

Noah: Being Odd For God

A children's story for adults:

What we don't know:

Genesis 6-8

The flood:

The animals:

The people:

What we do know:

Genesis 6-8, John 15:1-20, Hebrews 11:7, 2 Peter 2:5

Godly obedience will:

- ✓ set you apart from the crowd
- ✓ encourage others to follow
- ✓ bring salvation to others

Godly obedience can get:

- ✓ uncomfortable
- ✓ smelly
- ✓ incredibly painful

The choice we're left with:

Do we trust God enough to give him our future?

Growth Group Homework

For the week of November 4, 2012

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, Noah: Being Odd for God, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Chris gave us some great insight into godly obedience this weekend. Can you think of a time when your obedience set you apart from the crowd, encouraged others to follow or brought salvation to others?

Can you think of a time when obedience was uncomfortable, smelly or incredibly painful for you or someone you know?

2. One of the biggest influences on how we parent is how our parents parented us. What do you consider to be your parents' strengths as parents? Is there anything you wish they had done differently?

Can you identify any ways that your views on parenting may have been shaped by your parents' strengths or weaknesses in raising you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. One of the results of Noah being odd was that he served as a bright light for God in a dark world. As followers of Christ, we have also been called to be "children of light" (Ephesians 5:8)

in a dark world. As you read Ephesians 4:17-32, jot down the contrasts you see regarding choices, attitudes and actions between living as a light and living in darkness.

Ephesians 4:17-32

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. [18] They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. [19] Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

[20] You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. [21] Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. [22] You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; [23] to be made new in the attitude of your minds; [24] and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

[25] Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. [26] "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, [27] and do not give the devil a foothold. [28] He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

[29] Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. [30] And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. [31] Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. [32] Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. [NIV]

How could living like this cause people to think we are odd?

Which of these attitudes or actions is most challenging for you to consistently live out?

2. Many of us spent our whole life trying to fit in and be normal, so to be told we're supposed to be "odd for God" can be a bit hard to swallow. How could the following passages help us feel more comfortable being "odd for God?"

1 Peter 4:3-5

For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do--living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. [4] They think it

strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. [5] But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. [NIV]

1 Peter 2:9-12

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

[11] Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. [12] Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. [NIV]

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. [14] But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. [NIV]

3. We heard this weekend about Noah's positive parenting. On the opposite end of the parenting success spectrum is the high priest Eli. In 1 Samuel 2 & 3 we read about his failure as a parent. Read 1 Samuel 2:12-17; 2:22-25; 3:11-14 and then answer the following questions.

1 Samuel 2:12-17

Eli's sons were wicked men; they had no regard for the Lord. [13] Now it was the practice of the priests with the people that whenever anyone offered a sacrifice and while the meat was being boiled, the servant of the priest would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand. [14] He would plunge it into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot, and the priest would take for himself whatever the fork brought up. This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh. [15] But even before the fat was burned, the servant of the priest would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give the priest some meat to roast; he won't accept boiled meat from you, but only raw."

[16] If the man said to him, "Let the fat be burned up first, and then take whatever you want," the servant would then answer, "No, hand it over now; if you don't, I'll take it by force."

[17] This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord's sight, for they were treating the Lord's offering with contempt. [NIV]

1 Samuel 2:22-25

Now Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. [23] So he said to

them, "Why do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours. [24] No, my sons; it is not a good report that I hear spreading among the Lord's people. [25] If a man sins against another man, God may mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?" His sons, however, did not listen to their father's rebuke, for it was the Lord's will to put them to death. [NIV]

1 Samuel 3:11-14

And the Lord said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle. [12] At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family--from beginning to end. [13] For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons made themselves contemptible, and he failed to restrain them. [14] Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.' " [NIV]

Why do you think Eli made the parenting choices he made?

It's not uncommon for parents to try to rescue their children from the negative consequences of their behavior. Unfortunately, all too often this only serves to enable them to continue that behavior. Can you think of any reasons why people still try to rescue and enable their kids, spouse or friends even though it doesn't work?

What do you think the balance is between wanting to protect and care for our children (or spouse or friends) and letting them experience the natural consequences of their behavior?

TAKING IT HOME

1. What would it look like for you to trust God enough to give him your future?

2. As you think about various aspects of your life (home, work, friends, neighborhood, etc), how do you think you're doing being "odd for God" in each one of them?



Prayer Requests:

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