

Genesis 6-9 Pt 1 - Sin and Judgment

Introduction

A. Series Introduction

1. This morning we are starting the next section of Genesis - the flood account
 - a. This will cover Genesis chapters 6-9 and we will do it in four weeks
 - b. I will generally go through it in order, but really I'm going to divide it into four topics that appear here
 - i. First week (this week) - Sin and Judgment
 - ii. Second week - Salvation and Recreation
 - iii. Third week - Covenant and Promise
 - iv. Fourth week - Continuing Necessity
2. As we cover these four topics, my contention across the whole series will be that the flood is a type *par excellence* of both God's judgment and God's salvation
 - a. So, in each week, what I am going to do is see the truths that are described in the passage and then consider them as truths not only about the flood but about salvation and judgment in general
 - b. So, this week, we are going to see how sin is described before the flood and how God's judgment is portrayed and consider those as universal truths - what is sin and how does God react to it

B. Read Passage

Genesis 6:1-7 - *When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown. 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. And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 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."*

Genesis 6:11-13 - *Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth."*

Genesis 6:17 - *For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.*

Genesis 7:11-12 - *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.*

Genesis 7:17-24 - *The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.*

C. Proposition and Outline

1. Proposition: The flood came as a response to the sinfulness of man and was a great demonstration and type of God's judgment against sin. The flood calls us to understand our sin and God's judgment and respond rightly lest we are destroyed by God in the same way.
2. Outline:
 - a. The reality of sin: Sin is sinful beyond measure
 - b. God's reaction to sin: righteous, terrible judgment
 - c. Applications

I. The reality of sin: sin is sinful beyond measure (Romans 7:13)

Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

A. Sin infects everyone (6:1-4)

When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

1. The beginning of Genesis 6 is actually part of the account of the generations of Adam from Genesis 5
 - a. A new passage doesn't start until Genesis 6:9 - the beginning of Genesis 6 belongs to the previous account
 - b. So, as we start Genesis 6-9, I want to look back first and see how this passage finishes the story of Genesis 5
2. Genesis 5 is a hopeful story
 - a. In Genesis 5, the promise of God to provide a descendent is shown not to have died with Cain and Able
 - b. The line of Seth also is fruitful and multiplies and the descendents of Seth are generally characterized as godly, at least as compared to Cain's line
3. But Genesis 6:1-8 calls us to understand something important about man's sin and God's salvation
 - a. Amidst the hope of salvation portrayed in Genesis 5, one may be tempted to think that Seth, as a new promised son, made a new beginning and that the salvation of God was already accomplished, or that Seth's line was enough to accomplish salvation
 - b. Is a descendant of the woman who calls on God all that is necessary to destroy the serpent and the curse? Genesis 6 shows us that this is not the case
 - c. The descendents of Seth are a continuation and a type of the promise of God, but they are not the ultimate fulfillment - even Seth's line is full of sin
4. Genesis 6:1-8 introduces a theme of God's salvation that is going to be displayed across the entire Bible
 - a. God is going to reveal truths about His salvation across redemptive history and each truth is going to tell us something about what salvation is like and how it is going to happen
 - b. But, after displaying the truth typologically, God's revelation will show that each truth alone is not enough
 - c. The truth displayed in Genesis 5 is that the Savior will come as the seed of the woman but Genesis 6 shows us that it is not enough - a good type, but not enough on its own
 - d. The promised Savior will be a man, but He must be more than a man as well
5. On the flip side, Genesis 6:1-8 shows us that all descendents of Adam - every man and woman - are sinners
 - a. In Genesis 4, we are not surprised that Cain's line is marked by sin - they follow their father the murder
 - b. But, in Genesis 6, it should become clear that even good people are infected by sin - a line of 'godly' men does not escape the bondage of sin
 - c. This truth is emphasized across Scripture - all men are sinners and fail to meet God's righteous expectations
 - i. Romans 3:23 - *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*
 - ii. Ephesians 2:2 - *All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts.*
6. This is probably the point of mentioning the Nephilim in the passage
 - a. There are arguments about who the Nephilim are - some think they are descendents of ungodly unions between fallen angels and human women, others think they are descendents of intermarriages between Seth's line, the Sons of God, and Cain's line, the daughters of men
 - i. Personally, I lean slightly toward the latter interpretation, but there are excellent arguments to be made on both sides and there are other minor proposals that must be thought through also
 - ii. This morning, I'm not going to make any clear pronouncement on that question, though, because the passage simply doesn't make it clear exactly who the Nephilim are, so it can't be that important to us
 - b. This is not to say that the mention of the Nephilim is unimportant, though, but we need to look and see what the passage says to understand why they are included here
 - i. The passages says that the Nephilim were mighty men, men of renown.
 - ii. But even renowned, mighty men were merely the product of sinful unions and were entrapped by sin the same as everyone else
 - iii. In fact, the way the passage reads, the mighty men of the earth contribute most to sin. The Nephilim were mighty warriors, but God condemns the earth as full of violence a few verses later.
 - c. Good men are merely good sinners. Great men are merely great sinners. None escape the corruption of sin by their own power or goodness. The Nephilim may have been great men but they are sinners nonetheless and they will be destroyed by God for their sin. Sin infects everyone, even the Nephilim.

