Family Faith, Part 2

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Introduction

Would you take the Word of God and turn to Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 7? This morning we talked from Hebrews chapter 11 about faith for the family, and we're talking about that again tonight. This is just more or less an addendum to the message this morning. And, this is the year of the family. We are talking about family faith this Sunday; next Sunday, we're going to be talking about family finances. And so, let's read here in Hebrews chapter 11, beginning in verse 7: *"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house"*—now, that doesn't mean the place he lived. He wasn't trying to save something with four walls and a roof. When it says *"to the saving of his house"* (Hebrews 11:7), it means "his family"—"to the saving of his family"—*"by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith"* (Hebrews 11:7).

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A. The Titanic

Everybody today is talking about the Titanic. I have not seen the movie, but I have done reading about the Titanic—much reading about the Titanic. It was called an unsinkable ship, and that's about the only thing it ever did. It was a monstrous floating palace. It set sail on April the 10th, 1912. It was unequaled in lavish splendor. It had ballrooms. It had beauty salons. It had tennis courts. It had sauna baths. And, it has become a great object lesson that preachers have used and will continue to use, I guess, down through the ages until Jesus comes. Several things as I studied about the Titanic that interested me:

1. The Confidence

Number one was the confidence that those who sailed her had in that great ship—quotation: "Everybody knew that the ship was unsinkable." That was one of the keynotes for luring passengers aboard this ship—that is was an unsinkable boat. And so, they boarded this luxurious White Star liner. Every sailor aboard confidently said that it could not sink. And, Bruce Ismay, the White Star Chairman, stated—and I quote: "I cannot imagine any condition that would cause the ship to founder. I cannot imagine any disaster happening to this vessel. Modern shipbuilding has come beyond that." He said, "It just can't happen." And, it's no wonder that one of the crewmen flippantly said, "Even God Himself could not sink this ship." Hmm, well, here was a ship that sailed with great confidence, every assurance of safety, every available luxury. And so, this Titanic set sail.

2. The Carefree Spirit

But, not only was there this confidence—there was a carefree spirit. Those on board were having a party. A Mrs. Harris, who was one of those rescued, said—quote: "We were out on a lark. Revelry was the keynote. The weather was superb. The comfort and luxury aboard were all that had been promised. The days passed too quickly. I felt as if I could go on… I felt as if I could go on 'til the end of time." So, here they are sailing an unsinkable ship, having a wonderful, wonderful time. And, those who were in charge repeatedly called out on watch, "All's well, and the lights are burning brightly."

3. The Calamity

Soon, however, the lights were about to go out on the Titanic. On the night of April the 14th, this swiftly gliding ship was the only movement on an ebony sea, and the stars were the only light in a cloudless sky; and the sea was very calm—sailing along having a party. Yes, confidence, carefreeness, and then suddenly, calamity. They struck an

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iceberg, and they were not expecting, of course, to strike an iceberg. The crew had kept the Titanic at its regulated speed of 22 knots, but at 11:40 p.m., there was that fateful collision with that iceberg. And, in a matter of minutes, a 300-foot gash was ripped into one side of the indestructible ship. Now, for those of us who love the game of football, that's a gash the length of a football field. And, somebody said, "It is as if a giant finger were racked along the side of that ship." And, it opened one compartment, and then two compartments, and then three, and then four, and then five of the watertight compartments; and subsequently and consequently, they began to fill with water. No alarms were sounded, however, but gradually the news spread. Few, however, on board the ship, even after they'd struck the iceberg, seemed to be concerned. And, for those that were concerned, they were soothed with assurance that all that was needed was being taking care of, all that was needed to be done was being done—that assuaged their fear. They were told that danger was a fantasy; and so, the amusements resumed.

