

I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY CHOICES

Genesis 6:1-18

INTRODUCTION:

A. Have you noticed that we have become specialists at shirking responsibility & blaming others for our actions?

- If I overextend myself financially, it's not my fault, it's the fault of easy credit.
- If I get lung cancer, it isn't my fault that I chose to begin smoking, it's the fault of the tobacco company.
- If a man in a rage shoots & kills his neighbor, it's isn't his fault, it's the gun manufacturer's.
- If a drunk driver goes the wrong way on the highway, hits a school bus, & a number of people are killed, the Ford Motor Company is sued for making an unsafe bus.
- We've even got "no fault" divorces now, so that if a marriage doesn't work out, no one has to take the blame.
- And people aren't guilty of perverted behavior anymore - it's in their genes.

B. We blame heredity, environment, chemical imbalance, temporary insanity, job pressures, poverty, prejudice, & abuse.

- Now certainly those things can contribute to who we are, & can cause problems for us, but we have taken it to an extreme that says that no one is accountable for their behavior anymore.

C. The Bible makes it very clear that we are responsible for our choices.

- Romans 14:12 tells us that "everyone will give an account of himself to God."
- And that's what we need to learn today from the account of Noah & the Ark.
- This is not just an account of a man & some animals who survived a massive flood.
- It is a story of man's accountability to His Creator.
- It is a story about God's judgment for sin & His provision of salvation through grace.
- It is a story that explains to us in very certain terms that there are choices to be made, & that we will be held responsible for those choices.

Transition: Let's explore together the choice of the world, the choice of the righteous, & the choice of God

- & while we are exploring we will learn three life principles that will help us on our own spiritual journey.

1st...

1. THE CHOICE OF THE WORLD AROUND ME

- READ vss. 1-7; 11-12

- I don't know if you noticed, but this sounds very contemporary to me.

- Let's consider the similarities between the world of old & today's world.

A. 1st, Disregard for the sanctity of marriage

- We are informed that marriage was taking place between the sons of God & the daughters of men.
- There are several possible interpretations as to exactly who these two groups of people consisted of, but most likely the "sons of God" were from the godly line of Seth's household, & the "daughters of men" were from the ungodly line of Cain's.
- There are other possibilities, but one thing is obvious: these people had disregarded God's guidelines for marriage.
- They were not taking seriously the instructions that God had given to them.
- Let me stop for just a minute to say the Bible has nothing against interracial marriage -- that's not what we're dealing with here.
- The problem was that spiritual people were marrying unspiritual people.
- Some of you find yourselves in that kind of relationship right now, & although you love your spouses, you understand the difficulties involved & why God has set down the guidelines that he has.
- Paul makes it very clear in 1 Cor. 7:13ff that if you are married to a non-Christian you should stay in that relationship.
- But he also makes it very clear in vs. 39 that all marriages should be "in the Lord"
- Let's make this real simple: if you are single & looking to get married, don't date or consider anyone but another Christian.
- If you are already married & are a Christian but your spouse is not, do not divorce him/her, but be the best wife/husband you can be in that relationship.
- Okay, now back to the issue at hand.
- Our disregard for the sanctity of marriage is just as great as in the days of Noah, if not even greater.
- Many people want to try out the merchandise for a while before they commit.
- They'll live together & then make a real commitment later.

- On the other hand, many people get married w/o even considering what they are obligating themselves to.

- They look at the whole thing as if it's just a trial run.

- Any attitude toward marriage that does not include the commitment & unconditional love & appreciation for each other that God demands is a disregard for the sanctity of marriage.

B. 2nd, An Inclination towards evil

- Vs. 5 makes it clear that the people in Noah's day had hearts that were filled w/evil thoughts.

- Is it any different today?

[- Erma Bombeck observed, "We live in a strange society where we make documentaries of serial killers, movie idols out of organized crime members, authors out of political crooks, & role models out of criminals who beat the system. ... I don't know when crime went from being news to entertainment, but somehow it's made the transition."

- The easiest way to judge where our culture is at morally is to pay attention to the Arts -- what are they singing, writing, acting, & painting in our generation?

