

WALKING WITH INTEGRITY IN TIMES OF ADVERSITY

STUDY TWO

The Integrity of Enduring Obedience

Genesis 6:5–17, 21–22

This series is about the importance of being people of integrity at every turn, without compromise, without duplicity, and without hypocrisy.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

PEOPLE of integrity refuse to waver in their principles, regardless the temptation. They follow God's way—day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, decade after decade—even though no one else goes with them, even though everyone else opposes them.

Noah was such a man. He lived in a world of universal evil, saturated with violence, manipulation, and godlessness. Yet, he and his family stood out as the *only* people on earth who walked with God.

Can you imagine the pressure on them to conform to the lifestyle of those around them? To join the circus of sin outside their front door? The bright lights, however, never lured Noah away from his God, and that's the reason God recruited him for a mission that altered the course of history.

Let's get to know this ordinary hero who saved civilization, not by using special skills or powers but by exhibiting a single quality available to us all . . . *the integrity of enduring obedience.*



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Perhaps you have known the loneliness of being the only follower of God and the pressure of conforming. Pause now to ask God to use His Word and Spirit to reveal His presence to you in lonely times. Pray for wisdom, strength, and faith.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

The Integrity of Enduring Obedience

Genesis 6:5–17, 21–22



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

In his book, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs*, Pastor Chuck Swindoll encourages a careful reading of Scripture:

In order to become astute observers, we need to read as if for the first time. When we train ourselves to see God’s Word with fresh eyes, chances are good that we’ll notice details we’ve never seen there before.¹



Searching the Scriptures Tip

To learn about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, go to the Web page, “[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#).” There, you’ll find a helpful overview of the four necessary steps to studying the Bible: observation, interpretation, correlation, and application.



Observation: Noah, the Only Blameless Man on Earth

The account of Noah is a study in contrasts. Noah stands out in this passage like a gleaming star in a morally dark sky. Read [Genesis 6:1–6](#) in three Bible versions, including Eugene Peterson’s paraphrase, *The Message*.

The Darkness of Humanity and the Grief of God—Genesis 6:5–6

Describe the extent of human wickedness and the grief God felt in [Genesis 6:5–6](#).



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What do these verses state about the nature of God?

“But Noah”—*Genesis 6:7–8*

What contrast do you see in *Genesis 6:7–8*, and what makes this contrast so significant?

Noah’s Obedience in the Story of God’s Judgment and Salvation—*Genesis 6:9–22*

What further contrasts between Noah and sinful humanity do you observe in *Genesis 6:9–12*? *The Message* can help you find the words to write down as you observe the passage.



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What steps did God tell Noah to take to save created life and continue the human race, according to *Genesis 6:13–21*? What features of the ark stand out to you?

What character qualities did Noah exhibit in *6:22*? What was at stake if Noah didn't follow God's instructions precisely and not give up?

Faithfully and consistently, decade after decade, Noah did everything exactly as God commanded. He was meticulous in following God's instructions, and he finished the task.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Understanding Two Biblical Concepts

In the interpretation phase, we look for the meaning the biblical author intended to communicate to his audience. Here, two key words encapsulate that meaning: *favor* and *covenant*.

Everyone in Noah's day rested content to act godlessly—casting aside God's ways, shunning God's presence, and sinking deeper and deeper into sin. Noah, however, couldn't rest without Him. As a man of integrity, Noah "walked in close fellowship with God" (*Genesis 6:9*). Everyone eventually found only God's judgment. But Noah "found favor with the LORD" (*6:8*).



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The Hebrew word for “favor” is *chen*. It also means, “grace.” In fact, Genesis 6:8 is the first occurrence in Scripture of this theologically rich word. Here, *chen* simply means that God gladly opened Himself to Noah like a royal king removing all social barriers to befriend a peasant. God smiled at Noah and delighted in their relationship.

God expresses both grace and judgment in Genesis 6. Use the following chart to list the ways He did so.

God's Grace	God's Judgment

As an expression of His grace, God established a “covenant” with Noah (Genesis 6:18). The Hebrew word is *berith*, and it appears here for the first time in Scripture. In the Old Testament, God's covenants with His people are like the types of pledges an ancient king might make with a subject he wishes to favor.

When God makes a covenant of grace with an individual, He does so unconditionally, and He often includes a sign to guarantee His pledge. God is the royal sovereign who chooses to bless His subjects, and all God asks in return is faith in Him.

What “pledge” did God make Noah, according to [Genesis 6:17–19](#)? What did Noah have to do in response?



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What foundational principles about our salvation do you see emerging in this passage regarding God’s judgment, grace, and provision? How do these concepts help strengthen our faith to help us follow Jesus with enduring obedience?

By his actions, Noah faithfully declared the good news that there was a way of escape. When he set the door of the ark in place, I am certain Noah reminded the people watching that this door was the way to escape the coming flood. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Noah, a Preacher of Righteousness

Interestingly, Peter called Noah “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5 NASB). According to [2 Peter 2:5](#), what message do you think Noah preached for decades through his behavior while he was building the ark?

Like Noah, Jesus also warned about a future storm of judgment. What message did Jesus preach, according to [Matthew 24:37–39](#)? How will Christ’s return be like the flood in Noah’s day?



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According to *Ephesians 2:4–10*, what is the means of grace that will deliver us from this coming judgment?

Noah declared a similar kind of message to his world that we share with sinners in our world—except, the “ark” that saves us is not made of wood, but our Savior’s flesh and blood. In the space below, summarize the message of hope we have to offer in Christ.

As with the ark, only one door leads to safety. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). The door to salvation is still open, and we may come into that door by faith in Jesus Christ.

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Long-Term Obedience Today

Noah was one of a kind! No one in history walked to the beat of a different drummer more than Noah did. Think how ridiculous he must have seemed to his neighbors as he built his boat at a time when it had never rained before (Genesis 2:4–6). The ark was massive—longer than a football field, seventy-five feet wide, and about four stories high. No one had seen anything like it!

Yet, despite how outrageous the project, Noah obeyed God. He believed God would keep His word. So Noah acted in obedient faith for decades without a drop of rain.



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Perhaps you are following God in a dry season in which all you have to hope in is a promise from God. What pressures do you face to give up and join the crowd of unbelievers?

What do you think kept Noah from giving up during the years of boat-building? From his example, what can help you stay faithful in your situation?

What can you do today to rest in God's grace and covenant with you through Christ until He comes again?

Noah calls to us from the pages of Scripture, *don't give up!* He implores us to abide in the safe shelter of God's grace and to keep spreading the message of God's gracious offer on earth. God doesn't want anyone to perish and has provided a way to escape His judgment: our Savior, Jesus Christ. Each time we see a rainbow in the sky, we know God will keep His word.



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A FINAL PRAYER

Father, help me to faithfully declare the way of salvation through the door of Jesus Christ. Keep me faithful in following Your plan for my life and guide me in Your way. Thank You for opening Your grace to me and giving me the assurance of salvation. In the name of Jesus, amen.

ENDNOTE

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 95.