However, all was not well. And, at 12:45 a.m. a rocket was fired. It was to be the first of eight futile calls for assistance. Finally, they realized that the ship had to be abandoned. "Women and children first" was the call that went down through the corridors of the mighty sinking palace. By 1:30 a.m. in the morning, the dream cruise had turned into a nightmare. But, for many it was too late. There were over 2,000 aboard the Titanic and lifeboats for only about half that number. Some of the men even disguised themselves as women, that they might get aboard a lifeboat. And, those who were in the lifeboats circled the Titanic as loved ones might stand around a dying friend and as a family would stand and watch a loved one go over into eternity. They circled this mighty floating palace as she slithered into a watery grave. And, those who were in the lifeboats heard the calls of the survivors who were left struggling in that freezing sea, agonizing wails pleading for assistance, and those calls went unheeded because there was no more room in the lifeboats. The unthinkable had happened. The Titanic was sunk—nothing left but some desperate survivors.

The very name *Titanic* comes from the word *Titan*. The Titans were the gods of Greek mythology. They were to be the supreme gods of the universe. One thousand five hundred souls went to a watery grave. There were many classes aboard: those who were traveling luxury (first class); those who were traveling in other classes; and, of course, there were those who below, who were below in the steerage. But, after this calamity, all of those classes did not matter. There were only two classes—saved and lost.

Now, you know, in society, we have all kinds of classes, don't we? But, don't you have the idea that we're kind of on board the Titanic, and don't you have the idea that

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we are on a collision course with destiny? And, don't you have an idea that after it's all over, there are only going to be two classes—and that will be the saved and the lost? I thought about that as I prepared this message on the good ship *Grace*—Captain Noah and his ship, the ark. What a difference there was between the sinking of the Titanic and Noah and the ark! I chose this story of Noah and the ark, which is a true story, because I wanted to say one more time of the importance of getting our children off the Titanic and onto the ark, getting our families into the ark of safety, so that we might do as Noah did and prepare an ark for the saving of our house.

I. The Faith of Noah

Having said that, do you notice several things about Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 7? The very first thing I want you to notice is Noah's faith. Notice how it begins: *"By faith"—"by faith"—"Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, [and] prepared an ark to the saving of his house"* (Hebrews 11:7). Now, that's the same thing that we said this morning about the mother and father of Moses. How was young Moses reared? By faith. How are you going to raise a family in these days in which we live? There's only one way—by faith.

A. A Working Faith

And, it is a faith that is a working faith. *"By faith…Noah prepared an ark"* (Hebrews 11:7). Faith is not sitting around doing nothing, saying, "What will be, will be. I'm trusting God." Faith is belief with legs on it. Noah, because he had faith, he prepared an ark. It was a working faith.

B. A Waiting Faith

And, it was a waiting faith. For 120 years, he was building that ark with the wrath of God in the foreground and the ring of hammers in the background. The Bible says that he did this because he had been warned of God (Hebrews 11:7). That is, his faith, therefore, was based on the Word of God. For the Bible says that *"faith [comes] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17). It was a divine revelation that caused Noah to do what he did. That means that you will not have faith for your family until you hear from God.

C. A Faith that was Willing to Stand Alone

It was faith that was willing to stand alone. Noah was looked on as being strange, weird, eccentric, out of step with everybody else; and precious friend, so will you. Now, don't try to fit in. Noah was different; you must be different. You must stand alone.

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D. A Faith that Did Not Depend Upon Appearances

It was faith that did not depend upon appearances. There was no reason to believe there would be a flood from appearances. So far as we can tell, it had never even rained upon the earth. There was a mist that went up and watered the earth (Genesis 2:6). There had never been a universal calamity. There was nothing to suggest a flood—nothing but clear skies, nothing but people, according to Jesus, who were buying and selling and marrying and giving in marriage (Matthew 24:38). Everything was splendid, just as it was on the Titanic. But, the Bible says Noah was different. Noah had faith.

II. The Fear of Noah

Now, here's the second thing I want you to notice—not only the faith of Noah, but I want you to notice the fear of Noah—Noah and his fear—because the Bible says Noah was *"warned of God"* (Hebrews 11:7). Do you see that? And, he was *"moved with fear"* (Hebrews 11:7).

