

“Noah’s Faith” – Hebrews 11:7

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[What follows is the transcript of a sermon. It was originally intended to be heard, not read, so the tone is more conversational than academic. It has only been loosely edited, so forgive any grammatical, syntactical, or spelling errors. If you have questions please contact Southern Oaks Baptist Church through their official website, www.welovethegospel.com]

Take a Bible and let’s meet in Hebrews 11...

Shortly after our family arrived in Tyler, my wife, Allison, opted not to renew her contract with the Department of Homeland Security to begin working at Mercy Ships, a global non-profit that operates hospital ships and provides free surgeries and medical training in developing nations. So picture a large cruise ship turned into a traveling hospital. It’s pretty cool.

We had both heard of Mercy Ships before, but had no idea that the international headquarters for this ministry was in Lindale. That’s a little counterintuitive, isn’t it? Who would expect a ministry that primarily operates ocean-faring vessels would be located in the middle of East Texas. But, alas, this is the world we live in.

Imagine if one day Mercy Ships decided to build a new ship (don’t call it a “boat” or you will be reprimanded by my wife and you don’t want to be on the wrong side of a reprimand from my wife) and this new ship was going to be the largest ship of its kind. Where would you build that floating hospital? I suppose a number of places would serve as suitable construction sites, but let me tell you one place that would not—Lindale, Texas. You see in the technologically-advanced world that we live in, you can run an international organization from the middle of nowhere. What you can’t do is assemble something that big and then transport it to the ocean. There is no vehicle strong enough and no road wide enough to get that thing to water.

So imagine if one day you were driving through Lindale and you saw a massive, newly minted, ship getting a final coat of paint on it. What would you think? I can tell you what I would think—“Whose the genius that built that boat there?” or “They’re going to feel really stupid when it dawns on them that they just built a boat that will never see water unless it rains” or “Someone’s about to get fired.” There is a reason those things are constructed near the ocean and not hundreds of miles inland. If you saw someone constructing a ship that size in Lindale, you would, at best, assume someone didn’t think that through or, at worst, that the people building it are out of their mind. Well, friends, today our text will lead us to consider a man who built a large boat in a place even farther removed from a body of water and was considered a lunatic in his own day. At least, until it rained.

By now, you’ve guessed that I am referring to Noah, the next biblical character we encounter from “the cloud” of Hebrews 11. Noah was the only person, besides Adam, who we can say that every single person descended from because God relaunched the human race through him and his offspring. He is the ancestor of us all. But you may have assumed that this story is a merely a biblical story for children. In truth, it’s anything but, in its original context. In fact, to make the story more palatable almost every children’s curriculum has filtered out most of the gory details so that all that remains is a man, his family, and a floating zoo. Indeed, as one author put it, “Noah is perhaps best known today as a conservationist icon, a kind of Santa Claus for the environmental movement,”¹ no doubt owing to the animals he saved.

But there is more to Noah than this. Noah was a solitary ray of light in an age of darkness. And the author of Hebrews wants us to see that he too was a man of faith. So let’s look at the text for this morning. All the remarks about Noah are limited to just one verse, verse 7. Look there with me and follow along as I read. This is God’s Word...

“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7)

That is a very interesting verse. Perhaps we should first observe that Noah is presented as an exemplar of verse 6, which notes the impossibility of pleasing God apart from faith and states that *“whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him”* (Hebrews 11:6). Noah’s story illustrates the message of that verse. He was a man who didn’t just believe *in* God. He believed God.²

But there are four things I would like for us to see about the Noah and his faith from verse 7 today. A couple of them are review and a couple of them will be elaborated in the verses ahead. They are not unique to Noah’s faith, but they are aspects that the author chooses to highlight with respect to Noah. It’s important for to acknowledge, however, that our faith should share these same characteristics. Here is the first one for our consideration...

The Premise of Noah’s Faith

“...being warned by God concerning events yet unseen...”

