The One God Uses

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Date: 21 April 2024

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[0:00] Genesis chapter 6. The way God works and the way he moves is often unpredictable.

I often say that God throws curveballs. He works in unexpected ways. But a common trait of God is to raise somebody up in just the nick of time when there's a task at hand.
He challenged Abraham to pick it all up, everything he had, and go and God would tell him where he had to go along the way.
That's pretty scary. He rose up Moses to become the mouthpiece of the law, of God's law. And Moses was, by his own description, slow of speech and tongue.
He even said that slowly. Joseph was a man who ran the breadbasket of the world in the midst of a famine, but he had been sold into slavery by his brothers, left for dead.
[1:14] David was the youngest and the overlooked, but God used him to expand Israel to its greatest heights, at least so far. Did we bring up the foot-shaped mouth of Peter?

Did we bring up the Christian killer named Saul or the late bloomer named James who became the pastor of the church in Jerusalem? That's just a few of those because God throws curveballs.
How about if God picks a man that lives in the desert to build a boat to save humanity from total destruction while the earth was to face utter destruction?
That's what God did, and he chose Noah to be that man. Now, how did he pick him? Who is it that God uses? What is God looking for in us to use us?
Now, as I've listed several people, we could get several traits that God looks for in examining the many that I've mentioned, but I just found, I just want to look at a few traits that we see in Noah this morning.
[2:26] I think it's challenging enough. It's plenty to ponder on. It's found in Genesis chapter 6, beginning in verse 5, and it says this, The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, and the Lord regretted that he had made man on earth, and he grieved him to his heart.

So the Lord said, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, and man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I made them.
But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation.
Noah walked with God. I don't know about you, but I know that I, I want to be used of God.
I want God to use me for his purposes, as he sees fit, and to do my best to remove any hindrances that may be, that I may be prone to put in his way.
[3:53] I want to be used of God. And from Noah's example, I believe we find some things that God looks for. Who does God use? God uses one who is blessed.

It may seem kind of backwards to say it like that, but it's the truth. It's not. It's not backwards. It's the truth. It's just the way God works, and we don't have to understand his work.
We better accept it, but we don't have to understand it. God favored Noah. He did. He blessed Noah. He didn't do that because Noah was righteous, although Noah was righteous.
He was not perfect, and scripture points that out, but he was right. And God looked upon him with favor, and he shined. It is the blessings of God that allow us to be at our very best.
We're not able to do that within ourselves. God enables us. As a matter of fact, when it says that he found favor with God, that word in the Hebrew literally speaks of grace. In other words, it's in his grace and by his blessings that we're allowed to be everything that we can be for his honor and for his glory.
[5:06] We don't receive his blessings because of what we do. We are blessed by his grace and given the ability to do that. And when we use that God-given ability to do blessed things, we are

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further blessed.

It is a fulfillment of what life was meant to be. It has to do with being used for your purpose. I don't normally carry a pocket knife.
I've had a few in that big knife store in Sevierville. I'll go in there and find one and buy one and put it in my pocket and wash it in the washing machine the following week.
I don't normally carry a pocket knife. I have a couple, but I just don't need it that often. But I do carry a set of keys.
I carry a set of keys and I can cut a lot of things with a jaggered end of a key. I'm pretty good at it. Don't come messing with me. I'm pretty good at it.
[6:11] So, do my keys always do a good job cutting something? No. My keys are made to open locks, but sometimes I can cut through packaging tape to open a package when it comes.

You take those tags off your clothes, you know, I'll get my key out, son, and saw that baby off. But much beyond that, my keys won't cut it. Pun intended.
Why? Because that's not the purpose of the keys. The purpose of the key is to unlock, to open a lock. My best defense is my key, so if you mess with me, be careful, son, because I'll pull it on you, you know.
But that's not really the purpose of the key. The key is to unlock. Knives are made for cutting. Our purpose in life is to live for the Lord.
We're to carry out His will for our lives, and when we don't do that, we are living outside of our purpose. We're not living up to our potential. You'll be blessed by God when you carry out His purpose for your life, that His grace has enabled you to do, and you'll see the favor of God.
[7:32] The favor that God has for you as you walk in His way. Living for Him brings everything to light. Scripture says that Noah was favored and blessed, and God used him.

