



The Sermon

Dr. Steven J. Lawson

Genesis 6:1-8

"The World Gone Mad"

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TRANSCRIPT

I want to begin by reading the passage, as I always do, Genesis chapter 6. Today we're looking at verses 1 through 8. And the title of this message is "The World Gone Mad." The Word of God reads, " 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 also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.' The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

"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. The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. The Lord said, 'I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them.' But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." What a passage. What a passage. Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we so need Your assistance today to dig into these verses, and have them dig into us. We need the ministry of the Holy Spirit to be our

teacher, and to open our eyes so that we may behold truths in Your Word. Lord, I pray that You would assist me, that You would fill me with Your Spirit and stir up within me the gift to teach and to preach, so that I could be a channel through which Your Word would go forth with accuracy and clarity. I pray for everyone here today, that You would give receptive hearts and enlightened minds and eager wills to pursue what You require. So, Lord, as we now come to this passage which has been preached countless times down through the centuries, I pray that You would visit us this day here in Dallas, Texas, that this passage would be just as fresh with us as when it was first recorded by Moses. So, Lord, we look to You. Bless now us, Your people, in this place, in Jesus' name. Amen. [End]

In these verses which I've just read we clearly see the moral insanity of the world in the days of Noah before the flood. And we live in just such a world gone mad. We look at this passage and it is like looking into a mirror. And this is the world in which you and I live; no passage could be more relevant for us today than this text, because this is precisely what we see today. The more things change, the more things remain the same. We look to our left, and we look to our right, in our city, in our nation, and in our world, and we see Genesis 6:1-8. We see the world in which we live and out of control. We see the world gone mad.

We see the world living in moral insanity. We see the world with a reprobate mind. And so we live in a world in which right is wrong and wrong is right. We live in a world in which men are with men and women are with women. We live in an insane world in which men are becoming women and women are becoming men. And wherever people reject the knowledge of God, it always results in a world gone mad. When it loses its moral bearing, when it loses its moral compass, there is no other alternative but that that world becomes intolerable and insane. That's precisely what we see here in Romans chapter 6, and that is precisely what we see in the world in which we live.

Here in Genesis 6 we see the world self-destructing, we see the world imploding, falling on its own sword. This is the world in the days before the worldwide flood that drowned the entire human race, with the exception of

one family. So as we walk through this passage, there is a note of sobriety and seriousness as we walk through this that it will end on the high ground of saving grace.

So I want you to note in the first two verses, as we just stairstep our way through this: "The shameful union. The shameful union." And that's how this passage begins. We read in verse 1, "Now it came about," – in other words, with the further passing of time – "when men began to multiply on the face of the land." They began to multiply with exponential population growth. Do not think of this time as a sparsely-populated world, it was a world that was multiplying by the day.

And it says, "and daughters were born to them." Why would he say daughters? Why not sons? Because daughters have the capacity to deliver babies and to multiply the population with even greater rapidity. And so Moses as he records this paints the picture of the scene. He wants us to know that there were daughters and daughters and daughters and daughters that were bearing children.

And we come to verse 2, which is really the impact under this first heading, "that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took for themselves whomever they wish." And so the question for us is, "Who are these sons of God, and who are these daughters of men?" That's the interpretive knot that's going to have to be untied; and once we untie it, it will yield not only insight, but it will speak to us today.

Oh, there are four options on who the sons of God are, and I'm actually going to take a moment just to lay these out before you. There are many Bible scholars who would say these are fallen angels, the sons of God, demon spirits embodied in some human form, or just in their fallen demonic state that have cohabitated with daughters of men to produce a hybrid or mongrel offspring. I don't think that's the proper interpretation of this, though sons of God is used three times in the Old Testament in the book of Job to describe the angels. I think that's really based more on sensationalism than proper interpretation.

Jesus Himself said in [Mark 12:23](#) that the angels neither marry, nor are given in marriage. And I think that's just too far of a stretch, that's just reading too much into this passage. In fact, John Calvin calls this position an absurdity; and I would have to agree with him. And you'll also note in verse 3 that the men, that those who are involved are called "man," not angels.