The Bible is clear that this flood was universal.³ It is presented as a global judgment on humanity for their wickedness. Here’s how Genesis conveys the problem:

“Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³ 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 6:11-13)

In the verses immediately before this, Noah is introduced to us as one who was “righteous” and “well-pleasing” to God, but before it speaks of his virtues we are told that he had been touched by “grace” (Genesis 6:8; LXX). In other words, “Noah and his family were saved, not because they are more righteous than others, but simply because ‘Noah...found favor [i.e., *grace*] with the Lord.’”⁴ God’s grace came to Noah *before* his hand embraced any tool to build the ark. Grace first. Then obedience. That’s always the order. Grace even precedes faith. Noah doesn’t believe in God unless God takes the initiative to reveal Himself to Noah. Noah has no means of salvation unless God takes the initiative to reveal His plan and assembly instructions for the ark. Noah’s reputation for righteous living was evidence of God’s grace, not the basis for it. The premise—the starting point, the foundation—of Noah’s faith and everything that followed it was the grace of God.

Grace first. Then faith. Then obedience. Get the order wrong and you get everything wrong. And it’s no coincidence that the first biblical reference to “grace” and “righteousness” (i.e., Noah’s story) gets the order and significance correct. Richard Phillips makes this same point in his book:

“It isn’t that [Noah] was blameless and thereby found grace with God, but that his blamelessness itself was the result of God’s favor. Indeed, God’s grace was the source of his faith, which in turn was the motivating power behind his works. Hebrews 11:7 insists that Noah did everything ‘by faith.’ Faith was the operating principle for all that Noah did or achieved. ‘By faith Noah ... constructed an ark for the saving of his household.’ He shows us that the same faith that brings us into a right relationship with God also moves us to actions that please God in practical works of obedience.”⁵

Next, consider with me...

The Evidence of Noah's Faith

"...in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household."

Noah's faith was evidenced, first of all, by internal trust in God. Faith is not simply the certainty of a belief. "Faith is belief plus trust."⁶ But trust is generally seen in external obedience. Noah's faith was proven to be genuine through his obedience. God gave him instructions and he "*constructed an ark for the saving of his household*" (Heb. 11:7). And the Genesis account goes as far as to say that Noah "*did all that God commanded him*" (Gen. 6:22). His obedience was immediate and thorough. It was submissive and exhaustive.

Alexander Maclaren wrote something 60 years ago that still rings true—"If [faith] has no effect it has no existence."⁷ That's exactly right. Faith always results in works. "But wait," someone is thinking, "I thought we are saved by faith alone, apart from works." That is correct. The Bible couldn't be clearer on that front. But that doesn't mean that works don't matter. Yes, Paul said,

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

But then, in the very next verse, he adds,

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

Taken together we see that we are saved by faith apart from works, but the faith that saves leads to a life marked by works of righteousness that God has prepared for those He saves. We are saved apart from works, but for works. So faith and works have a relationship and an order. Faith comes first, but godly works necessarily follow as a consequence. This is why James says, "*faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead*" (James 2:17). Many have captured this balance well, but I think John Calvin said it best—"We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone." The Christians obedience "flows from faith like water from a fountain."⁸

"But what if Noah had not built the ark? What would we say about his faith? Imagine Noah insisting that he believed what God had said if he were not busy working on the ark! What would we say to a faith like that? We would say what James did—that such faith is useless and dead unless accompanied by works. If Noah did not even start working on the ark, chopping down trees and making diagrams, then the simple fact is that he could not have believed. But he did believe and therefore he built the ark. That is how faith and works fit together."⁹

And this is remarkable, given what God had called Noah to, isn't it? When God warned about the impending flood, Noah received revelation about "*things not seen.*" Noah's response is clearly marked by faith because, as the author told us in verse 1, "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" (KJV). God revealed His plan. Noah took the things revealed as granted even though initially he could not see them.¹⁰ He trusted in the faithfulness of God and walked by faith, not by sight.

"The only floods he had ever seen, if indeed he had seen any, were the wadi washers which came from an occasional thunderstorm. And he had certainly never set his eyes on anything as big as the ark, much less a ship!"¹¹

Yet even though the event and task were "entirely unavailable to Noah's senses and experiences, Noah nevertheless trusted God's word and acted accordingly."¹² Noah said, "I am not going to be defined by what I see. The sun shining won't last. The birds chirping won't last. The people laughing won't last...I will be defined by what God says...I believe God."¹³ That's biblical faith. It's believing God in things not seen. And it's powerful. It can change your life and how you live it.