Now, this morning, we told you that there were two parents who were not afraid: Amram was not afraid of the king's commandment; Jochebed was not afraid of the king's commandment. And, correspondingly, young Moses was not afraid to turn his back on Pharaoh. But now, the Bible says that Noah was *"moved with fear"* (Hebrews 11:7). Two kinds of fear—there's the fear of the world, and there's the fear of God. Amram and Jochebed had no fear of this world, and do you know why? They had the fear of God. That's the fear of God that we're talking about now. Noah was *"warned of God"* (Hebrews 11:7). And, when we say "the fear of God," that's the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10).

Now, listen to me, precious friend—the fear of God does not mean that we are shocked, dismayed, overwhelmed by the thought of God. *The fear of God is love on its knees.* It understands that our God is an awesome God—our God is a holy God. Now, I hear people say that they don't believe in religion based on fear. Well, I do—I do. Those people, by the way, are, are hypocrites. We live our lives based on fear every day. We fear starvation so we eat. We fear catching a cold so we wear overcoats. We fear those who will break and enter our homes so we lock our doors. We fear being hit by a car so we look both ways when we cross the street. We exercise self-preservation every day in 100 different ways, but the greatest danger that men can face is the wrath of God against our sin and unbelief. And, therefore, any man is wise to be moved with fear to get right with God.

Let me give you a scripture. Jesus said, *"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul"*—that is, "Don't you fear the Pharaohs of this world"—*"but rather*

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fear him which is able to destroy both [body] and [soul] in hell" (Matthew 10:28). Don't fear the people of this world; fear Almighty God. The supreme danger is to stand before God unpardoned, un-forgiven, and un-cleansed. And, I had rather frighten people into Heaven than lull them into Hell. Had you not? There is something to be warned about. Noah was moved with fear. Somewhere in years back, I read of some sailors who asked a chaplain, "Chaplain, do you believe in Hell?" He said, "Yes, I do. Why did you ask?" They said, "Simply this—if there is a Hell and you don't believe in it, we don't want you for a chaplain; and if there is no Hell, we need no chaplain." No, Noah was moved with fear.

III. The Foresight of Noah

Now, here's the third thing I want you to notice—not only Noah and his faith, and Noah and his fear, but I want you to notice Noah and his foresight. The Bible says he was *"moved with fear"*; and therefore, he *"prepared an ark"* (Hebrews 11:7). Noah did not wait until it began to rain before he prepared an ark. He did not wait until it began to rain in order to get ready. He had some foresight. He made preparations.

I may have told you about a time I was driving my automobile, going down a main street, and a car shot out of the side street. There was a stop street. The man never even slowed down. I saw him coming, I hit the brakes on my automobile. Finally, he saw me. He hit his brakes, and we both began to spin just like that—just spinning around. And, it so happened that when our automobiles stopped mine was pointing this way, and his was pointing that way, and our windows were about that far apart. I'm looking into his face, and he is looking into mine. And, he said to me, "Where in the blankety-blank-blank did you come from?" I started to say, "West Palm Beach." That's where I was born. "Where in the blankety-blank-blank did you come from?" I said, "Well, I was just coming down the street, sir." I said, "You ran a stop sign, but," I said, "thank God neither of us was hurt." But, I said, "You know, mister—you were seconds away from eternity; so was I." But, I said, "I would hate to meet God with that kind of language in my heart. I would hate to meet God with that kind of blasphemy in my heart." Do you know what he said? He said, "Well, I'll take care of that when I get there." Friend, he will not—he won't take care of it when he gets there. I mean, you can't prepare when you get there—you can't prepare. When it begins to rain, you can't build the ark. The Bible says that Noah *"prepared [this] ark to the saving of his [household]"* (Hebrews 11:7).

Now, we have a generation today, however, that makes no preparation. What did Jesus say would be the marks of the last days? He said in Matthew chapter 24: "But as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the day of the coming of the Son of man" (Matthew 24:30). They were marrying, giving in marriage, eating and drinking, and they

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knew not until the flood and took them all away (Matthew 24:38–39).