A second option is that these are mighty men, the sons of God, that these are dominant powers, and they are often tied in with the Nephilim in verse 4: mighty men, proud, arrogant, dominant, dominating weak women and pushing themselves upon them. But the text says nothing of that. The third option is that these sons of God are from the line of Seth, and the daughters of men are from the line of Cain, and that might be closer to the truth. But I think it's the fourth option that really is the key that unlocks this passage and it is very simply this, that the sons of God are exactly what it says they are: they are the sons of God, they are believers who have been adopted into God's family.

I agree with John Calvin that the true interpretation of any passage is that which is most plain and obvious and what is most plain. And obvious is that the sons of God are indeed sons of God, that they are believers who may have come down through the line of Seth. And the daughters of men are just that, they're daughters of men. They're not daughters of God, they're not of God, they are daughters of men, meaning that they are unbelievers. And so what we have here is believers marrying unbelievers, that the sons of God are marrying whomever they choose based upon the outward physical appearance.

"They saw that the daughters of men were beautiful," they were attractive, and there was on the inside an excitement that drew them to these daughters of men; and yet they did not see the heart, they did not see faith, they did not see devotion to God; and their fleshly appetites ran away with them, and they married against the will of God. "They married" - it says at the end of verse 2 - "to whom they chose," not the one whom God would have marked out for them. Their flesh, their lusts were leading them. I like what

John Calvin writes when he writes, "They were the sons of God by adoption, whom he had set apart for Himself, while the rest" – referring to the rest of the human race – "were left in their original condition. For when Scripture speaks of the sons of God, sometimes it has respect to eternal election."

And so I think that this is what was taking place. They violated the truth. Whether it had been revealed at this time and not recorded in Scripture – and remember, we've been fast-forwarding over many, many generations; we did that last week in Genesis 5 – we don't have everything that was being communicated by God to His people written down at the beginning of Genesis. So whether it was directly communicated that a believer should only marry another believer, or whether God wrote it on the conscience, writing His law in their heart, nevertheless that would be clearly understood.

And the Bible does teach this, does it not, that we are to only marry in the Lord, that a believer is only to marry in the Lord. Second Corinthians 6, and verses 14 and 16 – it's actually 2 Corinthians 6, I wrote it down wrong in my notes as you're running the computer. It's second Corinthians 6, verses 14 through 16. Listen to this: "Do not be bound together with unbelievers."

Now this is not immediately referring to marriage, as Paul writes to the Corinthians, it's referring to ministry, that, "Don't try to reach the world by becoming a partner with those who preach a false gospel or who are unsaved." No, they're not our ministry partner, they're our mission field, and it sends a mixed signal to the world if we partner with unbelievers in gospel enterprise in order to reach the world. That's the whole point of 2 Corinthians 6:14-16.

So let me read it again: "Do not be bound together with unbelievers." We're to be in the world, but not of the world, right? He goes on to say, "for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what is a

believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols?"

Those are five rhetorical questions that Paul does not even bother to answer, because any thinking person immediately knows the answer, that there is zero common ground on a spiritual level, that there is no mutual holding of common core convictions at the deepest level. There is no fellowship between light and darkness. There is no fellowship between Christ and the devil. And so that's why God forbids a believer to marry an unbeliever.

And I don't normally do this, but I want to read John Calvin again, as he gives really the best interpretation five hundred years ago of this passage, and I want you to hear the great expositor himself on this very point: "It was an intolerable profanity to pervert and to confound the order appointed by God," meaning the marriage order: believer and a believer. "It is not a light crime to violate a distinction established by the Lord. The worshipers of God are to be separated from profane nations. But they prostituted themselves. In the succession of time" – meaning over multiple generations – "the sons of God should degenerate when they bind themselves in the same yoke with unbelievers. They formed illicit marriages after their own lusts. By mingling themselves with the wicked, they profaned the worship of God and fell away from the faith."