For example, do you struggle with bitterness? Has someone upset you? Are you holding onto a grudge? Wounded? Struggling to forgive? You may not call yourself bitter, but you are. How's that working out for you? Are you enjoying life with that root of bitterness growing inside of you? Of course not! You want freedom from it. Who in their right mind wouldn't? So what does that have to do with faith? Tim Keller connects the dots for us.

"You can look at your wounds, the wounds that have been inflicted on you, or you can look at Jesus' wounds, dying on the cross for you. Which is it? Are you going to be moved by the wounds that are unseen or the wounds that are seen? In other words, if you look at the cross, do you believe he died for you? To look at the cross is to be moved by that and to say, 'Lord Jesus, I hurt you, and you forgave me. It cost you a lot. Now if I forgive this person here, it's going to cost me something, but nothing like what it cost you.'

What happens [then]? Freedom comes. Why does the freedom come? You're moved by the things that aren't seen. You tremble before the wonderful things God has said to you. Here are the things that are seen: bills, sicknesses, criticism. And then here is the Word of God. In Jesus Christ, the great bill has been paid. As the Holy Spirit has come into you, the great disease has been healed. As God's love has come to you in Christ, it means the only critic you have to fear...why, you're in his arms.

So are you going to look at the bills, are you going to look at the diseases, are you going to look at the criticism and be moved by that, or are you going to tremble at the wonderful words, 'I love you. I care for you. I have given my life to you'?"¹⁴

This is the life of faith (not sight) in action. And the same logic of faith was at work in Noah's life.

But this response of Noah, we're told, was motivated by "*reverent fear*" (11:7). Noah recognized that the judgment of God is not to be trifled with. Hebrews 12:29 tells us "*our God is a consuming fire.*" Humanity would learn that in Noah's day. But against the dark backdrop of that fierce judgment, Noah would learn that this same God is wonderfully gracious. His glory and grace shines brighter because of judgment, not in spite of it. And Noah's life would confirm that "*reverent fear*" is the appropriate disposition before this awesome God. But this is no fear akin to that instilled by a bully. As Kent Hughes explains,

"Noah obeys, not because he dreads the consequences of disobedience, but because of the sweet reverence he has for God. If there is any 'fear' here, it is that of holy regard and devotional awe. Noah's obedience is built on a warm heart for God—not a servile fear, but a loving fear like that of a child who does not want to displease his father."¹⁵

And this holy fear should always characterize our obedience to God. "We need to beware of obedience that is unemotional, that leaves our hearts beating at the same rate as before we believed."¹⁶ How much of your obedience is marked by "*reverent fear*"—a sense of awe at the Word of God and the God of the Word—instead of by mere expediency?

Next, consider a third mark of Noah's faith, namely...

The Sentence of Noah's Faith "*...he condemned the world...*"

It took over a century for Noah to build that boat. Imagine the ridicule.

"This kind of faith required Noah to stand alone in his generation. Apart from his immediate family members—and the strength of their faith is not at all clear—Noah alone trusted in the Lord. If we are going to live by faith and not by sight, that will often be true of us as well."¹⁷

How many jokes were made at his expense? How many days was he subjected to the taunts of men? How many demeaning nicknames were given to “Nuttty Noah”¹⁸ in those days? How many people gawked at him as they passed by? “But Noah maintained his practical obedience, doing exactly what God said, for twenty-five...fifty...seventy-five...100...120 years—until the ark lay like a huge coffin on the land.” Why? Because that’s what faith looks like. Faith obeys. And, in the end, it doesn’t disappoint. At least not when it is exercised in this life toward God. Unfortunately, the forecast for Noah’s generation was great disappointment. As Alexander Maclaren remarks,

“No doubt there were plenty of witty and wise things said about [Noah]... And then, one morning, the rain began, and continued, and for forty days it did not stop, and they began to think that perhaps, after all, there was some method in his madness. Noah got into his ark, and still it rained.... I wonder what [they] thought about it all then, with the water up to their knees. How their gibes and jests would die in their throats when it reached their lips!”¹⁹

Interestingly, there are widespread Jewish and Christian traditions that suggest that Noah preached to his generation, calling them to repentance, during the days he constructed the ark.²⁰ Indeed, Peter calls Noah a “*preacher of righteousness*” (2 Peter 2:5; NIV). “Surely that involved a condemnation of sin and a warning of judgment, but all of that was done in the shadow of the ark of salvation.”²¹ And, if that was the case, then Noah had one long pastorate (120 years) and nothing to show for it (no converts). He would have been a failure by many of the (less than biblical) metrics of our day.