B. Mankind is permeated by sin (6:5)

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

1. The generations of Adam does not end with merely a pronouncement that sin has infected all of mankind, it goes even further with this extremely potent statement in verse 5
 - a. Men are not merely sinners that sin some of the time
 - b. No, men are sinners so that EVERY intention of the thoughts of his heart was ONLY evil CONTINUALLY
 - c. The passage not only describes the breadth of sin - sin infects everyone - it also describes the depth of sin - sin penetrates to the very core of every person
2. Sin characterizes every person to the heart - there is nothing good in mankind (apart from Christ)
 - a. This is the constant testimony of the Bible, it is not merely that all people are sinners, it is that all people have nothing good in them - listen to the following references:
 - i. Psalm 14:2-3 - *The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.*
 - ii. Jeremiah 17:9 - *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*
 - iii. John 8:34 - *Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.*
 - iv. Romans 6:16-21 - *Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ... For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.*
 - v. II Peter 2:18-19 - *For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.*
 - vi. Romans 3:9-18 - *What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." "Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known." "There is no fear of God before their eyes."*
 - vii. John 3:19-20 - *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.*
 - b. Scripture testifies not only that every man is a sinner but that no man can do good
 - i. The thoughts of their hearts are only evil continually and they have a deceitful heart that is desperately wicked
 - ii. When God examines mankind, he finds none that are seeking after Him and none are able to do good
 - iii. Instead, mankind is a slave to sin - unable to do anything but serve this dreadful master
 - iv. So, Paul says that none are righteous, no not one and concludes, importantly, that there is no fear of God before our eyes
 - v. And John concludes that people love darkness rather than light
 - vi. In other words, we are sinners down to the core of our being, mankind is not merely a casual sinner, we are completely permeated by sin we love sin and we have been captured by sin
 - c. This doctrine is sometimes called total depravity
 - i. Now, I don't care if you use the term or not - the term 'total depravity' has nothing magical about it and it may be confusing to some
 - ii. But the truth is, men are totally depraved - we have nothing good in us - every thought of our heart is only evil all the time as God testifies in Genesis 6

3. But the question comes - what about the good things that sinners do?
 - a. Scripture clearly testifies that are good deeds are worthless before God - even hateful, so it is impossible for us to please Him
 - i. Isaiah 64:6 - *We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.*
 - ii. Romans 8:7-8 - *For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*
 - b. Hebrews tells us why even our good deeds are sinful before God - any deed done in the flesh apart from faith is odorous to God
 - i. Hebrews 11:6 - *And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*
 - ii. Romans 14:23 - *But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.*
 - c. So, the doctrine of total depravity does not deny that there are things that look good that sinners do
 - i. Men are not as evil as they could be all of the time, but it is saying is that men are never good - even deeds that may look good to us are not good before God
 - ii. When we get caught up in pointing out good things that unbelievers have done, we are looking from the wrong perspective - those deeds may look good to us, but before God they are still merely evil because they are done from a heart that hates Him and are not done in order to proclaim His glory in the universe
 - iii. So, every deed that humanity has done in themselves has been completely hateful to God because it does not seek His glory in the world
 - d. The reason it is sometimes hard to understand or accept this doctrine is a problem of perspective
 - i. We look around and we see that people are not 'as bad as they can be' - even unbelievers sometimes do good things
 - ii. But this is our perspective, in God's perspective, even the 'good' things unbelievers do are brazen sins
 - iii. If you have trouble thinking through this, here is a useful thought experiment
 - a) Which is a worse sin: murdering someone or not cherishing and adoring Christ as He deserves?
 - b) My understanding from Scripture is that not cherishing or adoring Christ as He deserves is much worse than any other sin we could possibly commit - it is a sin of infinite proportions against a being of infinite goodness
 - c) And the unfortunate truth is that none of us have loved or adored Christ as He deserves, instead we are, in our flesh, haters of God
 - d) So, all of us are already guilty of infinite sin - we may do relatively better or worse things, but we are merely stacking better or worse sins on top of our already infinite sin - it makes little difference
 - iv. From God's perspective all men are completely and totally corrupt
4. Total depravity can really be summed up by a question that Job asks in Job 14
 - a. Job 14:4 - *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one.*
 - b. Since sin has infected us, now everything we do is infected with sin. We can no longer do anything that is not sinful. Even our best deeds are full of sin. They are full of pride, self-reliance, lusts, passions, etc. and not full of the love of God.
5. So, Paul concludes in Ephesians 2:1-2 - *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*
 - a. The condition of sinful man is death in sin
 - b. It is an apt metaphor - just as a dead man can do nothing but be dead, so a sinful man can do nothing but sin
 - c. There is nothing a dead man can do to become alive, so there is nothing a sinful man can do to be good

