

ONE NEW WORLD



Aloha everyone, if we haven't met, I'm Pastor Mark and we are in Week 2 of our brand new series, *One New World*. Last week we embarked on our voyage and we set our sights on what God said will happen at the end of all time. Spoiler alert, all peoples everywhere will come together as one, under one rule, in one new world. Ephesians 1:10; God is going to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

We talked about how, in scripture, God's people were marked as a people who made impossible crossings. He would part the waters to make a way. And today God is preparing His people for one final crossing from the world as we know it, to a new world in Christ.

So now that we know what is coming to the world, perhaps the million dollar question is when. When will these things take place? Let's look at the words of Jesus concerning that time,

³⁶ *"Concerning that day and exact hour, no one knows when it will arrive, not even the angels of heaven—only the Father knows," (Matthew 24:36 TPT).*

So we know what is coming to the world, but Jesus said, nobody – not even the angels in heaven, know when these things will take place.

1. How close do you think we are to Jesus' return? Why?

This past summer, my brother Caleb came home to visit after being deployed in the Middle East so our family planned a staycation in Waikiki to spend time with him. My wife and I live in Hale'iwa so going to Waikiki is a big deal for us – I'm sorry, did I say deal? I meant ordeal. My wife packed our entire house, the kids had their little roly suitcases, you'd think we were going to New York City. So funny, we were walking down Kalakaua Avenue and the kids are just looking up at all the buildings. I turned to Jalee and said, "Wow our kids really are country bumpkins yea!" But even the drive out there was an ordeal. I know, I know, if you're from the mainland you probably scoff when you hear Hawaii people complaining about how far we have to drive. But when you live in Hale'iwa, Honolulu might as well be an outer island. And any parent who has ever driven for an extended amount of time with small children knows there is a question kids are dying to know, one burning question they feel the need to ask over and over and over again every five minutes. Parents, help me out, what is that question? (Are we there yet?)

I don't know about you, but as I look out my window watching life go by, recently the view hasn't looked so great. As I watch what's happening in our nation, as I watch what's happening in Haiti and Afghanistan, this small question begins to creep into my mind. I have this longing desire to turn to my heavenly Father who is driving the car and ask, "God, are we there yet?" "How much longer do we have to go?" Anybody else?

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The thing is, my kids have no concept of time. Minutes, hours, these words have no meaning to them. I have to use landmarks. I told them to look for the tall buildings. When you see the tall buildings, you'll know we're almost there. And our finite minds cannot comprehend God's timing. God exists outside of time. We wouldn't understand God's plans if He told them to us. So instead God gives us signs, waypoints, things to watch for.

Right after His statement that no one, not even the angels would know the day and exact hour of God's Plan, Jesus gives us a profound sign to watch for. In the very next verse,

"³⁷ For it will be like it was in the days of Noah when the Son of Man appears. ³⁸ Before the flood, people lived their lives eating, drinking, marrying, and having children. ³⁹ They didn't realize the end was near until Noah entered the ark, and then suddenly, the flood came and took them all away in judgment. It will happen the same way when the Son of Man appears," (Matthew 24:37-39 TPT).

Today we are going to look at the life of Noah. Noah was a man who was living in the end of his time. Like us, God warned Noah that he would be making a crossing, from the world as he knew it, to the world to come, and this revelation drastically changed the way Noah lived. Let's look at Noah's story to see how you and I can prepare to make our crossing into the new world.

The first thing Jesus tells us is that, "It will be like it was in the days of Noah". In order to understand what it was like in the days of Noah, we have to travel all the way back in time to the very beginning. When God created the heavens and the earth, mankind was perfect. But Adam and Eve were given a choice – come under the rulership of God or determine good and evil for yourself. You know the story. Adam and Eve chose door number 2 and became patient zero in a world-wide pandemic called sin – The rate of transmission 100%. Rate of mortality 100%. This fatal disease was passed on to their children and their children's children. Its symptoms were violence, destruction, chaos, and ultimately death. Fast forward the tape 2000 years and the sin of mankind had become a global pandemic and now threatened to destroy all life. These were the days of Noah. Let's read the beginning of Noah's story in Genesis 6,

"⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. ⁶ The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. ⁷ So the Lord said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them. ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." (Genesis 6:5-8 NIV).

2. Discuss Genesis 6:5-8 with your group. What do you think the Bible means when it says, "The Lord 'regretted'..."?



The world in Noah's day had become so systemically depraved and corrupt – the inclination of each person's heart was only evil all the time; endless violence, endless suffering. Picture what's happening in Afghanistan today but worse and on a global scale meaning no one is coming to the rescue. And God scans the surface of the earth looking for any righteous that He might save from the calamity about to befall them, and He can only find one single family.

So the first thing we get from Noah's story is that God sees what no one else sees. What no one else sees, God sees. God saw corruption when no one else saw a problem. God saw injustice when nobody else seemed to notice. God saw every hurt, every betrayal, every act of selfishness when the rest of the world turned a blind eye. Nothing escaped God's notice. But you know what else God saw?

God saw one man and his family still living for Him. To everybody else, Noah was probably invisible – but to God, Noah was the most important person on the planet.

And it can be so tempting to think that God isn't watching. With all the injustice in the world today why would God care about me? We look around and see so much darkness, it can be tempting to think that our life doesn't matter, that our faith is insignificant, that we can't make a difference because we are too small. But God is looking for those willing to stand for Him in these times.

