

LIVE A DISTINCTLY CHRISTIAN LIFE

5 This is the written account of Adam's genealogy. In the day when God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. ²He created them male and female, and blessed them, and he named them "man," in the day when they were created. ³After Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. ⁴And Adam lived eight hundred years after the birth of Seth, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ⁵Now altogether Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

⁶After Seth had lived a hundred and five years he became the father of Enosh. ⁷And Seth lived eight hundred and seven years after the birth of Enosh, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ⁸Now altogether Seth live nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.

⁹After Enosh had lived ninety years he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰And Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years after the birth of Kenan, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ¹¹Now altogether Enosh lived nine hundred and five years, and he died.

¹²After Kenan had lived seventy years he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³And Kenan lived eight hundred and forty years after the birth of Mahalalel, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ¹⁴Now altogether Kenan lived nine hundred and ten years, and he died.

¹⁵After Mahalalel had lived sixty five years he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶And Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years after the birth of Jared, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ¹⁷Now altogether Mahalalel lived eight hundred and ninety five years, and he died.

¹⁸After Jared had lived a hundred and sixty two years he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹And Jared lived eight hundred years after the birth of Enoch, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ²⁰Now altogether Jared lived nine hundred and sixty two years, and he died.

²¹After Enoch had lived sixty five years he became the father of Methuselah. ²²After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God for three hundred years, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ²³Now altogether Enoch lived three hundred and sixty five years. ²⁴Enoch walked with God, then he was removed from the earth; for God took him away.

²⁵After Methuselah had lived a hundred and eighty seven years he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶And Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty two years after the birth of Lamech, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ²⁷Now altogether Methuselah lived nine hundred and sixty nine years, and he died.

²⁸After Lamech had lived a hundred and eighty two years, he gave birth to a son. ²⁹He named him Noah, saying, This one shall give us rest from the work and hard labor of our hands caused by the ground which Jehovah has cursed. ³⁰And Lamech lived five hundred and ninety five years after the birth of Noah, and there were born to him other sons and daughters. ³¹Now altogether Lamech lived seven hundred and seventy seven years, and he died.

³²After Noah had lived for five hundred years, he gave birth to Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6 Now when men began to increase in number upon the earth, and daughters were born to them, ²the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; so they took any of them whom they chose and made them their wives. ³Then Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not contend with man forever, for man is mortal; man's days shall be a hundred and twenty years.

⁴The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God came to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the mighty men of old, the men of renown. ⁵And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every conception of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶And Jehovah felt remorse that he had made man on the earth, and it brought grief to his heart. ⁷And Jehovah said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the ground; both man and beast, as well as creeping things, and the birds of the heavens; for I regret that I have made them. ⁸But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah. (Gen. 5:1-6:8)

Introduction

Two university students in Moorhead, Minnesota, painted a mural on the wall outside their dormitory room. The mural depicted a school of fish all swimming in the same direction, with the exception of one single fish heading the opposite way. The one distinctly different fish was painted in the form of the age-old Christian symbol: IXTHUS. Printed across the bottom of the mural were the words: “Go against the flow.”

In obedience to our Lord, as His disciples we must be willing to go against the flow of society. As we follow the Lord Jesus, our motives, values, and decisions are bound to be different from those who are not Christians. (*Our Daily Bread*, 4/8/95.)

As children of God in Christ Jesus, we must preserve a unique and godly identity, distinct from the apostate world in which we live. Because you are a child of God in Christ Jesus, you must live a distinctly Christian life in the midst of an ungodly world.

I. Live a Distinctly Christian Life, and Thereby Enjoy God's Favor

The first seven verses of Genesis 6 describe the sinfulness of the human race, with verse 5 declaring: *“Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth.”* Then, in striking contrast to the first seven verses, we read in verse 8: *“But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah.”*

Noah was *a part of* the covenant line. By the grace of God, and through the exercise of faith, Noah was in the LORD's covenant of salvation. By the grace of God at work in his life, Noah was faithful to the covenant, living a distinctly Christian life. Contrast verse 5, which declares, *“the wickedness of man was great,”* with verse 9, which declares, *“Noah was a righteous man.”*

Noah was *the climax* of the covenant line. Beginning with Adam, Noah was the 10th generation, (a biblical number of completeness.) In the days of Noah the LORD brings the Great Flood, which judged the old world and brought into being “a new creation.”