C. Sin is a great offense against God (6:6)

And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.

1. What the passage does not mean: God does not know what is going on
 - a. Some people would look at verses like Genesis 6:6 that describe God as being sorry something happened and twist it to mean that God is not sovereign or all knowing
 - i. If God is sorry He made man, he must not have know how great man's sin would be
 - ii. Therefore God must not be able to see the future nor is He perfectly sovereign over it
 - iii. This doctrinal understanding is called open theology - God is open to what may happen

- b. But I would caution you strongly against falling into such understandings
 - i. I will agree that passages like this are hard to understand
 - ii. But there is very clear teaching in the rest of the Bible about God's sovereign handling of all things including His sovereign rule over the future
 - iii. Isaiah 48:3-11 - *"The former things I declared of old; they went out from my mouth, and I announced them; then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass. Because I know that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead brass, I declared them to you from of old, before they came to pass I announced them to you, lest you should say, 'My idol did them, my carved image and my metal image commanded them.' "You have heard; now see all this; and will you not declare it? From this time forth I announce to you new things, hidden things that you have not known. They are created now, not long ago; before today you have never heard of them, lest you should say, 'Behold, I knew them.' You have never heard, you have never known, from of old your ear has not been opened. For I knew that you would surely deal treacherously, and that from before birth you were called a rebel. "For my name's sake I defer my anger, for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.*
 - iv. God knows the future and is sovereign over it and He even declares what will happen in the future so that we will give Him the glory when it happens
 - c. On the other hand, we shouldn't react so strongly to this wrong doctrine that we end up denying what the passage is saying
 - i. Some people would react to doctrines like open theology and decide that God cannot have any emotions - this is called the doctrine of impassibility
 - ii. This is actually a fairly common doctrine to hold - since God is sovereign over all things including the future, He can't be emotionally affected by what is going on - it is even enshrined in many of the great historical Statements of Faith
 - iii. But, the problem is this passage, and many, many others, describe God as having deep, rich emotions regarding what happens in this world
 - iv. God is sovereign over all things, but He is also emotionally invested in His world
 - d. So, we should be careful not to fall into error on either side
 - i. We shouldn't deny God's sovereign knowledge of the future
 - ii. But we also shouldn't deny God's present emotional attachment to His creation
2. What the passage does mean: sin is a great grief to God
- a. God does have great emotional involvement in this world, and sin grieves Him deeply
 - i. Psalm 5:4-6 - *For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. You destroy those who speak lies; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.*
 - ii. Psalm 11:4-7 - *The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD's throne is in heaven; his eyes see, his eyelids test the children of man. The LORD tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence. Let him rain coals on the wicked; fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup. For the LORD is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face.*
 - iii. Isaiah 61:8 - *For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong;*
 - iv. Zechariah 8:17 - *do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the LORD."*
 - b. God is completely without sin and cannot abide with sin and sin is therefore hateful and grievous to Him
 - i. Habakkuk 1:13 - *You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong,*
 - ii. I John 1:5 - *This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*
 - iii. God hates sin with all of His being, it is utterly detestable to Him
 - c. So, this completes our description of sin from this passage
 - i. Sin infects all of mankind
 - ii. And not only does it infect all of mankind, but it permeates all of them to the heart
 - iii. And this sin is grievous and hateful to God - He cannot abide it
 - iv. Which leads directly to the second section of the sermon this morning