However, if the author had these preaching traditions in mind, it’s far from obvious.²² The focus here is not so much the witness of his words, but the witness of his faith in action. The text says, “*by this he condemned the world*” (Hebrews 11:7). That sounds a bit harsh, doesn’t it? But no one can deny that they were condemned as the waters came crashing in on them.

But what does it mean that Noah, by faith, “*condemned the world*”? One commentator explains it like this:

“It’s not that Noah sat in an official capacity as judge over the antediluvian [i.e., pre-flood] people. Rather, whenever an individual lives in obedience to God against the immorality of the world, that individual condemns the rest of the world in its unrighteousness. Think of it this way: What happens when you put a light in a dark room? The light stands out from the darkness, and what had previously been unseen is revealed for what it truly is. Often we do not even recognize how dark an environment has become until someone shines a light in it. By the same token, the obedience of a righteous man both reveals and condemns the disobedience of the world.”²³

When we preach the Gospel there is a call upon the hearer to respond—the turn of repentance and the trust of faith. But if they refuse their opportunities to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and believe on Him as Savior, they will be condemned in their sins. The witness that they rejected will stand as evidence against them on the Day of Judgment and they will have no defense because the Judge the stand before is Jesus, the very same Defense Attorney they rejected. In that sense, by our witness they are condemned. In a similar way, Noah’s “continual preparation of the ark was a constant visual witness that judgment was coming.”²⁴ But the generation rejected that witness. And in this way Noah’s faith and faithful obedience “*condemned the world*.”

“Some people were probably reprovved by Noah’s word and walk. Some may have even begun to long for righteousness. But, sadly, not one person responded in a century-plus of such consistent witness. In fact, the world became progressively darker. The abiding lesson? True faith witnesses both by *word* and by *life*. But the results must be left to God.”²⁵

Here the focus is on the witness of Noah’s faith, characterized by obedience. His obedient life was a witness to the world. This is true of us as well. Of course, our witness through our lifestyle can be overstated. It is famously overstated in the saying sometimes attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, “Preach the Gospel always and,

if necessary, use words.” I appreciate the sentiment of these words. The Christian must live in a way that points to, illustrates, and makes evident the power of the Gospel. But the Gospel is still “news.” The word Gospel, in fact, means “good news.” So, yes, our lifestyle matters, but it’s not all that matters.

If the Gospel is a message, then it can’t be preached *without* words. So “preach the Gospel always and, if necessary, use words” is about as logical as “give me your phone number and, if necessary, use digits” or “satisfy my hunger and, if necessary, use something edible.” A phone number necessitates numerical digits. Satisfying hunger necessitates something edible. And, in the same way, preaching the Gospel requires words, words communicating the content of the Gospel. You will lead no one to Christ by living a good life alone. To do that, you’ll have to share the Gospel. Noah bore witness by word (“*a preacher of righteousness*”) and deed (“*he did all that God commanded him*”). So in the end, his faith condemned the world that rejected the witness of his word and deeds. His message matched the manner of his life. “Everything Noah did was calculated to save.”²⁶ May the same be true of us, that the world may find the message we deliver most compelling.

Of course, the world in Noah’s day was not convinced. That was not because Noah was unfaithful in his proclamation. It was clearly not because his life didn’t match his message. It is because the Lord controls the Harvest. We should remember this and pray, as Jesus instructed, to the “Lord of the Harvest.” God expects us to be faithful. That’s our responsibility. Fruitfulness is His responsibility. Just because we don’t see the results we want does not mean we are not being faithful. It could mean that. But the Bible is filled with examples of faithful witnesses who labored to no avail by all appearances. But their labor was not in vain. God is glorified in the exercise of His justice every bit as much as in the exercise of His mercy. Noah’s ministry glorified God, even though there were no conversions to show for it and his faith “condemned the world.”

