

## January 6-Genesis 6

Genesis 6 opens with a rather bizarre scene unfolding on Earth. Verse 2 shares with us that the “sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose.” While there is some debate regarding the identity of these “sons of God”, it is fairly clear from a study of the Old Testament that these sons were most likely angels. In fact, the book of Job alone has three references to the “sons of God” (1:6, 2:1, 38:7) and each of them very clearly refer to angelic beings.

Nevertheless, the point of the beginning of this chapter is that mankind had strayed very far away from God’s design and purpose for them. Remember, just a few short chapters ago that God created man and woman to be together in marriage for the purpose of multiplying. This multiplication of man was meant to bring to bear more individuals who could glorify and obey God on earth. However, in chapter 6 we read that man has neglected to obey God in many ways, culminating in the statement found in verse 5 “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” This is a monumental statement in the Scripture and it reminds us of the biblical truth that mankind is totally and utterly depraved. Depravity is a word that simply means “corrupt”. Sin made its entrance into the world through the disobedience of Adam and Eve, and consequently depravity has marked every man and woman’s life from that moment forward. Paul states this truth succinctly in Romans 5:12 saying “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin and so death spread to all men because all have sinned.” Essentially, what Paul is telling us is that we are born as natural sinners by virtue of our heritage and association with the first sinners Adam and Eve. Sin, at its heart is disobedience to God, and unfortunately it is the natural inclination of every man and woman who has ever lived.

The Bible speaks often about the reality that the human heart is terribly sinful. For example, Jeremiah 17:9 shares with us that “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick”, another passage referring to our sin is Romans 3:23 which states “all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” These texts, and many others, lead us to an important doctrine called “total depravity”. Total depravity essentially means that every part of our being has been corrupted by sin. It does not mean that we are absolutely as evil as we possibly could be in our fallen state, but it does mean that there is not a part of our being that has not been affected and marred by sin. The truth of man’s total depravity should cause us to think long and hard about verse 8 in chapter 6. Verse 8 says “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.” Now, if it is true that all men are totally depraved, meaning we are all natural sinners, then how could Noah have found favor with God? After all, God’s standard of righteousness is totally pure and we know that Noah was a sinner (Genesis 9:21) so did God just make an exception? Biblically the answer is clear, Noah was no exception. Romans 3:23 tells us clearly “all have sinned” and we know no mere human man transcends that truth.

The truth regarding how Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord is recorded for us in Hebrews 11:7 “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 by faith.” What separated Noah was not his good works but his faith. To be sure, good works came as a product of his faith (James 2:26) but Noah was counted righteous in God’s eyes because of his faith in God’s promises to save he and his family. In the same way, we today are counted righteous in the sight of our God not because of our good works but because of our faith in the Savior Jesus Christ. God informed Noah that he must believe that God would save his family if he believed in God’s warning and followed his instruction of building an ark to be a shield from the coming judgment. God has informed us today that we must believe and follow our Lord Jesus Christ as He is our shield in the Day of Judgment that is to come. Have you humbled yourself to trust in Christ? Is your faith, like Noah’s, inspiring you today to be obedient to God’s commands?