II. God's reaction to sin: righteous, terrible judgment (Ephesians 5:6, Colossians 3:6)

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

A. God sees every sinner (6:11-12)

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

1. The first observation from the text about God's reaction to sin is fairly obvious, I think, but Scripture emphasizes it over and over because we are apt to forget or ignore this great truth - God sees everything and knows every sin
 - a. Psalm 11:4 - *The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD's throne is in heaven; his eyes see, his eyelids test the children of man.*
 - b. Psalm 33:13-15 - *The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds.*
 - c. Psalm 139:1-12 - *O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.*
 - d. Jeremiah 23:23-24 - *Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God far away? Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD.*
2. So, as we talk about God's reaction to sin, the first thing we must acknowledge is that God sees every sinner
 - a. If sin is as bad as we discussed in the last point, then we must also realize that God sees all sin and He knows exactly how bad we are - there is nothing we can do to hide from His presence

B. God is justified to utterly destroy every sinner (6:3, 6-7)

Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 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."

1. Nowhere in our passage does it directly say that God is justified to judge sin, but throughout the passage, God defends why He is going to destroy the earth
 - a. There are two basic lines of thought that God gives for why He is justified to utterly destroy every sinner which I have tried to pull out in the two verses that we are looking at here
2. First, God is justified to judge sin because He is the Creator and we are merely creatures - He is sovereign over us
 - a. We see this in verse 3 - *Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."*
 - b. God says that since man is merely flesh, that is merely His creation, He will not abide with him forever
 - i. The translation of this verse is hard at several points (abide/contend/remain with, Spirit/breath, flesh/corrupted) as is the interpretation (is man's lifespan now 120 years or is it 120 years until the judgment or both)
 - ii. But regardless of how you translate or interpret the verse it comes down to the same point
 - iii. God isn't going to let sinful humanity continue forever, His judgment is going to come because He is sovereign and sinful men are merely creatures
 - c. We see a similar statements made across the Scriptures about God's right to judge His creatures
 - i. Isaiah 29:13-16 - *And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men, therefore, behold, I will again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden." Ah, you who hide deep from the LORD your counsel, whose deeds are in the dark, and who say, "Who sees us? Who knows us?" You turn things upside down! Shall the potter be regarded as the clay, that the thing made should say of its maker, "He did not make me"; or the thing formed say of him who formed it, "He has no understanding"?*

- ii. Jeremiah 18:1-11 - *The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do. Then the word of the LORD came to me: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the LORD. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it. And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will relent of the good that I had intended to do to it. Now, therefore, say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: 'Thus says the LORD, Behold, I am shaping disaster against you and devising a plan against you. Return, every one from his evil way, and amend your ways and your deeds.'*
 - iii. Romans 9:19-21 - *You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?*
 - d. God is the Creator and He has the right to judge His creatures because He created them
3. Second, God is justified to judge sin because He is holy and sin is hateful to Him
- a. This is the emphasis of verses 6-7 - *And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 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."*
 - b. God is right to judge because He is sovereign, but God is also right to judge because sin is sinful
 - i. We have already considered God's hatred of sin a few minutes ago, so I will not go over that again
 - ii. But if God is holy and sin is hateful to Him, then how could He not judge it and utterly destroy it
 - c. We see this across the Scriptures as well
 - i. Exodus 34:6-7 - *The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."*
 - ii. Habakkuk 1:13 - *You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?*
 - d. So, God's judgment of sin is a thing to be rejoiced in because in destroying sin He is destroying the most hateful thing in the universe
 - i. Revelation 19:1-4 - *After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for his judgments are true and just; for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants." Once more they cried out, "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever." And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great."*

C. God has chosen to utterly destroy every sinner (6:13, 17)

And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth... For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.

1. Each of the points here under God's reaction to sin builds incrementally on each other
 - a. God sees every sinner and God is justified to utterly destroy every sinner
 - b. So, it should come as no surprise that God has chosen to utterly destroy every sinner
 - c. It is the natural outcome of the truths about sin and the truths about God that we have already considered this morning
 - d. It should actually surprise us more if this was not the case
2. So, God makes an announcement to Noah that He has determined to destroy all sinners along with the earth
 - a. His Godness and His holiness could not abide with sin, so He purposed to utterly destroy it
 - b. And as we've been considering throughout our lesson this morning, this serves as an example and type of the judgment that is going to come
 - c. Just as God determined to utterly destroy every sinner in the days of Noah, so also God has determined to utterly destroy every sinner on the last day

- d. Acts 17:30-31 - *The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."*
- e. II Peter 2:1-10 - *But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.*