But, make no mistake about it, before Noah “condemned the world,” the world had already condemned Noah. Fortunately for Noah (and for all God’s people), the world’s estimation of us counts for nothing in the end. “When he constructed an ark Noah gained not only the approval of God, but also the ridicule of men”²⁷ But God always has the final word. And this God has not left us with any excuses. Just as God came to the pre-flood generation through the witness of Noah, He comes to our post-flood generation in the witness of His Church who proclaim the words of His Son, Jesus:

“For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.” (Matthew 24:27-29)

If Jesus likened the “*days of Noah*” to the days that will precede His Second Coming, then Christians must always be prepared to face similar hostility and indifference. The Christian life seem just as “crazy” to many in the world around us. “That anyone would deny himself, willingly sacrifice, and devote himself to holiness is mind-boggling” to a lost and dying world.²⁸ Does the world find you mind-boggling? Do you look like a follower of Jesus as defined by Jesus or just like one defined by a cultural Christianity baptized in the American Dream? The former frustrates the world. The latter fits right in. One condemns the world. The other lives for the world commendation. So what’s it going to be?

Next, let’s reflect on...

The Inheritance of Noah’s Faith

“...and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.”

What is that? That’s the doctrine of justification by faith alone (*sola fide*) yet again. I won’t belabor this point today because I stressed it a couple weeks ago when we considered the life of Abel. We considered the

relationship between this doctrine and our assurance, worship, and holiness. And now in verse 7 we see it illustrated for us again. Noah, we are told, “*became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.*”

Once again we are reminded “that the Old Testament saints were imputed the righteousness of Christ (retroactively) when they believed (see Gen 15:6), just as Christians receive that same righteousness by faith alone.”²⁹ In other words, when we believe on Jesus alone for our salvation we are not only forgiven of all our sins, but freely given His perfect righteousness as our own so that we can be in God’s presence forever as holy children. It’s not a righteousness from us and our achievement. It’s a righteousness from God. An alien righteousness. A gift righteousness. This is the consistent biblical witness (e.g., Romans 1:16, 17; 3:21, 22; Phil. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:21).

And this is why “*heir*” is the appropriate word. Noah, like all those who believe, was made an “*heir of righteousness*” through faith. What is an heir? An heir is someone who gets rich off of the work and achievement of another. An heir is someone who receives something they didn’t earn by virtue of relationship. The Gospel is not about earning. It’s about receiving. The Gospel proclaims that God makes enemies into heirs. How? By adopting as His children when we rest our faith in Jesus. Everything we have, everything that is given to us in salvation, is Christ’s achievement, not ours. We are heirs, inheritors, because God has been gracious to us in Christ. Those considered righteous in God’s sight are those who “*became heirs of the righteousness that comes by faith.*”

In conclusion, I would be remiss if we didn’t observe...

The Gospel According to Noah *The Ark as Archetype*

Like every story of the Bible, the story of Noah helps us to glimpse some facet of the Gospel. Throughout Scripture, the flood is seen as a picture of God’s judgment and a warning of the far more cataclysmic judgment that comes when the Lord returns. God will judge the living and the dead. That’s coming. Like Noah, our lives should point to God’s judgment and provided means of salvation.

When we look at Noah’s ark we see that God provided a means of escaping His judgment. And in this we are meant to see a shadow of Christ and His work. Peter Lewis captures the Gospel well when he remarks:

“Christ Jesus is our ark now: big enough for the whole world, strong enough to withstand the shocks of life, the rising waters of death, and the upheavals of the last judgment. There is safety here in the Son of God, sent to be for us all the shelter, the salvation, that we so desperately needed; our ark and safe passage into the new world God has planned. From that ark we will emerge to inherit a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1).”³⁰

Amen, someone!

If Jesus is our Ark then we are safe in Him. We are safe because the judgment of God beats upon Him and not us. We are secure because the waves of God’s wrath were absorbed by Him. We are dry because He was submerged in the fury of God’s condemnation in our place. We don’t have to touch the waters of condemnation because Jesus already has. And hidden in Him we can truly cry out, “He is our shield. He is our refuge.” We can say, with Noah, “Go ahead, flood. Come on, rain. Come on, water. The lower you seek to lay me, the higher you simply raise me.”³¹

On the other side of the destructive waters of Noah’s day, the covenant was established with those who were spared the judgment of God so that they might be reassured they need not fear the condemnation of God. In a similar way, we, the Church, on the other side of the judgment poured out on Christ, have been assured that

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). The word for “rainbow” in Hebrew is the same word for “bow” weapon. And the “bow” God put across the sky in Noah’s day was facing toward the heavens, not the sinners below. Why? Because it anticipated the One sent down from heaven—the Son of God—who took on flesh and would absorb the arrow of God’s judgment in the place of sinners. The man of heaven came between us and the arrow of God’s wrath. What grace!

