



COVENANT

COVENANT OF HOPE FACILITATOR GUIDE

A PATIENT GOD

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being very) how patient would you say you are?

How patient would others say you are?

How do you handle a situation where a friend has disappointed you?

2 Peter 3:9 (CSB)— The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.

According to this verse, how patient is God to us?

What is God's goal for all of us? **[To come to repentance]**

God's desire from the beginning was for humans to live in **RELATIONSHIP** with Him.

This week Pastor Chris' message took a look at the covenant God made with Noah.

What is the first thing you think of when you hear the name Noah? **[The flood, the ark.]**

The first thing we often think of is associated with God's judgment on mankind. Last week, Pastor Chris began a new sermon series called **COVENANT**. A covenant consists of a two-party deal. But unlike a contract, which is dependent on the responsibility of both sides, God made His promises in spite of mankind's failure to live up to their end of the deal.

Genesis 6:5-6— When the Lord saw that human wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every inclination of the human mind was nothing but evil all the time, the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was deeply grieved.

How do you feel when you watch the news today? [Mad? Sad? Does it break your heart, knowing it hurts God?]

How do you think you would react if you were God?

Jewish tradition says it took Noah 120 years to build the ark. Others think it was a shorter amount of time. Nevertheless, all agree that it took many years.

Why do you think God waited so long between the time He told Noah to build the boat and when the flood came? [Noah would have been warning people about the destruction that was to come. God was waiting to give them a chance to believe and be spared.]

What does this say to you about why Jesus has not returned yet after all these years? [He is patiently waiting for more people to have a chance to repent and come to Him. God loves people so much that He wants to give all the opportunity to know Him.]

WHY NOAH?

In a world that was so full of evil, Noah stuck out as a unique man.

In this crazy, evil world today, how well does your faith and commitment to God stand out?

Hebrews 11:7

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; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

God is searching for another Noah.

Here is the kind of person God is looking to make a covenant with:

- God enters into partnership with one who **BELIEVES** in Him.

Matthew 16:24-25 (CSB)— Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wants to follow after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me will find it.

- God enters into partnership with one who **OBEYS** Him.

1 Samuel 15:22 (CSB)— And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

- God enters into partnership with one who **WORSHIPS** Him
James 4:8— Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you...
Psalms 59:16—But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.
- God saves the family of one who **PARTNERS** with Him.
Isaiah 49:25— For thus says the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken, and the prey of the tyrant be rescued, for I will contend with those who contend with you, and I will save your children.
Proverbs 14:26— In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

Which of those 4 things do you do well?

Which of those characteristics do you need to work on?

Do you have family that you desire to see saved?

According to these characteristics, what do you need to do to reach your lost loved ones?

The covenant was not made until *after* Noah and his family worshiped on dry ground. When we go through trials and we can still worship God on the other side, God wants to partner with us so that we never have to go through something like that again.

THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT

Genesis 6:13 & 15— 13 I have placed my bow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all the living creatures: water will never again become a flood to destroy every creature.

What was to be the sign of the covenant? [The rainbow]

According to verse 15, who was to look at the rainbow and remember the promise? [God. The rainbow was to be a reminder to God.]

Sometimes after a rain, we will only see part of a rainbow, but rainbows are actually a fully formed bow. The people of the Bible would have been very familiar with the fact that the “bow” is a symbol of war. The rounded part of the bow would have been facing the enemy. The rainbow is pointed up and away from humanity and it is pointed to God Himself. This is the sign pointed to Him as a reminder to Him.

Many will ask the question: What about the floods we experience today?

All the floods we experience today are localized floods. Yes, they are devastating and destructive, but they are nothing compared to the worldwide flood that was strong enough to reshape the land masses and continents. That flood was powerful enough to carve out the Grand Canyon in a matter of days. Localized floods are actually proof that God is still keeping His promise.

Turning the Bow Around

There have been organizations that have adopted the sign of the rainbow for themselves. However, taking the sign of the bow and turning upside down the definition of God’s covenant—for example: redefining the ordinance of marriage as something different than what God established—is turning the “bow” upside down. Upside down means the bow of war is now facing us and judgment can’t be far behind.

God wants people that He can trust. Read the following lines that are part of Noah’s character. Check the box beside the ones you will commit yourself to live up to.

- I will establish a family of faith and prepare them for the future God has for them.
- I will commit myself to live a righteous life—putting God first and living out a spiritual worldview.
- I will be obedient to whatever God is calling me to do.
- I will give praise and worship to God through the difficult times because they are a test of love and loyalty to Him.

PRAYER TIME

- Give God praise for His promises given to us. Thank God for His protection on this earth.
- Ask God to show you the areas of your life where you lack in your character to be a Noah in your day.
- Pray for your family and lost loved ones who need to be ready for the upcoming return of Jesus. Ask God to show you how you can reach them.
- Pray for this world that is living so much like those who were living in the days of Noah. Pray that they will be warned, change their mind, and enter into the Ark of Safety—Jesus.