And Proverbs would put it this way: "Can a man take a fire into his bosom and be not burned?" And the answer is of course he will be burned if he takes a fire into his bosom. And it was this shameful union of believers marrying unbelievers that contributed greatly to the demise of the ancient world before the flood. It wasn't the only sin that was taking place, but it was the diluting of the influence of believers. There is now not the restriction of holding back the corruption. The salt of the world was being compromised. And when the salt becomes compromised, there is nothing to hold back the corruption of the world.

If it wasn't for the church in the world today, I promise you, you wouldn't even want to be here. It is the moral influence of godly believers in the world that is serving as the salt that is restraining the corruption of the world. But when you remove the salt, all hell breaks loose. And so by the time of the flood, the salt had become so weakened that there were only eight believers on the planet. With each one of these commingling of marriages, it was a weakening, a weakening, a weakening, a weakening of the influence of the godly, and how this whole thing has boiled down to one family, and the whole world, the whole entire world caught up in the grossest corruptions imaginable.

Jesus Himself said in Luke 14:34, "Salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless," - meaning it's become washed out, it's lost its savor - "with what will it be seasoned. It is useless." Now listen to this: "It is useless either for the soil" - meaning to be used as fertilizer - "or for the manure pile." It's not even potent enough to tone down the stench of the manure pile. That's how worthless a so-called Christian is who has lost his distinctiveness, who has lost his convictions, who has lost his way. In fact, is showing himself to be not even a Christian at all, but only in name only. And so the only thing holding back the complete corruption of this nation this day is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The rug has been pulled out from underneath us in this culture and in this society; and where we once had family mores and family values that had been passed down really just in the form of tradition, and then with pulpits abandoning the Word of God, and God's people becoming more anemic, more anemic, more anemic, we are left in a nation right now and left in a world in which we are but islands, islands assault in the midst of oceans of corruption. And there's not enough to stem the tide, there's not enough to hold it back. And that's exactly what took place in Genesis chapter 6. It was more than what one family could do to retard the stench of the world. And so that's how this begins. It begins with a shameful union; and it still goes on today.

I once pastored a very large church in another state, and I had the richest woman in town come to me and ask if I would marry her to the richest man

in the region in this church. And I asked him, when he came privately, to give me his testimony of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And he told me that you had to be baptized in order to be saved, that only that water would be a part of washing away sin. And I said, "Sir, I cannot marry a believer to an unbeliever." And he said, "Who's the unbeliever?" and I said, "You are, sir. Despite the fact that the university is named after your name here in town, and despite the fact that the airport terminal is named after the woman you want to marry, I cannot marry a believer to an unbeliever. It would violate every sermon I ever preached. It would send a signal to every young girl in this church that it does not matter who you marry, and it would send a signal to every family and to every young man, "Just let your lusts lead you to what looks beautiful."

What was going on here was the shameful union of believers marrying unbelievers. And there are those even with us here today who, when you were married, you both were unbelievers, and you have become a believer. And you now know the difficulty of being unequally yoked to an unbeliever, and how it's like trying to drive a car with the emergency brake on; you just can't quite move forward.

And before I move on, I want to say to every young person here today and everyone who is not married, that you may only marry in the Lord. It does not matter how much you like another person. It does not matter how you mesh or the chemistry you would have. If you as a believer marry an unbeliever, you are flagrantly violating the Word of God, and you have just bought into more trouble than you can ever imagine: the shameful union.

Second, I want you to note: "The sober warning." How did God respond to this? Did God say, "Hey, we can work this all out; we'll find common ground; we'll meet in the middle"? No. In verse 3, God Himself is the speaker. And just as speculation, the text does not say it, but in 2 Peter 2:5, Noah is called a preacher of righteousness. And it may be that Noah was actually the preacher of this message; but nevertheless, it is God Himself who is speaking directly. And it really adds to the to the weight, to the gravitas, to the authority of verse 3 to know that this is God Himself speaking. This is not Moses recording, this is God Himself speaking: "My



Spirit shall not always strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

God the Father here begins by affirming the person of the Holy Spirit. And let us be very clear: the Holy Spirit was mightily and powerfully at work in the world throughout the entire Old Testament. You'll find Him first mentioned in Genesis 1:2. And so even when Jesus says, "I will send the Holy Spirit," the Holy Spirit was already here. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent. The Holy Spirit is everywhere present, at all times. And so Jesus is referring there to a greater manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit.