But I see another trait as well. God uses one who is righteous. One who walks with the Lord can be righteous. It's not that we earn that righteousness.
It is that we're changed by God's power and by His might, and under God, we can live in a way that pleases Him. Now, for the Christian, this righteousness is positional.
We have been made right by the Lord when we come into relationship with Him. And now, we just have to live that way in our practice.
And Noah did. He put his faith in God to work, and God enabled him to live a righteous life.
[8:38] I want you to listen to what Hebrews 11, verse 7 said about him. He said, By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear, constructed an ark for the saving of his household.

By this, he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes from faith.
Just as in the days of Noah, so it'll be in the days of the Son of Man.
What a contrast to the world in which he was living. His world was marked by wickedness. His world was marked by perversion. And the thoughts and the minds of society were polluted.
They were led by the lust of the flesh. They were led by the lust of the eyes. They were led by the pride of life. How do you survive in your walk with God when you live in a world that's filled with all of that stuff?
Well, we better learn because we're right there. We're right in the midst of it. Jesus was talking about his return and he said this in Luke chapter 17, verse 26 and following.
[9:44] He said, Just as in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage until the day when Noah entered the ark.

And the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot, there will be eating and drinking and buying and selling, planting and building. But on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all.
So it will be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. Now, I want you to understand something. The point of that passage is the suddenness and the need of readiness concerning the return of the Lord.
I truly believe the only thing that is holding the Lord back from coming is the Father telling him to go get his bride. And I believe we need to be ready. I don't care what's happening in the world and you're trying to figure it out on your timeline.

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You better be ready because I'm telling you, the Lord could return at any time. However, I want you to understand that the wickedness we see around us today, it is no greater than the wickedness around Noah.
[10:56] He faced the same thing. It's probably not any better today than it was with Noah, but it's probably not any worse. So what do you do if you're a Christian who's trying to live for Christ if the world you live in is wicked enough to destroy?

What do you do when the whole world seems to have turned upside down? It becomes completely amoral and the things that they should shame are held as if it's correct.
And the things that are correct as if they're shamed. What do you do in the midst of that? I'll tell you what you do. You live for the Lord Jesus. You live on for Christ. You live a righteous life.
It is the darkness that the light is made more obvious. The more wicked world, the more the faithful Christian will stand out. And friend, it's time we stand out.
It's time we make a difference in the world in which we're planted. God uses one who's righteous, but also God uses one who is a witness. No one didn't try to hide the fact that the difference in him was God.
[12:07] He let that be known. He spoke out about living right before the Lord. And you know how I know that? Because 2 Peter 2, verse 5 calls him a herald of righteousness.

Now, a herald is a person who carries or proclaims important news. And Noah was speaking of the Lord. He was preaching about the Lord.
So don't think that Noah was some recluse whittler that never engaged with anybody, but spent 100 years of himself, to himself building the boat that God told him to build.
No, Noah honored God with his life. And when people ask him why he lived the way he did, if people ask him why he built a boat miles away from water, he told them.
Actually, he was telling them before they ask because he is a herald of righteousness as Scripture describes him. There is a fella at Sam's Club these days that is trying his best.
[13:15] He stands beside the dog food and he's trying to sell me a home warranty every time I go in there. He asked me if I'm a homeowner. I said, I am.

He does his sales pitch. I tell him I'm not interested. I come back two weeks later. He says, are you a homeowner? What is it about me that makes him think I'm losing my home? I mean, what is that, you know?
But I want you to understand something about this fella. He is a herald for the home warranty. I mean, he is. He does not wait for you to ask him, why do you loiter by the dog food?
He don't ask. He meets you where you are. And he tells you the qualities and the timing. If you'll do it today, Sam's will pay for your first month, but you got to fill out the form now.
Go to it now. He's a herald of the home warranty. He's dedicated to it. I don't approach him. He approaches me. Noah was living it, is what I'm trying to tell you.
[14:24] Noah was sharing it. He was telling people about it. He told people who made the difference in his life. And my friend, we ought to too.