D. God's judgment will utterly destroy every sinner (7:11-12, 17-24)

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights... The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

1. Again, our point is another small incremental addition to our understanding of God's judgment
 - a. God's choice to utterly destroy every sinner will not be nullified
 - b. God pronounced a total judgment upon the world of the ungodly and He brought His purposes to pass
2. So, in the same way, we should not overlook God's choice to destroy every sinner at the last judgment
 - a. II Peter 3:5-12 - *For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!*
 - b. God's promised purposes are sure and God has promised to utterly destroy the world of sinners and to utterly destroy every sinner along with it

I. Applications

A. We must understand our sin and God's justice rightly and personally

1. The first application I want to make this morning is to transition from merely theological understanding of these truths to personal conviction of these truths
 - a. We can talk in an abstract way about the fact that all people are sinners or that we are permeated by sin
 - b. But, I want to consider now that if this is true of each person it is true about you and about me
 - c. You and I are sinners before God and, apart from Christ, we have been captured by sin to do its will and our sinfulness is hateful to God
 - d. So, I want to call you to see your state before God as a sinner and to understand that and mourn over it correctly
2. Paul understood his sinful state before conversion rightly
 - a. I Timothy 1:13 - a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent
 - b. I Timothy 1:17 - the foremost of sinners
 - c. Ephesians 3:8 - less than the least of all of God's people
3. Paul also understood his continuing battle with his sinful nature
 - a. We might be tempted to say that our sinful nature existed before Christ redeemed us, and in a way that is true - but there is also a way that our salvation is not done yet and we will be battling our sinful nature until Christ returns
 - b. So, though Christ has freed us from bondage to sin, we still find sin in us and beside us and we ought rightfully to continue understanding and mourning this fact
 - c. Romans 7:13-24 - *Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*
4. David also understood his sin before God
 - a. Psalm 51:3-5 - *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*
 - b. David understood his sin and his sinfulness before God and he understood how God hated sin and was right to judge it - this is the humble understanding that I want to call us to this morning as we consider sin
5. So we should be able to say with Paul wholeheartedly
 - a. About our former selves before Christ - Ephesians 2:1-3 - *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.*
 - b. And about our continuing situation as sinners - Romans 7:24 - *Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*

B. We must understand our desperate need of Christ

1. I don't want our applications this morning to end with a right understanding of sin, because a right understanding of sin is not an end unto itself
 - a. A right understanding of sin has a purpose, a goal to which it leads
 - b. It ought to point us to Christ - either for the first time to seek Him for forgiveness for our sins or, as we grow in our understanding of sin, to understand more and more how much we need Christ because of the greatness of our sin
2. This is what Paul's contemplation of man's sinfulness led him to
 - a. Ephesians 2:1-5 - *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*
3. So, the reason I want you to understand your sin rightly is to magnify Christ as He ought to be magnified
 - a. Apart from the grace of Christ we had no hope - Paul says that we were "*without hope and without God in the world*" - as we understand our sinfulness more and more we ought to love Christ more and more
 - b. Luke 7:41-50 - *"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven---for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."*
 - c. Like the forgiven woman, the more we know our own sin the more we know the forgiveness of Christ and the more we know the forgiveness of Christ, the more we love Christ. Knowing sin is not an end unto itself, knowing our sin rightly ought to cause us to love and magnify Christ greatly.

C. We must acknowledge, expose, and repent of sin

1. Our last two applications were primarily personal understanding of the truths we've looked at this morning, but now I want to turn to something active and practical - what should we do in the face of sin
 - a. My contention this morning is that there are three things we need to do in the face of sin - three things that the Bible prescribes for us
 - b. First, we must acknowledge our sin to ourselves and to God
 - c. Second, we must expose our sin to God and to each other
 - d. Third, we must repent of sin and seek after righteousness instead
2. We must acknowledge our sin to ourselves and to God
 - a. I start with acknowledgment of sin because it seems to be the most basic necessity regarding sin
 - i. In my experience with myself and with others it seems that the first thing sinful man wants to do is minimize or deny his sin - he wants to deceive others, God and even himself about his sinfulness
 - ii. So, instead of being deceitful about our sin, we must acknowledge our sin, to declare it rightly to ourselves and to God
 - b. This is a very Scriptural principle
 - i. I John 1:8-9 - *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*
 - ii. Psalm 51:3-5 - *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*
 - iii. Notice that David acknowledges both individual sins and general sinfulness and God's right to judge sin
3. We must expose our sin to God and to each other
 - a. Scripture does not stop at simply acknowledging our sinfulness, though that is an important starting point
 - i. As we look across Scripture, it also calls us to expose our sin to God and to each other
 - ii. Now, to expose our sin to God is very similar to acknowledging our sin, but it has the connotation of exposing it to Him for the purpose of Him destroying it
 - iii. And a new dimension of exposing is to expose our sins to each other - to spend time confessing our sins to one another for the same purpose - to seek each other's help in destroying sin in our lives