But without the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, no one would have ever been convicted of sin, no one would ever been called into fellowship with God, no one would have ever been regenerated, no one would have ever been sealed in salvation. The Holy Spirit had to be at work in the Old Testament, or no one would have ever been saved. And so what we're to understand is the Holy Spirit is simply not mentioned as much in the Old Testament as He is mentioned in the New Testament. But there is this continuity from Old to New Testament in this regard, and He says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man forever." What that means is right now at this time as this is unfolding, that the Holy Spirit is striving with man; and God is saying there comes a deadline with God, there comes a line in the sand in which if you have not responded to the ministry of the Holy Spirit to convict your heart and to draw you into saving faith, then there comes a point when God will just turn you over to your own ways. It's Romans chapter 1: the abandonment of God. And He says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man forever."

But it is now, it just won't continue. And we will find out at the end of this verse that there is a deadline with God, and it was one hundred and twenty years, and that God was patient, and God was keeping the door open, and God was keeping the light burning, this opportunity for this hell-bent world to turn in repentance to God. The word "striving" means literally to judge. It means deplete a case in a courtroom. It means to bring prosecution and charges against the defendant.

And that's the ministry of the Holy Spirit. That's what we call the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, is to prosecute the heart of the unbeliever of what? Well, Jesus said in John 16:8, "When He comes, He will convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment," right? "Sin, because they believe not in Me; righteousness, because I go to the Father; and judgment, because the prince of this world has been cast down." It's an argument from the greater to the lesser. If the devil himself will not escape the judgment on the last day, then neither will any person in this world escape the judgment of God.

And it is the Holy Spirit who has come into the world to bring strong conviction to the heart of guilt under the law of God. That's the only way anyone will ever be saved is when they come under the deep conviction of their sin. It causes them to flee to the Savior, to the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is what was taking place here in the world. The Spirit of God was moving, the Spirit of God was acting, and the world was stiff-necked, and uncircumcised of heart, and resisting and resisting the work of the Holy Spirit. And God says, "My Spirit will not continue this much longer. I will give you a push in the direction you want to go. I will remove the brakes from your car, I will remove the steering wheel from your car, and you may just go down the broad path headed for destruction." There is a day of opportunity with God that is open, and there is a day of opportunity with God that becomes closed.

He says here that this judgment that would come is because he is flesh. I don't think this is referring to physical flesh, because men at that time were not living one hundred and twenty years, they were living to be nine hundred years. It's not talking about physical flesh and the duration or longevity of a person's life, it's referring to the spiritual flesh. It's referring to the human nature. It's referring to lustful flesh, and carnal flesh, and arrogant flesh. And God says, "Nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

The word "nevertheless" indicates actually not a negative, but a positive, in that God is giving a period of time for this world to repent. Despite the fact

that God will not strive with men forever, nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years. This is exactly the message that God gave to Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh to preach forty days, and Nineveh will be destroyed. It is both a message of condemnation, but it is also a message of salvation: "You have forty days to turn to the Lord. You have forty days to humble yourself and to repent." And that is exactly what is taking place here. But there is coming an end to the patience of God. There is a limited number of days as well that remain for this age. I have no idea how many days those are; but there is coming an unprecedented time on this world known as the great tribulation, and there shall come unparalleled destruction of the earth and humanity. And God is giving one last opportunity at the end of the age for people to turn to Him.

Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 24:37 and following: "For the coming of the Son of Man shall be just like the days of Noah." Let me repeat that: "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage," - and let me be quick to explain this. Those were not bad things, those were fine things. What it means is they were just caught up in the everyday affairs of life: eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage. Those are not sinful things, those are just things that did not involve God. They just had thought for this world, but no thought for the world to come.