A. The Three Marks of Noah's Day

What were the three marks of Noah's day? Well, the same three marks of our day:

1. Indifference

Number one: indifference—eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage (Matthew 24:38). Nothing wrong with those things, but the idea is that life is just going on—eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage (Matthew 24:38).

2. Immorality

And then, the second mark was immorality. The way that they were living was a stench in the nostrils of God. Genesis chapter 6 tells us that (Genesis 6).

3. Ignorance

And, the third mark was ignorance: *"They knew not until the flood came, and took them all away"* (Matthew 24:39). Those are the classic three marks of our generation today—indifference, immorality, and ignorance. However, Noah went against the tide. He *"prepared an ark to the saving of his house"* (Hebrews 11:7).

IV. The Family of Noah

Now, here's the next thing I want you to notice—not only Noah and his foresight, but I want you to notice Noah and his family. Noah *"prepared an ark [for] the saving of his house"* (Hebrews 11:7). Now, the Bible teaches household faith.

Let me give you some verses. Just open, if you will please, to these verses that I've jotted down. Acts chapter 11—just put your bookmark there in Hebrews chapter 11, and turn to Acts chapter 11 with me. Let me show you something—why I believe this is such an important verse for what we are about this year, the year of the family. Acts chapter 11, beginning in verse 13: and Peter here is talking about his vision, and he says, *"And he shewed us how he"*—that is, Cornelius—*"had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved"* (Acts 11:13–14). Just underscore that. "You, Cornelius, and all your house. Cornelius, we don't want you to go to Heaven and leave your family behind."

And then, look, if you will, in Acts chapter 16. Just fast-forward there just a little bit and look, if you will, in verse 15: it talks about a certain woman whose name was Lydia, and the Bible says, *"And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us"* (Acts 16:15). Now, it's an important thing that when Lydia got saved, the very first thing she did was to share her faith with those who were

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in her household.

Now, turn to Acts chapter 16 and look in verse 30 at the Philippian jailer, if you would: and he had asked Paul and Silas, *"What must I do to be saved? And they said"*—verse 31—*"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house"* (Acts 16:30–32). And, look in verse 34: *"And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all [of] his house"—"with all [of] his house"* (Acts 16:34).

Now, Noah *"prepared an ark to the saving of his house"* (Hebrews 11:7)—not his domicile, not the place where he lived, but his family. Now, we want everybody saved; but folks, I want all my family going to Heaven. The Bible teaches a household faith. That doesn't mean that you can believe for your children, but it certainly means that you need to have some foresight, you need to make some preparation, you need to say, "I want all my family to be aboard the ark of safety." I cannot even imagine the thought of being in Heaven without my children, without my grandchildren. I want them to know the Lord. That's the reason I've questioned each of them so carefully, dealt with them so prayerfully, that they might come to know the Lord Jesus. And, I would sit down and talk with each of my grandchildren, face to face, heart to heart, as their parents have done about faith in the Lord Jesus.

I can remember one time, many years ago, I was praying, and I said, "Lord, if any of my children who have made a profession of faith are not saved—O God, please, if they just are members of the church but they are not truly saved—O God, speak to their heart." I told nobody about the prayer, but the next Sunday my precious daughter, Gail, came down the aisle and said, "Daddy, I'm not sure I've really been saved. I want to be saved—I want to be saved." I thank God for that. We need to be concerned about our children, that they are all upon that ark. Parents, can you imagine a little boy in Noah's time who would come home to his dad and say, "Daddy, there's a man over here. His name is Noah. He's building a great big ship because he said God's going to send a flood and destroy the world." Can you imagine that man saying, "Son, don't worry about that. Old Noah is just a religious fanatic. He's an old fool. He's been building that boat now for more than 100 years. No flood has come. As a matter of fact, Son, it's almost humorous. When I was a little boy I went out and saw old Noah building that boat, and I came to my dad and asked my dad about it, and Son, you won't believe this, but my dad said the same thing had happened to him. He had talked to his dad about it. Son, from generation to generation, there have always been religious fanatics. We live in one of the finest neighborhoods here. You're going to one of the finest schools here. Son, your daddy loves you. Don't you worry about being aboard any so-called *ark*. Don't you worry

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about those fundamentalist believers—just don't worry about that. Everything is going to be all right, Son." Mister, it would be bad enough for you to go to Hell, but for you to take your children with you—how sad that would be! The Bible says that Noah *"prepared an ark to the saving of his house"* (Hebrews 11:7). So, think with me just a little bit about Noah and his family: he got his family into the ark.