Noah *represents* the covenant line. What is said of Noah, he “*found favor in the eyes of Jehovah,*” can also be said of the other members of the covenant line who also were faithful to the LORD.

Certain members of the covenant line are singled out for special mention—what is said about them shows different facets of a life that receives the LORD’s favor.

The first member of the covenant line to be singled out for special consideration is Enoch: “*Enoch walked with God*” (Gen. 5:21-24.) We should also take note Hebrews 11:5,

By faith Enoch was taken so that he would not experience death; and he was not found, because God took him. Before he was taken it was testified of him that he was one who was pleasing to God. (Heb. 11:5)

Enoch was an ordinary man, nothing more is said about him besides the fact he had a family; although Jude 14 describes Enoch as “*one who prophesied.*” But as an ordinary man there was something extraordinary about him: “*Enoch was taken so that he would not experience death.*” Enoch was taken because he had been “*pleasing to God*” (Heb. 11:5.) According to Genesis 5:22, Enoch had been walking with God for 300 years, (here was a committed Christian life.)

Hebrews 11:5 informs us, “*by faith Enoch was taken;*” the source of Enoch’s covenant commitment was faith. Faith stimulated and inspired his commitment. Faith connected him to Christ and the divine resources that enabled his commitment, as the Apostle Paul testifies in Philippians 4:13, “*I am able to do all things by him [Christ] who gives me strength.*”

Enoch was taken “*so that he would not experience death*” (Heb. 11:5.) That is to say, Enoch was never separated from fellowship with God. It appears that in the Old Testament era, for there to be unbroken fellowship with God, what was required was an immediate translation into the presence of God—because throughout the Old Testament era, before the accomplishment of Christ’s work at Calvary, upon death men appear to have entered into a state of soul-sleep, which would temporarily suspend the believer’s fellowship with God. This seems to be confirmed by several Old Testament passages, prominent among them being Psalm 88:10-12 and Psalm 115:17,

*Will you work wonders for the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise you?
11 Shall your lovingkindness be declared in the grave? Or your faithfulness in the*

place of destruction? ¹²Shall your wonders be known in the dark? And your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? (Psl. 88:10-12)

The dead do not praise the LORD, nor do any who go down into silence. (Psl. 115:17)

Conversely, in the New Testament era the Christian's "translation" occurs at the time of his physical departure from this present earthly life as in clearly indicated in such passages as 2 Corinthians 5:8,

... we are ... willing to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. (2 Cor. 5:8)

The second member of the covenant line to be singled out for special consideration is Lamech: Lamech hoped in God (Gen. 5:28-31.) Lamech names his son "*Noah*," (derived from the Hebrew נֹחַ, meaning "to rest," "to give comfort," "to give consolation.") Lamech prophesies, "*This one shall give us rest from the work and hard labor of our hands caused by the ground that Jehovah has cursed.*" Lamech recognized that Noah would be used by God to bring salvation to His covenant people, with Noah the people of God would pass safely through the judgment and enter into a "new" creation, experiencing God's divine blessing of rest.

After the birth of Noah, Lamech had to wait 595 years, and even then he had to rest in peace without yet seeing the realization of his godly hope. Lamech's whole life was characterized by hope in the LORD and His sure promises.

The third member of the covenant line to be singled out for special consideration is Noah: Noah was a righteous man before God (Gen. 6:9.) Noah is described as being "*blameless (נִזְקָה) in his generation.*" This means that Noah kept himself from willful, defiant transgressions (cp. Psalm 19:12-13, printed below); Noah conscientiously sought to live in submission to God.

*Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. ¹³Also **hold your servant back from committing willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then shall I be blameless (נִזְקָה), and I shall be innocent of great transgression.** (Psl. 19:12-13)*

Noah was "*blameless*" because "*he walked with God*" (Gen. 6:9.) In Genesis 17:1, the LORD had given to Abram this commandment: "*I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be blameless (נִזְקָה).*" The way to be blameless—the way to stay clear of great transgressions and stay on track spiritually—is to always set the LORD before you. As David testifies, "*I have set Jehovah always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved*" (Psl. 16:8.)

In contrast, note what is said with regard to the spiritual attitude of the wicked:

*An oracle is within my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked, **There is no fear of God before his eyes.** ²He flatters himself in his own eyes that his iniquity will not be detected and hated. ³The words of his mouth speak of iniquity and deceit. He has ceased to be wise and to do good. ⁴He devises iniquity upon his bed; He sets himself in a way that is not good; he does not abhor evil. (Psl. 36:1-4)*

Live a distinctly Christian life, characterized by 1) Fellowship with God, 2) Hope in God, and 3) Righteousness before God; and thereby enjoy God's favor.

II. Live a Distinctly Christian Life, and Thereby Bring Joy to God's Heart

When God looked down upon His creation, he saw that *"the wickedness of man was great in the earth"* (Gen. 6:5.) Men were engaged in all forms of wicked conduct. Genesis 6:11-12 describes the earth as being *"corrupt before God and filled with violence."* When the LORD looked down upon His creation, he saw that *"every conception of the thoughts of [man's] heart was only evil continually"* (6:5.) Man, who was created for devotion to God, had become completely devoted to evil.

An example of the state of the world in that day is given in Genesis 6:1-2; there we read, *"the sons of God co-habited with the daughters of men"* (literally, *"the sons of God took for themselves women."*) This mysterious account seems to be referring to a perverse union between fallen angels (*"the sons of God"*) and human women (*"the daughters of men"*)—note Job 1:6, a passage in which fallen angels (demons) are identified as *"sons of God."* We may also note Jude 6, which speaks about *"angels who did not stay within their own positions of authority, but left their appointed place."* According to Genesis 6:4, this perverse union produced *"Nephilim,"* that is to say, "men of renown," men of superhuman strength and exploit.

As the LORD looked upon the totally degenerate state of the world, he declared: *"My Spirit shall not contend with man forever, for man is mortal."* The Holy Spirit will not endlessly convict men and seek their repentance; there comes a point when men are consigned to the divine judgment. The Day of Judgment is set: it shall come after a period of 120 years, and then shall come the Flood.

As the LORD looked down upon the world in its degenerated condition, we read the incredible words, *"Jehovah felt remorse [literally, "Jehovah repented"], that he had made man on the earth, and it brought grief to his heart"* (Gen. 6:6.) As E.F. Kevan explains,

... the God who is revealed in the Scripture is capable of feeling sorrow and being grieved. He has real reactions to human conduct. Nevertheless, it is

impossible to conceive of the omniscient God regretting some false move that He has made. The repentance of God is not a change in purpose, but a change in attitude ... When man changes in his behavior then God changes in His attitude. The expression "*it repented the LORD*" is simply an indication ... that God's attitude to man sinning is necessarily different from God's attitude to man obeying. (E. F. Kevan, *The New Bible Commentary, Genesis*, p.83)

In contrast to all that the LORD saw when He looked upon the world, and his reaction to it, stands verse 8: "*But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah.*" Proverbs 11:20 states, "*Those who are perverse in heart are detestable to Jehovah; but those who are blameless (צַדִּיק) in their way are his delight.*"

Live a distinctly Christian life, and thereby bring joy to God's heart.

Conclusion

Because you are a child of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you must live a distinctly Christian life in the midst of this ungodly world. As you do so by the grace of God, you will both enjoy God's favor as well as bring joy to God's heart. Our Lord Jesus expressed this very truth in John 15:10-11;

If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you [i.e., so that we may be the object and the source of Christ's own joy], and your joy may be complete. (Jn. 15:10-11)