They had thought for themselves, but no thought for God, it says - "until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came" - it was too late once they connected the dots - "and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be." He'll come so swiftly, so quickly, in the twinkling of an eye. There'll be no time to repent in that day. There'll be no time to make it right with God, just like it was when Noah shut the ark, and no one else could enter. Now we are living in days like Noah. And how much longer this insanity can go on and spiral down in its death spiral, only the Lord knows.

I want you to note in verse 4, "The sinister rulers. The sinister rulers." Among the many corruptions that were spreading in the world, Moses now

singles out this one. He's already singled out one, the believers marrying unbelievers; and now he singles out this one, which is sinister rulers, ungodly rulers.

We read in verse 4, "The Nephilim were on the earth in those days." You say, "Who are these people?" and the answer is we really don't know. At the end of this verse they are identified as mighty men and men of renown. They are mighty in power, mighty in stature, mighty in influence. The name "Nephilim" simply means the fallen ones. And I don't think we are to take it as they are the fallen ones, it's that their influence and their power is like a juggernaut and has come down like a storm onto the earth to influence the lives of people. They have come down hard upon the culture and upon the society, and inflicting much damage, and imposing their will upon others, and really controlling the population.

The Nephilim practice great violence and tyranny; and they do not represent all the people of this of that age, but a very special segment of extraordinary power. And again, John Calvin notes that, "They were stronger than the rest, and relying on their own might and power. They exalted themselves unlawfully and without measure." These robbers brought destruction and desolation into the world by their lust for domination. They're just like liberal politicians today, who want to take away individual, personal freedoms, and it and exert their will upon everyone else, that, "This is what you will do, this is what you will be, this is how you will conduct yourself; otherwise, you may not do this, or you may not do that." It is the power of a handful to dominate an entire population of people who just fall in in lockstep. That's what these people were; and we see it all around us today.

As we continue through this verse, in the middle of the verse, in order to make sense of this verse, which is not easy, the middle third of this verse is like a parenthesis, and he says, "and also afterward," and the idea is, "and going on at the same time." It's what he just mentioned earlier in verse 2: "When the sons of God came in to the daughters of men." And that may even suggest they weren't - it's not just that they were marrying and giving in marriage, being given in marriage, it kind of suggests by what is not

being said, that they're just moving in, shacking up, and living with each other, and that this is becoming polygamy, it's becoming harems. It's just becoming a producing factory of babies.

"The sons of God came in to the daughters of men," - here we have it again, believers marrying unbelievers - "and they," - the unbelieving women - "bore children to them," - referring to the believing men. This is just violating the distinction that God has made of believers with unbelievers; and it will become further clarified and explained as the rest of the Bible unfolds.

But you'll recall when Moses will write the book of Leviticus, and in all of these Levitical distinctions, "You can't eat this. You can't wear this. You must be this." And what's going on there? God is making such a distinction between you and the world that you just even need to look different, smell different, talk different, be different. Stop trying to blend in. But that firewall was not present here between believers and unbelievers.

And these men these passive men, and no doubt aggressive women, are contributing to this. I think of James 4:4 as I read this part of the verse. James 4:4 says, "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world is an enemy of God." Choose sides. You can't have one foot in and one foot out. You can't play all ends into the middle. Choose your allegiance, and choose your loyalty, and choose it well.

Then the last part of verse 4, he returns to really the first part of verse 4, so the last third matches up with the first third, and he says, "Those were the mighty men." And the "those" refer not to the offspring of believers and unbelievers, it refers to the Nephilim. They were the mighty men. And the Hebrew word there for "mighty" means that they were mighty in power, mighty in sway, mighty in influence, and they used it to full advantage, as they dominated over the lives of others, leading them down a path of further moral corruption.

It says, "who were of old," - meaning ancient times before the flood - "men of renown." That means they were famous in their day, they were iconic, they were the cultural heroes. Everyone looked up to them and wanted to be like them, and model themselves after them and be in their shoes. And this is like Hollywood. This is like other cultural figures that we have today, who don't know anything about anything, but project themselves as the moral conscience of the nation, when, in fact, they are perverted to their ears. It's been said, "They have faces like angels and hearts like alley cats." "Men of renown," standout figures revered by the corrupt populace. And so it is their sinister reign that dominated the day.

