Satan and his demons.

And it is, as I said, a completely separate subject. But why does Peter bring that up here? He's talking about suffering for righteousness sake. He's talking about disobedience and being wrongfully accused and so forth.

He gets into the death of Christ, which is the ultimate illustration of that. And yet it is through Christ's death that the gospel, the good news, is preached. There's good news that because of Christ's death, deliverance is possible.

And it is something that is not only related to us, but also related to all of God's creation, whether it is the inanimate creation, the animal and plant world that is under a curse because of our transgression, and even the angelic hosts. Everything is reconciled to God in Christ. He has put all things under his feet.

He has reconciled all things to himself. The scripture says, whether in heaven or in earth. And that in heaven has meaning.

And that's a subject we'll take up when we get a little further in Colossians. Suffice it to say here that when we get to verse 21, this is an illustration of that which now saves us. Baptism.

Not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. The idea of water baptism is not that the water baptism in itself delivers us. And this salvation here is not salvation from the lake of fire.

This is deliverance. Deliverance in time. Deliverance from the persecution of others.

Deliverance from the threats and the fear and the disapproval and everything that he's been talking about in the context. The context here is not salvation, is it? The context is, as a believer, suffering for righteousness sake. How are you delivered in that suffering? Noah, who was already a believer, who already had a covenant relationship with God.

Who walked with God. Who was righteous and blameless before God. He was delivered through a time of judgment.

A time of death for everyone around him. How was he saved? He was saved through water. The water came down and that water was a water of judgment.

It was also a water of deliverance. The water that drowned the disobedient lifted the ark and preserved it. There is an anti-type which now delivers us.

Baptism. Not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. This is what Peter learned in the upper room when Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

Remember the removal of the flesh of the body? Jesus stripped of the waste and got the water and began washing their feet. Peter said, No, Lord, don't wash my feet. You're not going to wash my feet.

Jesus said, If I don't wash your feet, you have no part with me. You have no inheritance with me. Peter said, Well, then, if that's the case, wash me all over.

Jesus said, No. Those who have had a bath don't need another one. There's one bath and that's all it takes.

After that, you just need your feet washed. It's a picture, of course, of the forgiveness of sins. The bath is salvation.

The foot washing is the ongoing need for confession and cleansing as we come before God and acknowledge our failures and our transgressions. It is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Baptism delivers us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now, wait a minute. I thought that I was saved by the death of Jesus Christ. I thought it was His death on the cross that saved me.

Well, it was. So, why is Peter talking about deliverance through the resurrection of Christ here? It's a different kind of deliverance, isn't it? The salvation that brings us into relationship with Jesus Christ, that deliverance that makes us believers and enters us into union with Him, is accomplished by Christ's death. Redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation are accomplished by His death.

So, what is this deliverance that is accomplished through His resurrection? Well, this is a fascinating area to get into because if you look back in this book, go back to 1 Peter 1, verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. What is that living hope? Is it, I won't go to the lake of fire? Well, he tells us in verse 4. It is to an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for deliverance, ready to be revealed in the last time. This is what you greatly rejoice in, Peter says in verse 6, even though now for a little while, if need be, you are grieved by various trials.

What is it that sustains us? What is it that gives us perspective so that we maintain our peace and our joy as we endure, as we bear up under these things in life? It is the hope, the living hope that Jesus gave us. Now, the hope that we have of salvation, of life with God in eternity and not going to the lake of fire, that's what God gave us through the death of Christ. What we have through the resurrection of Christ, that hope is the inheritance.

It is the incorruptible, undefiled reward and blessing in the millennium and in eternity future that comes and is reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith. Can you be a believer and not be kept by the power of God? Can you be a faithless believer? Yes, you can, and many of us are. And we're not kept.

What does it mean to be kept? It means to be guarded, to be preserved. We can get ourselves far away from God as believers and the preserving, protecting, blessing power

of God no longer applies. These are the Israelites that dropped in the wilderness.

This is the subject of Hebrews. Turn with me to Hebrews chapter 6. That ground in verse 8 of Hebrews 6 that bears thorns and briars is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you.

Yes, things that accompany deliverance, even though we now speak. God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name in that you have ministered to the saints and do minister. Are we talking about salvation here? He says, we're confident of better things of you because there is fruit in your life that indicates that you're living by faith.

Your love for the saints is evidence of your faith. And people say, well, this is perseverance of the saints. This is salvation.

Not at all. It's confusing apples and oranges. It's confusing deliverance from the lake of fire from deliverance in time.

We desire that each of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. These promises are inherited through faith and patience. If you lack faith, if you lack patience, you don't inherit the promises.

It doesn't mean you're not saved. It means that that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away is not going to be reserved in heaven for you. This is a choice we make as believers.

This is what is available to us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Remember recently when we were in Romans chapter 6? You might turn back there. Romans chapter 6. And you say, boy, we're sure getting far away from Noah.

We're not really. I feel like Perry Mason again. This will all link together, Your Honor.

Look at Romans chapter 6 where once again we have the issue of baptism introduced. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? He's talking to believers now, right? We're already saved, but should we continue in sin so that God's grace can continue to abound to us? If it's abounded to us a little bit, then the more we sin, the more grace. He says, may it never be.

How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? We who have died to sin are already believers. Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? That's what happened at the point of salvation. We're identified with Christ in His death.

He died. We died. Death cancels out the condemnation, cancels out the impossibility of

ever living in eternity with God.

Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death so that... There's a purpose for this. Now we're moving forward from salvation to where we need to be as believers. So that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should do what? Walk in newness of life.

Walking is an activity. It's something that takes place over time. It isn't something that happens at a point.

It doesn't say so that we should stand on high forever. It says so that we should walk in newness of life. The reason we're identified with Christ in His death is to save us in the eternal sense.

Save us from the lake of fire. The reason we're identified with Christ in His resurrection is that just as the life He lives, He lives to God, we too can walk in newness of life. We're saved for a purpose.

If we've been united together in the likeness of His death, if we are believers, verse 5 of Romans 6, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him so that... Here's another one of those purpose clauses. So that the body of sin might be done away with that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

How is that manifested in evidence? It's in our life. Are we still enslaved to sin? Are we still caught up in the things of the world? Are we living our life to God? He who has died has been freed from sin. Verse 8, now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.

Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. This is our link, believe it or not, to Genesis chapter 7 and chapter 8. Christ, having been raised, dies no more. There's one great death that Christ died, and He doesn't die again.

It happens once, and it never happens again. That judgment has taken place. The call now is, in the light of that death, and having been resurrected from it, to walk in newness of life.

That's the call. You don't have to go back and be saved again. Now the challenge is live.

The death that He died in verse 10, He died to sin once for all. Did you ever wonder why there's such an emphasis on Christ dying once for all? Did you ever wonder why it's so terrible in Hebrews that He says these in chapter 6 who fall away, it's impossible to renew them to repentance because they crucify to themselves again and again the Son of God. They keep going back and crucifying Christ all over again.

They go back to the sacrifices. They go back to the things that foreshadowed His death. Instead of living life to God the way that He does, dwelling on the death of Christ is a mistake.

We are to dwell on the resurrection of Christ. It's the power of His resurrection that counts. He died for a purpose.

We're identified with His death for a purpose. We don't stop at the cross. Once again you think, boy that's a very tenuous and extended link back to Noah.

We're going to pause and take our break. When we come back we're going to see how closely these ideas are related. And we're going to get a great insight into why we have what we have in Genesis chapter 8. So let's pause here and take a break.