We ought to be heralds of the gospel. Sharing with others the difference that Christ has made in our life. Seek them out. Pray for them. Speak to them.
When God opens the door for you to do that, God uses a witness. Somebody who's just willing. He'll use you. He also uses one who is blameless.
Blamelessness speaks of how people took him. Some people live right.
They talk right. But you just don't trust them. You can't quite put your finger on it. But something just don't smell right.
[15:30] It just seems like something's up. That was not the case for Noah. Noah lived out his faith. He spoke of it.

And when Noah was standing with two other men having a conversation and Noah walked off, those other two guys would look at each other and say, I think a lot of that man.
That man's a lot. He's a man of God. And when discussion came up about why Noah was building a cruise ship-sized boat in the middle of the desert, they didn't understand him.
They probably thought he was a little off. Maybe way off. But I'm telling you, if he was blameless, they thought the world of him.
He believed God and people believed in him and God uses people with a reputation that people can trust. He'll use the blameless.

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[16:33] God also uses one who walks with God. He uses the person who walks with God. And Scripture says clearly at the end of this passage, Noah walked with God daily.

That means he talked with God. That means he walked with God. That means he lived for God. Now, I want you to notice the progressive buildup in this description of Noah.
First, he was a blessed man. We could spend the afternoon here. If I were to ask you, has God blessed your life? Share today some way that God has blessed your life.
If you were quick and wasn't hungry, you could stand up and speak and talk about the blessings of the Lord. He was blessed.
He was a righteous man. Not near as many as there should be are righteous today. God honors and God uses the righteous.
[17:42] He was a blameless man. Many want that. They aim for that kind of goal, but they few reach that, that blamelessness.

He was a godly man. He walked with God. That term there, Noah walked with God, is something that is used very rarely in the Old Testament.
It is spoken of about Enoch. It is spoken of about Abraham. It is spoken of about Isaac and some godly kings. And that's it. And when you combine all those characteristics of being blessed and being righteous and being blameless and walking with God, I want you to understand the impact that that has upon your life.
For one, you are spiritually alert. He knew the judgment of God was coming because he walked with God. Nobody else seemed to have a clue apparently.
But he knew it was coming because he walked with God. He was spiritually alert. Not only that, but he was spiritually accurate. He was aiming in the right direction. He was surrounded by the ungodlessness of the day and yet he was blameless and above reproach.
[18:53] It wasn't that he was a little bit better than everybody else. No, he was blameless and above reproach. That means that people didn't say anything bad about him and if they did say something about him, somebody was going to straighten you out if you said something.

That whole phrase that Noah was blameless and above reproach just hangs over me. What a testimony.
What a place to aim. to be blameless and above reproach. Not only that, but he was also spiritually consistent. He steadily walked with God.
Not only was he made stronger by that, but he impacted other people's lives. He was a herald of godliness. I mean, as Noah was exposed to the holiness of God in his walk, he became more aware of the wickedness around him.
And it's cyclical the way this works because the more aware of the wickedness around him, the more he realized the coming of the judgment of God. And the more he realized the judgment of God was coming, the more he considered the evil of the world.
[20:04] And the more aware of that that he was, the closer he walked with God. And the closer that he walked with God, the more he was aware of the judgment of God. Out of the overflow of that spiritual life, he lived blamelessly blamelessly before the Lord.

He lived, he walked obediently before the Lord. And he spoke openly about the Lord. And what, what may seem ironic about all that, I don't believe it is, is the name Noah means rest.
Debatably, the busiest man on the earth. He had a big boat to build. Yet his name means rest.
That's what a blameless walk and talk with God will do for you.
In the midst of the busyness and the chaos, God will give you rest. Hebrews 11 verse 7 says that he worked with a reverent fear.
[21:25] That means that he had a reverence and an obedience to God that motivated him to let nothing come in the way. Nothing. Not, not his misunderstanding, a flood.