- What are Marilyn Manson, Snoop Doggy Dog, & TLC singing about?

- What is on your TV set this week that you wouldn't mind sitting down & watching w/Jesus as your guest?

- The world of Noah is our world -- it is just dressed up in modern technology.

C. 3rd, Filled with Violence

- God had created a world of peace & harmony.

- But it had turned into a world so filled w/violence that God made the decision to destroy it.

- I don't think I need to give you statistics to convince you of the violence in our world - read the paper - watch the news - open your front door, & you'll be able to see it for yourself.

Transition: Well, there is something we can learn from this:

- PRINCIPLE #1: I AM ACCOUNTABLE TO AN ABSOLUTE STANDARD OF MORALITY REGARDLESS OF PUBLIC OPINION

- As believers in Christ we do not measure right & wrong by a 51% majority.

- We don't make decisions based on what everyone else is or is not doing.

- We are the people of God, & we are well aware that God doesn't grade on the curve -- 99.9% of the people of Noah's day were wrong & they drowned in the flood.

- God's standard does not change based on the public opinion polls.

- He has given us an absolute standard of truth in His Son, Jesus Christ.

- (John 14:6) "I am the way & the truth & the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. -- AN ABSOLUTE STANDARD

- (Heb 13:8) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday & today & forever. - AN ABSOLUTE STANDARD

- (Mat 7:13-14) "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate & broad is the road that leads to destruction, & many enter through it. {14} But small is the gate & narrow the road that leads to life, & only a few find it. - AN ABSOLUTE STANDARD

Transition: We've looked at the choice of the world & the 1st principle God calls us to live by, now let's consider...

2. THE CHOICE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

- READ vss. 8-9

- When the Bible speaks of Noah's righteousness, it is not saying he was w/o sin.

- The decision for righteousness that Noah made & that we must make consists of three choices.

A. 1st, It is choosing to be different than the world around us.

- God compared Noah's life to the lives of the people around him & declared he was "blameless among the people of his time" (vs. 9).

- Notice that God did not declare Noah righteous because he wore clothes that were different than the world's, or because he didn't like the style of music, or because he was boring, or because he refused to associate w/worldly people.

- God called Noah righteous because he lived by a different standard.

- Noah looked like, & had much in common w/the people of his day, but he stood out because of his dedication to the things of God.

- If God were to look at our hearts (& I'm sure He is doing that right now), would He see anything about us that would make us stand out?

- Would He be able to scan the crowd & say (fill in the blank) is "blameless among the people of his/her time"?

B. 2nd, It is choosing to walk w/God

- To say that Noah walked w/God is to say that he lived in obedience to God.

- His life was entwined w/the purpose of God Himself.

- God expects the same choice from each of us -- the choice to walk w/God, to have Him as our ever-present companion & guide.

- Jesus speaks to this when He says, (John 14:23) "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, & we will come to him & make our home with him."

C. 3rd, It is choosing to be a "preacher of righteousness"

- You won't find this in our text, but this is how 2 Peter 2:5 describes Noah.

- While we are in the world we are expected to proclaim the righteousness of the Lord to the world.

- We are not supposed to gather in holy huddles w/other believers & hide from the world.

- We are to go into the world w/the saving message of Jesus Christ so that others can join us in our relationship w/Christ.

Transition: There is another principle we learn here:

PRINCIPLE #2: I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR WISE CHOICES REGARDLESS OF MY OWN PERSONAL FEELINGS

- There were certainly times when Noah didn't feel like building the Ark & enduring the ridicule of the people around him.

- But he persevered because he understood that he was on a mission from God & that God held him responsible for doing the right thing.

- Like Noah, we are each responsible for making wise choices that will honor God & will help us to fulfill our mission as evangelists in this world.

Transition: We've seen the choice of the world, & the choice of the righteous, now let's consider:

3. THE CHOICE OF GOD

- READ vss. 6; 13-18

- From these verses we learn three important truths about God:

A. 1st, God suffers emotionally when we disobey Him

- Vs. 6 says that God's "heart was filled w/pain".