And nothing has changed today. Likewise, it is the sinister rulers of this generation who are leading the lives of people down a dark path of increased debauchery and depravity. This nation is like a lamb led to slaughter in the heat of its lust, with its mind completely unplugged. And this is the description of the days before Noah.

Please note, fourth, in verse 5: "The sinful corruption." This is the theological interpretation of the day. This is the doctrinal overlay to see and understand what was going on in the world; and it's the very same theological template to explain our world today.

Verse 5, " Then the Lord saw the wickedness of man was great" - not small, great, huge, exceedingly great - "on the earth," - meaning wherever man was; the corruption had spread from the center to the perimeters - "and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart" - that's a very all-inclusive statement, by the way. No thoughts outside of what this statement says: "every intention."

And the word "intention" here is a Hebrew word that means plans and designs, and premeditated forethought. No one's just haphazardly falling into sin. No, it's been well-strategized, well-thought out before the act is even carried out, every intention of the thoughts of his heart; he's just masterminding more sin. Just when you think this whole thing has hit rock bottom - and we can't be any more evil than what we see - there are other

people who are strategizing and masterminding even greater depths of depravity, to take it even deeper and deeper into sin; and that there's like no bottom to this.

How depraved can depraved be, that, "every intention of the thoughts of his heart" - and the word "heart" there in the Hebrew mind and understanding, it just includes everything on the inside. It includes your mind. It includes your desires, your affections, the choices of your will. From the top of your head to the bottom of your feet, the entirety of your inner person, it says - "was only evil." This sentence is becoming darker by each word: "only," - meaning exclusively, monolithically - "only evil." The word "evil" referring to moral perversity. It's like taking a glass of water and a smaller glass of cyanide and just pouring it into the glass of water, and it just permeates the whole. That's what's happened to the heart of man. That's what's happened to the inner soul of man. And any understanding of what's wrong with man is to live in a Pollyanna dream world.

One reason we believe the Bible is the Word of God, because the Bible so tells it like it is. It tells us the worst about us. If this was written by man, this would be covered up, we would be being put in the best possible scenario. But God does not lie. "And every intention of every heart is only evil" - and then He has the last word - "continually." There's no day off for the evil heart, there's no sabbatical rest for the evil heart, there's no parentheses of a time out for the evil heart, it's constantly pumping out its evil self-centered plans.

The word "continually" there is actually two words in the original Hebrew, and those two words are "every day." It's just all day, every day. This is the doctrine of total depravity; and understanding this doctrine is really the only way to actually understand the grace of God. If you capitulate at this level and say, "Man is a little bit better than what the Bible says he is," then to the degree that you raise up man, to that degree you bring down God, and it's just a very small step from God to man, and it's a minimal grace. But if you understand that man is in the dungeon and in the grave of sin way down here, and that God is high and lifted up and holy, the grace that is required to span this chasm is amazing grace, it is unfathomable

grace, incomprehensible grace. And so as Moses is recording this, he is actually magnifying the grace of God. I mean, these verses are the black velvet backdrop upon which the diamond of verse 8 will be placed.

The doctrine of total depravity: it means that the mind is blinded by sin, and it cannot see with understanding the truth of the gospel. You can memorize the verses, you can walk your way through the maps at the back, you can win the whatever award for the most memorized verses, but you don't understand it's implication for your life; you're blinded. And then the heart is perverse; and it loves what it should hate, and it hates what it should love. The unbeliever's heart has no appetite for God, no desire to come to God on His terms; they want a self-made religion, God by their own terms.

But then further – and you need to understand this, as long as we're getting all the cards out on the table – the will is also bound by sin. The will is actually just the handmaiden of the heart and the mind. The will only chooses to do what the heart tells it to do. And the heart only knows what to do by what the mind has learned. So the lowest level is the will. And the will is like the tail of the dog; it's not wagging the dog, the dog is wagging the tail. And the mind and the heart is controlling the will. So if you have a desperately depraved mind and a desperately depraved heart, that will can never function properly towards God. It may know how to make business deals, it may know how to make certain choices that are secular, but it will never make the right choice for the gospel or for God, it's impossible.

