

¹³ Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴ Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall ^[u]cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵ This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred ^[k]cubits, its breadth fifty ^[u]cubits, and its height thirty ^[m]cubits. ¹⁶ You shall make a ^[w]window for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from ^[o]the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks. ¹⁷ Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. ¹⁸ But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every *kind* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. ²⁰ Of the birds after their kind, and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every *kind* will come to you to keep *them* alive. ²¹ As for you, take for yourself some of all food which is edible, and gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be for food for you and for them." ²² Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did

"That's Right, God Doesn't Exist."

When they eventually touched on the subject of God, Mike said: 'I don't believe that God exists.'

"Why do you say that?" asked Bill.

"Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn't exist. Tell me Bill, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there would be neither suffering nor pain. I can't imagine a loving God who would allow all of these things."

Bill thought for a moment, but didn't respond because he didn't want to start an argument. Mike finished his barbering job and Bill left the shop. Just after he left the barbershop, he saw a man in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair and an untrimmed beard. He looked dirty and unkempt.

Bill turned back and entered the barbershop again and he said to Mike, the barber:

"You know what? Barbers do not exist."

"How can you say that?" asked the surprised barber. "I am here, and I am a barber. And I just worked on you!"

"No!" Bill exclaimed.

"Barbers don't exist because if they did, there would be no people with dirty long hair and untrimmed beards, like that man outside."

"Ah, but barbers DO exist! That's what happens when people do not come to me."

"Exactly!" Bill affirmed.

"That's the point! God, too, DOES exist! And that's what happens when people do not come to God too."

1. Comfort Zone

2. Character Zone

The 1st zone is what we call our comfort zone. Our comfort zone is comfortable hence the name "Comfort zone" This zone is a safe place. It keeps us moving forward in our daily task.

There is little or no frustration in this zone. It is on an even playing field. We are in control of our surroundings, our time, our task and our conversations. The comfort zone does not require a lot of faith or obedience.

In the comfort zone we take a laid-back stance.

The problem is that the comfort zone is a "no growth zone". You may think the worst that can happen is the longer you stay, the more you remain the same.

But actually, the longer you stay, the less you stay the same, because you atrophy into something less. The comfort zone doesn't stretch us. It is easy to get caught up in the nature of the comfort zone and fall into a state of just being, of doing nothing. The comfort zone has a chameleon effect where you slowly fade into the background of the world. In the comfort zone we begin to look to ourselves for our own pleasure, our own gain. We do not need an outside entity telling us what to do or what not to do because that goes against our desires of comfort.

The people in Genesis 6 lived for their own desires, their own pleasure and paid no attention to the ways of the Lord.

Either we're growing stronger in the development of Christ-like character, or we are growing weaker. So what needs to happen is that we need to stretch ourselves out of our comfort zone and get into the other zone, the "character zone".

What character do we want portrayed in our lives? The character of the world or the character of God.

The Character Zone

The character zone is where we learn of God. It is the place where we first hear the story of Noah. Verse 8 of chapter 6 reads And Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

There was something about Noah's character that made God take notice. Noah stood against the backdrop of a broken world. His character was one of love and trust in God. He did not atrophy into a world of complacency and sin. He loved the Lord and he honored God. Moving from the comfort zone to the character zone you learn to fight giants, or you learn to build great ships.

King David began his legacy in the character zone. Remember when David was anointed by the Prophet Samuel, Jesse had called in 7 of his sons to be seen by the Prophet and each one was rejected. They were rejected because God was not looking from a worldly stance. He was looking for someone that had character building qualities on the inside. God was looking for someone who was seeking Him. God was looking for a Godly character, one that would reflect the image of God to the world.

Samuel asked if there were any more sons and Jesse called David in from the fields. David lived his life in the comfort of the fields. He was in the field tending his father's sheep. David lived a life learning of the ways of the Lord even as a young boy. He learned to play the harp in the fields. The Psalms of praise he wrote as a man probably began in the fields as he watched over the sheep and looked to the stars above, marveling at the ways of the Lord.

In the character zone you learn that God fights your battles. If you remember David was called in from the fields to take food to his brothers and to see what was happening with the people. Goliath was tormenting the people. David stood before Goliath and said, "Who are you to come against the armies of the living God." David knew of God and he knew of the character of God. David allowed the character of God to rise within him and the enemy of God fell at David's feet.

We need to allow the Character of God to rise within us and defeat the enemy of the living God. Do we live in our character-building zone? Or do we live in atrophy?

Noah lived in the Character-building zone. Noah did not atrophy into world of sin. He moved from the comfort zone into the character zone. God looked down and saw Noah. In all of the evil, in all of the corruption, in all of the darkness of the world, God looked down and saw a mirrored reflection of himself in Noah. God saw light, God saw goodness, God saw Grace in the life of Noah.

The task ahead of Noah was large, it would seem impossible.

Build a ship, make it this long and this tall and this wide. Give it 3 stories. Make a window. Make a door, one door. There were no power tools, no calculators to figure dimension. No assembly line, no workers, no heavy equipment to move the trees and make the boards. Everything was done with the hands of character.

And God brought the animals. Can you imagine the sight of all of those animals walking toward the ark? Imagine prairie dogs and penguins. The climate control. Noah and his family entered in and God closed the door.

Allow God to build your character and God will close the world off from you. You may face trials and heartache and storms in this world but nothing of this world will thrive against you...

Isaiah 54:7 “No weapon that is formed against you will prosper;
And every tongue that ¹accuses you in judgment you will condemn.
This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord,
And their vindication is from Me,” declares the Lord.

God will establish his covenant with you if you enter into the ark of his grace. We fail to enter in when we do not step from our comfort zone into our character-building zone.

¹⁷ Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. ¹⁸ But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.

Noah’s character reflected the image of God. Just as the character of Noah, the faith of Noah saved creation, your character in Christ Jesus can bring others to salvation. In the Book of Mark chapter 2, four friends carried a man on a mat to the house where Jesus was teaching. They could not enter the house because of the crowd of people. These four men climbed on the house top and dug an opening through the clay roof and lowered their friend down before Jesus. ⁵ And Jesus seeing their faith *said to the paralytic, “⁶ Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Do you want a covenant with God? Do you want to see you family and friends come to salvation? Then move from your comfort zone to your character-building zone and allow God to do a work in you....

[COMMUNION INTRODUCTION]

Jesus has established a mighty covenant with all who would come and receive. It is through communion we remember the hour of our salvation and the day of our baptism.

Communion is not taken lightly. It is the relationship between you and the Father made possible through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Pastor Cherryl M. Register

Greenville United Methodist Church

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