

Don't Wait for the Rain  
Genesis 6:5-22  
September 20, 2009

A group named Truth sang a song back in the 1990's entitled, "Don't Wait for the Rain." It began like this:

*Noah was a hard workin' family man  
Trying just to make ends meet;  
Keepin' his faith in his Father's hands  
Trustin' where he couldn't see.  
The Lord told Noah the rain was gonna come  
He didn't ask why and he didn't run,  
He just gathered together his wife and his sons  
and he built an ark.*

It's a great song, and the story of Noah is a great story. It's one of the stories we learn as kids, probably because it has a lot of animals in it and the action is so grand. A man builds a huge boat, gathers two of every animal on earth and then rain floods the entire world killing everything and everybody except those on the boat.

While the image of giraffes and panda bears sticking their heads out of the windows of the ark makes for cute artwork, this is also a story with a great deal of insight to offer us today.

Consider Noah. We're told that the Lord looked at ALL of the people on the earth and only found ONE righteous man – Noah. What made him righteous? We're actually told. The passage tells us, "*He consistently followed God's will and enjoyed a close relationship with Him.*"

Last week I talked a bit about the importance of prayer as something that needs to undergird any great undertaking in the church. This week I want to remind us that a close relationship with God, one that is characterized by a constant prayer life, is crucial to the life of any individual.

As we look around us today:

- The wars in the Middle East rage on;
- Unemployment in NC was announced at 10.8% this past week;
- While the stock market continues to rebound slowly, most people seem to be squeamish about investing;
- Partisan bickering continues among our elected "leaders" at multiple levels of government;
- Individuals and families are trying to figure out how to make ends meet.

The title of an article from this past January is very telling about our faith practices today, “*Many Turning to Prayer in These Tough Economic Times.*”

Noah enjoyed a close relationship with God undoubtedly because of the amount of time he spent in communication with him. I imagine he sought answers to questions – both large and small – from the Lord. He probably spent a significant amount of time just talking to God – at least as much time as he spent listening. And I am sure that he didn’t forget to thank God when things were going well, instead of only bending the Lord’s ear when times were tough.

This morning, friends, I want to encourage you to see Noah not as a character in a cute children’s Bible story, but as a great example of a life of faith – one that we should strive to emulate.

Go to God every day with your joys and your praises. Spend intimate time with Him – not left over time, but intentional time. So when the rain comes you won’t get caught outside banging on the door of the ark, shouting to be let in.

I am reminded of the story of the wedding feast in Matthew 25:10-13:

*Then those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked.*

*Later, when the other five bridesmaids returned, they stood outside, calling, 'Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!'*

*"But he called back, 'Believe me, I don't know you!'*

*"So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.*

Those folks were not let in because:

1. They were late;
2. They host did not recognize them as a close friend.

You and I want to be recognized as a close friend of God’s; however, our sin keeps us separated from Him. Fortunately, God loves us enough that He made a way for us to be reconciled to Him – through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

As you listen to this message this morning, there are many of you who already have a saving relationship with the Lord through Jesus – hear this message and commit yourself to a *strengthened* relationship with Him.

Some of you may be in church for the first time, or you may attend church on a regular basis, but if you are honest with yourself, you have never really trusted Christ as your Savior and Lord.

There's plenty of room in the ark of the Lord for you. Just remember, like those who were caught outside the door of the wedding feast, we don't know the day or hour of His return. There will be a time one day, when it will be too late.

So, don't wait for the rain before you seek shelter and safety for your soul in the ark of the cross.