V. The Fortune of Noah

The last thing I would have you to think about is not only Noah and his family, but Noah and his fortune. Look at it here, now, again in verse 7. Go back to Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 7, and the Bible speaks of the fortune that this man had because he obeyed the Lord. The Bible says he *"prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of righteousness, which is by faith"* (Hebrews 11:7). That's his fortune—that's his fortune.

Now, he had more than that fortune. Actually, he had a great fortune in other ways. You see, while other people were buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, and going on about taking care of feathering their own nest, Noah was building the ark. Perhaps Noah put everything that he had into building of that ark, because evidently it was a costly project. And, maybe when the last nail was driven into that ark, Noah was bankrupt. God said, "Noah, come thou and thy family into the ark" (Genesis 7:1). And, Noah and his family went into that ark. And, he'd put everything into the ark and went into the ark. According to this world, a pauper—but friend, when he came out of the ark, he owned the world. The Bible says, *"The meek shall inherit the earth"* (Psalm 37:11). When he went into the ark, he was a minority; but when he came out, he was a majority. And, I just love to think about this.

But, the great thing is not necessarily the real estate that he had. The main thing is this—that he was an heir of righteousness (Hebrews 11:7). The things that really mattered to Noah he gained by faith. And so, what is the message here? The message is there's a ship that we're all familiar with—the Titanic. I have an idea that there are a lot of people who are on board the Titanic right now, and they are saying, "All is well, and the lights are burning brightly." But, I have an idea there are some other people who are on the good ship *Grace* and have put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—and truly, all is well. Are you on board? Is your family on board? The gangplank is faith. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and [you'll] be saved"* (Acts 16:31).

Conclusion

Will you bow your heads in prayer? Every head bowed, and every eye closed. How many tonight can say, "Pastor Rogers, I'm on board the good ship *Grace*. I have

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received Christ as my personal Savior and Lord. And, that ark is a picture of Jesus, and I am in Jesus, the ark of safety. I know that I know by the grace of God that I'm Heaven-born and I'm Heaven-bound"? If you can give me that testimony, would you lift your hand? Just hold it up. Oh, that's so many of us. Take your hand down.

Now, if you could not lift your hand, let me help you for a moment. You might say, "Pastor, I'm not certain that I'm saved, but I want to be. If I man can be saved, if a man can know—if a woman can be saved, and if they can know—I want to know. I don't want to go through the wrath of God. I don't want to face the floodwaters of God's wrath without an ark of safety. I want to be saved." If you feel that way, let me just guide you in a prayer.

Would you pray this way? "Lord Jesus, I know that You are the Son of God. I know that You died for my sins—You paid for my sins with Your blood on the cross. I know that God raised You from the dead. You promised to save me if I would trust You. Right now, on this Sunday night, in Bellevue Baptist Church, I trust You to save me—right in this seat, right now with all of my heart. I don't look for a feeling; I don't ask for a sign. I stand upon Your Word. You promised to save me if I would receive You and trust You, and I do. By an act of my will, as You have enabled me to do it, I choose You as my Lord and Savior. I trust You to save me. I now belong to You. You are now my Lord, my Savior, my Master, and my friend. I turn to You, and I turn from all I know to be wrong; and I give You my heart forever and ever. And, Lord Jesus, because You died for me, I will live for You and I will follow You by your grace and for Your glory wherever you lead me. And, Lord Jesus, I'll not be ashamed of You. I'll not try to hide the fact that I've given my heart to You, but I will make it public if You'll only help me. In Your name I pray. Amen."

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