So this is the doctrine of total depravity. I don't have time to read the verses; but if you're taking notes, you can just write down Psalm 14:2-3, Ecclesiastes 9:3, Jeremiah 17:9. I mean, I think the point has already been made. I said that; I'm going to go ahead and read it; I just can't let it go.

Psalm 14:2-3, "The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, to see if there are any who seek for God." Verse 3, "They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one." That's the world.



Ecclesiastes 9:3, you've got to hear this verse: "The hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity." And that's always the order: evil makes people insane. Sin will make you stupid. In Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick." The heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart. We are not evolving, we are devolving downward into deeper and grosser levels of sin.

This is what we see as we look around the world today; and there is no political solution, no political solution that can fix a spiritual problem. The only hope for this world is the gospel of Jesus Christ, and there is no other way out. And I'll tell you this: democracy cannot work apart from the gospel. A government of the people, by the people, and for the people, when the people are reprobates and animals, will lead to the worse government and the worst culture and the worst society imaginable. You don't want a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, if the people are wickedly depraved. You would rather have a benevolent dictator, if he knew the Lord, to put things in order. Every form of government cannot work apart from the gospel of Jesus Christ, whether it's democracy, oligarchy, whatever the form.

So look at verse 6. I want you to see Number Five: "The sorrowful heart." God is not unmoved by this. God is not existing in a bubble disconnected from this world. Note the sorrowful heart: "The Lord was sorry that He had made man." Now none of this caught God by surprise, God knows everything that will happen before it occurs. God is never caught off-guard. God is not receiving updates in heaven on what's the next thing that unfolded here. God has never learned anything.

So what does this mean God was sorry? It's a Hebrew word that means God was grieved, and God was pained. This word "sorry" is a very weak translation that has been given to us. It was wrenching to God that He had made man, despite the fact that God has known all along this would happen. And in a sense, it's a part of his eternal purpose and plan, though He is not the author of evil or sin. Nevertheless, God is not immune to this, and God was grieved and pained.

And then we read at the end of verse 6, "and he was grieved in His heart." That means He suffered anguish. God is not a stoic sovereign making chess moves in heaven. He's not a robotic ruler. He's not a mechanical maker. We are made in His image, and we have emotions, and we are made sorrowful, and we grieve; and so it is with God. Ephesians 4 tells us, "We grieve the Holy Spirit" - I think it's **verse 29** - when we sin."

Verse 7, "The Lord said, 'I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth.'" And the verb "blot out" means to wipe out. It means to wash away, wash out as though it never happened. And "man" here refers to the whole human race, the entire human race. Not a region, the whole human race, wherever they are found, except for one family of eight. And God says, "I'm going to wipe them out from the entire face of the earth. I'm just going to drown them to death, till they float on the surface of the water, and then their insides burst and they sink to the bottom."

You say, "Are you surprised God does this?" I'm surprised He didn't do it earlier. He said to Adam, "In the day that you eat of this fruit you shall surely die." This shouldn't surprise any one of us. What should catch us off-guard is the long-suffering and patience of God to endure such insanity in the midst of the people.

And God just does it top to bottom at the end of verse 7: "from man to animals to creeping things to birds of the sky; for I am sorry," - and that just reinforces - "I'm sorry that I've made them." How deeply God was grieved. And I think this just begs the question, "What must Holy God be feeling this moment as He looks down upon the United States of America, as well as the nations of the world, and see the debauchery and the depravity and the inventing of evil by the truckloads?"

God is not immune to this; and Jonathan Edwards likened it this way in his famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." He likened it to the river of God's wrath is flowing, and there is a dam of mercy that is holding it back at the present time; but the river keeps flowing, and it's building and it's building and deepening and heightening and increasing in

its force, until one day when God removes the dam of His mercy, the rivers of His wrath will be unleashed with even far greater damning force. And we make no apology for this, because this is God, and this is a planet that is populated with rebels and those who are guilty of cosmic treason to the highest level.