3. What does Noah's story tell you about your significance in God's eyes?

Archbishop William Temple of Canterbury put it like this. He said our world today is like a store (Picture Wal-Mart or Target). He said one night a vandal broke into the store and switched all of the price tags so that cheap things had high price tags on them and valuable things were marked low. Shoppers entered the store the next day and found 70" flat screen TVs for \$1.99 but toilet paper was \$600 (That's actually not so far-fetched). Precious jewels were going for a couple of bucks while a pack of gum cost a couple hundred. And this is what the devil has done to our world. He wants us chasing after the things that don't have any kingdom value – any eternal value, at the cost of things God treasures most. We venerate celebrities whom we don't even know while cutting down those closest to us. We place our confidence in human wisdom – human knowledge but don't value God's Word. We place our time, talent, and treasure into the temporary things of this world but invest little into eternity? Don't be taken in Church. Because make no mistake, when God comes He is going to put everything back in its proper place. And a lot of people are going to be in for the surprise of their lives because the things we were told to value will mean nothing in that new world and the things we were told to ignore will be the very things God was looking for. So hold fast, stand strong, because God is looking for His faithful. When God sees that you are faithful, He will invite you to take part in His plan. In the very next verse it says,



4. Do you think Archbishop William Temple was correct in his analysis? In what ways do you see this in society today?

⁹ This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. ¹⁰ Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. ¹¹ Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. ¹² God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. ¹³ So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. ¹⁴ So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out,"

(Genesis 6:9-14 NIV).

Because God saw that Noah was righteous, he was blameless, and he walked in faithfulness, He invited Noah in on His master plan. Now, put yourself in Noah's shoes. God has called you into His office and He says, "Noah, I'm sure you've probably noticed, but things are not so good out there." And you say, "Yes, Lord, I've noticed. Not good." And God says, "Nobody loves me, nobody listens to me, and everyone is bent on destroying each other. However, I've also noticed that your family is different. You love me, you listen to me, and you walk in My ways. And because of that, I'm going to make you head of my new building project to save the world." And you say, "Wow, thank you God! I'm humbled! I don't know what to say! I accept! And you know, I've been doing a lot of thinking and I think we could really use some social reform, the government isn't getting anything done, and I really think if we get organized..." "Noah." "I've got a few Bill proposals that I think we really fix some things..." "Noah." "Oh man, my son Japheth found this really funny meme, but when you look closer there's actually like a super deep meaning behind them..." "NOAH." "Oh, yes God?" "You're going to build an ark." "I'm sorry, what was that God?" "I want you...to build...an ark." "An ark..." "Yes, an ark." "Ok sorry, is 'ark' code for something? Is it an acronym? It's my first day, I don't really know all the lingo yet." "Nope, you're going to build an ark." "But God, I've never built an ark before. I don't even know what an ark is." "Don't worry Noah, I'll show you."

Fast forward the tape 2000 years. A poor Jewish carpenter named Yeshua comes into the world. Yeshua means savior. In English, we say Jesus. When Jesus stepped into the scene, everyone was trying to figure out who He was. Some thought He was an Old Testament prophet back from the dead. Others labeled Him a sinner because of those He associated with. Perhaps He was a Roman sympathizer, after all, He did say, "Give unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar." Who is this guy? What is His plan? One day Jesus asked His disciples this question,

¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven,"

(Matthew 16: 15-17 NIV).



The whole world was left scratching their heads in regard to God's Master Plan. Maybe He's this, maybe He's that? And they were all dead wrong. The intellectual giants of that day missed it. The religious leaders of that day missed it. And Peter, a fisherman answers, you're none of those things. You're something else entirely – You are God. And Jesus says, "Bingo, that's the Master Plan. But you didn't get that from a tweet you read, CNN didn't tell you that, you didn't get that from Fox News, or NBC or from a book you read – flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, human wisdom did not reveal that to you. My Father told you that."

What did Peter and Noah have in common? They were close to God and God revealed His Master Plan to them. After God revealed His Master Plan to Peter, Jesus said to Him, "Peter, I'm going to make the head of my new building project to save the world." "Yes!" Said Peter, "What are we building? Let me guess, an army!" "Uhh nope." "A new religion?" "Not quite. We're going to build a Church." "Ok sorry, is 'Church' code for something? Is it an acronym? It's my first day, I don't really know all the lingo yet." "Nope." "But God, I've never built a Church before. I don't even know what a Church is." "Don't worry Peter, I'll show you."

5. What qualifications does someone need to partner with God in His Master Plan?

God's Master Plan of salvation was not something anyone would have conceived in a million years. If Jesus were alive today, how would we label Him? Some might label Him a Republican, other might say He's a Democrat, still others a Socialist. But no, my friends, He is none of those things. His Kingdom is not of this world and flesh and blood will not reveal His plan to us. For that, we need to walk closely with the Father.

There have been many times throughout this pandemic that I'll read something, or hear something and my flesh just wants to react. I've typed things out, I've crafted my rebuttals, and I just imagine how good it's going to feel to give people a piece of my mind. But before I hit 'send' there has been a verse that has been an anchor for me any time I find myself wanting to give people a piece of my mind. In Isaiah 55:8, God says,

⁸ "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord."

It's as if God is saying, "The way you see that, is not how I see it. Your solutions are not my solutions." And I say, "Yea but surely I'm close enough right? Come on, I'm a Pastor after all!" And then God drops verse nine on me,

⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

In other words, "Mark, can you touch the heavens?" "No." That's how unattainable my Master Plan is apart from Me."



Church, as in the days of Noah, and in the days of Jesus, God is preparing His people to make an impossible crossing. The only way to know God's Master Plan of salvation is to walk humbly before Him. To live blamelessly. To seek His Face. God is searching and God sees.

6. Are there any worldly values, strategies, ideals that you need to repent from in order to embrace God's Master Plan for your life?