Many believed it hadn't even rained yet. And here he is preparing for a flood. How do you wrap your head around that? He didn't let his weariness get in the way.
He built a big old boat. He didn't let his weariness come in the way. He didn't let the ridicule come in the way. I mean, he was blameless and right, but people would say, you know, he's blameless and he's right, but is he all right?
What's he doing? Not the stress of the job ahead of him. Did you realize that once he got that thing built, what was in front of him?

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For one, he was going to be on a boat with his family for a year, you know? But besides that, he was a cruise ship manager for thousands of animals.
[22:38] Nothing came in the way of him being used by God. And I'll tell you, in a day of wickedness, God uses the person that lives out God's purposes for his or her life.

The person that's blessed by God. The person who's willing to be a blessing for the Lord. God wants people who live a consecrated life, a solid witness for the Lord, a reputation without blame, that have a solid daily walk with God.
God's God's God's God's love. That's why he'll use you today. May there not be any hindrances in our life from being everything that God would have us to be, from doing everything that God would have us to do, than accomplishing all that God has set forth for us.
May nothing come in the way of that. And so I ask today, what is it in your life today that serves as a hindrance from you being everything that God would have you to be?
I'm not talking about 10 years ago. I'm not talking about 20 years ago. I'm not talking about two weeks ago. Let's deal with today.
[24:30] What is it today that keeps you from being everything that God would have you to be? for some of you, it may be that although you have a knowledge of the Lord, an awareness of Him, the reality is when you look at your life, you've never entered into a relationship with Christ.

You've never surrendered your life to follow Him. You've never confessed your sins before Him. You've never asked Him to forgive you and to come into your life and change you. You've never entered into a relationship, never been saved.
And if that's the case in your life, I've got news for you. Today's the day of salvation. He'll meet you where you are and change you forever. And maybe you have done that, but the reality is there's areas of your life that are not pleasing to God.
You've not been obedient about God. Maybe you've done that privately and never made it public. Jesus, by His example and by His commission, tells us that our faith ought to be made public.
We need to let that be known. Or maybe you have all that down, but you don't have everything down. And there's some things you need to put down at the altar and leave them today so that you can be used of God, not for great, mighty, earth-shaking, life, world-changing, but just be ready to do what God wants to do in your life.
[26:07] Let nothing come in the way of what God wants to do in you. May we honor God with everything that we are.

With every head bowed, with every eye closed. God wants to love. I don't know how God speaks to you today, but I know you'll never be happy unless you are obedient to Him. And so I would encourage you to just simply be obedient to God.
If you've never given your heart and life to the Lord, I'd love to guide you in that process. If you've never been baptized as a believer, but you've got a personal relationship with Him privately and never made that public, you come. We'd love to guide you in that.
Maybe God's drawing you to this church. This is where God would have you to go. I encourage you to join us. You invest in us, we invest in you, we grow together. We get it done for the kingdom's sake.
Or maybe you just got something in your life that's gnawing on you today and the Holy Spirit is eating your lunch. Whether it's in the pew where you are or whether it's at this altar, it don't make any difference. Let's just get rid of it. Let's just take care of it today.
[27:10] Let's make a commitment to not let anything in our life be a hindrance, to be everything that God would have us to be. We're not looking for the grandiose, we're just looking for obedience.

Just do whatever it takes to be everything that God would have us to be. Lord Jesus, I love you and I thank you for the life of Noah. How inspiring and how encouraging it is to me to know that you meet us where we are, you make us what we need to be, and you guide us to be everything that you have us to be, and you use us for your purposes.
God, today, speak to our hearts and lives and give us the willingness and the fortitude and the obedience to do exactly what you would tell us to do. Nothing more and nothing less.
Lead us right now during this time, I pray. In Jesus' name, amen.

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