And just as Noah received a sign of the covenant—a rainbow—stretched out across the sky, so too Jesus was stretched out across the sky on a tree to remind us that He is “*the guarantee of a better covenant*” (Hebrews 7:22). And this is the covenant that God has established with all who believe in His Son for their salvation. So I commend Christ to you today—He is our only hope in life and death. Believe in Him and you will be raised from death to life.

And all God’s people said? Amen!

Let’s pray...

¹ Richard D. Phillips, *Hebrews* (REC; Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2006), 425.

² Timothy Keller, “Noah and the Power of Faith; Faith in Conviction,” a sermon preached on September 25, 1994, and accessed through Logos Bible Software.

³ Not surprisingly, practically every religion and mythology, from Asia to North America, remembers Noah and the flood. A Sumerian tablet from 1600 B.C. tells how a king was warned about a destructive deluge and therefore built a great boat. In Akkadian there is the *Atrahasis* epic, which tells of a great flood that destroyed mankind after earlier attempts to curb its wickedness. Only Atrahasis and his family, who were warned by the creator-god Enki, escaped in the boat they were told to build. This saga seems to have provided the source material for the Babylonian epic *Gilgamesh*, which tells a similar story. While these and other examples are corrupted by pagan ideas, they preserve a shared memory of this cataclysmic event. Noah’s name seems also to have passed down into one language after another. In ancient Sanskrit his name became Manu, based on the word *ma* for water. Thus the name is ‘Nu of the waters.’ This was passed on to ancient India, where Manu was the father of all peoples. Egyptian mythology named its water god Nu, and the mythical founder of the Germanic peoples was Mannus, from which we get the word ‘man.’” Phillips, 424–425.

⁴ R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Exalting Jesus in Hebrews* (CCE; Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2017), 177.

⁵ Phillips, 427.

⁶ R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul* (PW; Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1993), 88.

⁷ Alexander Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, 11 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 10:116.

⁸ John Calvin, *Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries*, 12 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 12:165.

⁹ Phillips, 429. He continues, “The same is true for us. We always act according to our beliefs, in keeping with our real convictions. If you believed there were a bomb in your room, you would run out of it right now. If we trust that it is necessary to repent and believe the good news to be saved, we will flee temptation and at least begin chopping at the trees of our sinful habits and building our faith. It took Noah 120 years to build the ark, and it will take a while for our sanctification. But if we believe, we will at least get to work now. There is no escaping the truth: faith and works are inseparable.” Ibid., 429–430.

¹⁰ “Even though he had not one shred of proof apart from God’s Word, Noah nonetheless believed. This shows that faith in things unseen is the same as faith in God’s Word, the same as faith in God’s promises.” Ibid., 426.

¹¹ Hughes, 87.

¹² David A. DeSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews”* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 391.

¹³ Keller, “Noah and the Power of Faith.”

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Hughes, 88.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Phillips, 426.

¹⁸ Ray Stedman, *Hebrews* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992), 122.

¹⁹ Maclaren, 10:119.

²⁰ E.g., 2 Peter 2:5; *Sib. Or.* 1.125–36; *1 Clem.* 7.6.

²¹ Phillips, 433-434.

²² “Similarly, the addressees who walk in the way of Noah may regard their truest and preparation as a condemnation of the world—a striking concept given the ways in which the believers may have been made to feel condemnation by the unbelieving society. The author raises them from being concerned with society’s judgment on their commitment to Jesus and to one another to being empowered by the realization that their ongoing perseverance in the upward call of God ‘condemns’ the word that sees no value in such a call.” DeSilva, 391-392.

²³ Mohler, 176.

²⁴ Hughes, 90.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Phillips, 433.

²⁷ Brown, 201.

²⁸ Phillips, 430.

²⁹ Mohler, 177.

³⁰ Peter Lewis, *God’s Hall of Fame* (Ross-shire, U.K.: Christian Focus, 1999), 52.

³¹ Keller, “Noah and the Power of Faith.”