So I'm so glad there's verse 8. We end with verse 8, "A saved remnant," because God always has a remnant, God always shows saving grace, God always shows saving mercy: "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion, and I will harden the rest." The mystery is not that He would harden the rest, the mystery is that He would have mercy upon rebels like you and me. There but for the grace of God go you and I.

And so in verse 8, in the midst of this ungodly, unholy war against God, there was a remnant, small: one man and his wife, three sons and their wives, and that was all. Noah preached for one hundred and twenty years, he saw zero response. He was like Isaiah, he was like Jeremiah, he was like Ezekiel, that God said, "I will be glorified just in the preaching of My name, even with no one believing. I will be glorified in the proclamation of My name."

And so we read in verse 8, "But," – and sharp contrast with what has proceeded – "but" – and now this pivots and turns – "Noah found favor in the eyes of God." Noah was a trophy of God's grace. Even in the midst of this day of vengeance and wrath, the grace and the mercy of God is flowing from His throne, and Noah is singled out by God. He found favor. The word "favor" here means grace, unmerited favor, undeserved favor. Noah was a brand plucked from the fire. Noah became a bright, sparkling diamond in a coal mine. Noah stood out like a bright star on a dark night because of the grace of God. And there is this remnant with Noah, and God will drown the entire human race, just submerge them until they're dead. And then the waters will lower, and God will start all over again populating the planet.

Here we see that even in days of decadence that there is a godly remnant. And you and I are a part of that remnant today. We're a part of that unbroken chain of believers down through the centuries that will extend one day to the time of the return of Christ. And so it is incumbent upon us not to be married to the world, but to be in the world, and to bear witness to the world, and live distinctively different from the world, but not to become absorbed in the evil world system. We must maintain our distinctiveness. We must be different in order to make a difference. We are the salt of the earth, and we are to hold back the corruption by the message we bring by the way we raise our children, by our penetration into the world.

This is not a time for us to sound retreat and end up in a commune someplace by ourselves; that's not God's will nor design for us. God's purpose is that we go into all the world, that we go into the highways and the byways, that we shout it from the housetop, that we penetrate this world as best we can, as we are the light of the world in this hour of darkness, moral depravity, and wickedness. We are the candle that's burning, and is the only message of salvation that there is. And so it is incumbent upon us to remain strong in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I know going through these verses is somewhat sobering, it's very sobering. But I've come today not to tickle your ears, I've come today not to court you, I've come today to deliver to you the Word of God as a herald, as an ambassador of the high courts of heaven, to bring to you the truth of what's wrong with the world, and to bring to you the message of the only way of escape from the final judgment upon this world. And that way of salvation is found in Jesus Christ and in Him alone, who is like the ark of God, in that He is the only salvation and deliverance and rescue from His wrath. But you must be in the ark, you must be in Christ in order to escape the wrath that is to come. You need to prepare to meet the living God. You must prepare to have your day in court before the throne of grace. But it will be a judgment bar of wrath if you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

And so even today, it is as it was in the days of Noah, there's this window of time. There is this period of time that is shrinking for sinners to get on

board, to get in the ark, because the clouds are already beginning to swirl, and they're darkening at the end of this age. And soon the bottoms will open up, and there will be a torrential downpour that will never stop. And if you've never come to faith in Jesus Christ, the door of the ark is open, and you can enter in by faith alone, not by church membership, not by baptism, not by your good works; but by committing your life to Christ, you could take that step of faith and enter the ark, and be delivered from the wrath that is to come. This is the truth of God's Word. May you be a part of this remnant that has remained pure to the Lord. Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, this passage is beyond us, it's like an electrical shock that jolts our whole system. And there's no way to spray perfume on these verses. There's no way to put a candy shell around it. They're hard-hitting. They're direct. They tell it like it is. And, Lord, You have spoken to us today through Your Word. I pray that we would all be humble and be under Your Word and receive it as the truth from Your mouth. Father, we understand this is what's wrong with the world, but we understand that You have sent salvation in Your Son. May we all be committed to Him, in Jesus' name. Amen.