- b. Scripture calls us to expose our sin and our sinfulness to God
 - i. Ephesians 5:11-14 - *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*
 - ii. John 3:21 - *But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."*
- c. Scripture calls us to expose our sins to each other as well
 - i. James 5:16 - *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*
 - ii. Acts 19:18-20 - *Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.*
 - iii. Exposing our sins to each other may be the hardest thing I call us to this morning, but it is one of the most beneficial as well
 - a) It builds a right humility in us as it causes us to meditate and understand our sinfulness
 - b) It gives us the opportunity to pray powerfully for each other in specific ways
 - c) And it gives us the opportunity to guard each other against temptations we will face
 - iv. I've had the opportunity several times over the last couple weeks during our Friday meetings to do this with some of the men and we have had the chance to pray together for each other as we exposed sin in our lives
- 4. We must repent of sin and seek after righteousness instead
 - a. I'm sure most of you know the definition of repentance, but it would be good to define it once more
 - i. To repent means to turn away from, so to repent from sin means that we desire no longer to be captured by sin but to be captured by righteousness instead
 - ii. It is the culmination of acknowledgement and exposure of sin - these are for the purpose of renouncing our sin and seeking God's righteousness instead
 - b. Repentance may be the most repeated theme in the Bible
 - i. Matthew 4:17 - *Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*
 - ii. Luke 13:1-5 - *There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."*
 - iii. Acts 2:37-38 - *Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
 - iv. Acts 17:30-31 - *The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."*
- 5. The end result of this point is a call to earnest and honest prayer before God
 - a. Acknowledging sin, exposing sin and repenting of sin start in honest prayer before God
 - i. Prayer is where we bring our understanding of sin and our desperate need for Christ into reality - a time when we can weep over the horror of our sin and rejoice over the goodness of Christ to us
 - ii. We honestly acknowledge both our sin and our sinfulness before God
 - iii. We expose our sin to God seeking Him to destroy the sin we have acknowledged before Him
 - iv. And we repent before God and determine by His power to live according to His character instead
 - b. And then, as we expose and confess sin to each other, we must come in prayer before God
 - i. Confession of sin should not be simply a cathartic time of absolving ourselves of feelings of guilt
 - ii. Instead, it should be a time where we learn how to pray powerfully for each other
 - iii. So, as we expose sin, we should pray earnestly for each other for God's power to defeat sin in our brothers' and sisters' lives

D. We must understand our desperate need of the Holy Spirit's power in our lives

1. As we acknowledge, expose and especially repent of sin, that is desire to turn away from it, the truths of sin should also show us how much we need the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives
 - a. When we start wanting to turn away from sins power, the true power of sin in our lives is revealed to us
 - b. We cannot merely turn away from sin in our own power, but we are not hopeless
 - c. God has promised that through His Spirit we can have victory over sin
2. Romans 8:5-13 - *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*
3. Galatians 5:16-25 - *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.*
4. And so, sin once more serves to push us to glorify God
 - a. We have already been pushed to see how great our desperate need of Christ is and to magnify and adore Him rightly
 - b. And now we are being pushed to see how deeply we need the Holy Spirit's power in our life and to earnestly seek Him rightly

E. We must proclaim God's coming judgment on sin

1. I finish with this application based on two texts that reflect on the time period of the flood
 - a. II Peter 2:4-5, 9-10 - *For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly... then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority*
 - b. Jude 14-15 - *It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him."*
2. In the Genesis account, two men are called out as righteous - Enoch and Noah - and in the New Testament we see that both of them were heralds or prophets of God, denouncing sin and calling to righteousness
 - a. Enoch prophesied the coming judgment of God
 - b. Noah was a herald of righteousness
3. If the flood is the supreme type of the coming judgment then those of us who have repented of sin should also be heralds of righteousness to a sinful world
 - a. We should not be ashamed or bashful about proclaiming the realities of sin and judgment
 - b. Instead, we should be bold in proclaiming the coming judgment and seeking to turn people from sin and to enter the Ark of Salvation - Christ