



Scripture

Genesis 6:5–8 (ESV)

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. ⁶And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.” ⁸But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Sermon Guide

The Need

How Bad Can It Be?

Genesis 6:5 is meant to contrast with Genesis 1. When we are told in Genesis 6:5 that “the Lord saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become,” we are to think of the many earlier statements that “God saw” what he had made, “that it was good” (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). The God who originally looked out on a good world is “grieved” that he made man and is determined to wipe all living creatures—“men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air”—from the earth.

What is it that has changed God’s outlook?

Sin that is viewed not as mere imperfection, but as something thoroughly hostile to God’s purposes and thoroughly infecting, like poison in drinking water.

Sin is an *internal* matter.

“The LORD saw ... that every inclination of the thoughts of [man’s] heart was only evil all the time.”

From the Heart: “Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man ‘unclean.’ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man ‘unclean’” (Matt. 15:17–20).

Sin is *pervasive*.

It comes out of the heart, which controls what we think and do, sin necessarily affects every part of our being so that nothing we think, do, plan, or are is unaffected by it. “Every inclination of the thoughts of [man’s] heart was *only* evil all the time.”

God, who sees things as they really are, describes the state of mankind severely. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”

The Lord Jesus made a fundamental statement about man’s depravity in John 3:6: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” He saw in man an unwillingness to respond to grace—“You will not come” (John 5:40), “You have not the love of God” (v. 42), “You receive me not” (v. 43), “You believe not” (v. 47).

It is not only that sin is internal as well as external, nor that it is pervasive in that it affects everything we can possibly think or do. It is also *continuous*, for in God’s judgment we all do “only evil *all the time*.”¹

The Heart of God

“... and it grieved him to his heart”

It’s a tragedy; it’s a horror, because the world was designed to have at its center, love of God and when that’s not there, things that should work, don’t work; things explode into evil and chaos, and we experience that every day—God loves the creatures that He made

by the fact that His heart is broken God proves Himself, not just to be sovereign, and not just to be Creator, and not just to be Almighty, but to be a God of marvelous love as He weeps at the betrayal.

“What in the world is God going to do?” How will God respond to this ultimate betrayal? Because you see, God understands this...that Every sin is vertical – you have never, ever sinned a purely horizontal sin in your life. Every sin is forgetting Him; every sin is refusing to love Him; every sin is a rejection of His presence and His glory and His authority—every sin is vertical.

God’s Response to the Betrayal

Genesis 6:7 (ESV)

So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

God in holy, righteous justice says, “Enough! I made you. I owned you. I provided every good thing you could ever want, a life of beauty that you could've never ever made for yourself, and this is what you do, you turn your back on me. I will wipe you out! I will wipe the earth clean.”

Noah Found Favor

Genesis 6:8 (ESV)

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Grace shines through, and the promise of a new day dawns.

This is the first appearance of the idea in the Bible. Here for the first-time grace is explicitly mentioned. So long as life lasts, regardless of the extent of the evil, there is always opportunity to find God’s grace where alone it can be found, namely, in the work of Jesus Christ in dying for his people’s salvation. Noah may not have known details about that future work of Christ. But he looked forward to the deliverer and ordered his life accordingly.

Notice that Noah did not earn grace. Noah found grace. He was willing to accept God’s judgment on his sinful and rebellious nature and place his hope in the Savior. By an act of sovereign Grace, God placed His favor on Noah and his family.

After the Flood

Genesis 9:8–9 (ESV)

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you,

God makes a covenant with Noah, and God says, “Noah, I’m going to bless you and not only bless you, but I’m going to bless your descendants.” There is a very familiar name in the genealogy that follows- Abraham. Because Abraham was one of those descendants, and God made a covenant with Abraham, and He said to Abraham, “Not only will your descendants be blessed, but through your seed, all the nations of earth will be blessed.” The apostle Paul alerts us to the fact that the seed of Abraham is Jesus Christ. The only way this horrible brokenness of relationship could be rectified is for God to send His Son.

“And so, God sends His Son, the Lord Jesus, to be exposed to all the harsh realities of life in a fallen world, but to live in the midst of all of that brokenness and all of that temptation an utterly perfect life, that life flowed out of His love for God, His love for the Father. He said, “I came to do Your will, O Father.” And in every thought and in every desire and in every word and in every action, He perfectly obeyed. He did what we are unable to do. And He died a satisfactory death. He took our sin upon Himself and paid the penalty for our sin with His death so that there would be hope for us, that finally love of self would be defeated, and it would be replaced by the love of God. So that someday, we would stand before Him, and every cell of our hearts would fully love Him so that every word and every thought and every action would be pleasing in his sight. That's the hope of redemption.” Paul David Tripp

And The Manger

Everyone in this room needs to embrace the sad reality of the betrayal of our Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious celebration of the hope that is ours represented by that baby in a manger who has come on this mission of rescue and deliverance.

¹George Bush, *Notes on Genesis*, vol. 1 (Minneapolis: James Family Christian Publishers, 1979), 120. Original edition 1860.