

2

Making Difficult Choices

Noah

*Hebrews 11:7;
Genesis 6:5-22*

Catastrophe movies are big business. Oceans rise to swallow cities, pandemics wipe out nations, alien spaceships blast bridges and skyscrapers. We sit in our seats surrounded by images of destruction and disaster—and then walk out to the lobby to get a refill on our popcorn! While we're stunned by the visual effects on the screen, we also realize that what we're seeing isn't really happening.

GROUP DISCUSSION. What catastrophes do you think could happen in the next ten years? What can you do to be prepared?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Are you someone who tries to prepare for every possible situation, or are you more willing just to take things as they come? What is the downside of your particular approach to the unexpected events of life?

The Bible has its own share of catastrophes—real ones. A massive flood, for example, destroyed every human being on earth except for Noah and his family, floating on the surface of the turbulent water in a crude barge. All Noah had to rely on as he did the tedious, laborious work of building the ark was God's warning of a disaster yet to come. Clearly, his choice to believe God was not an easy one to make. *Read Hebrews 11:7 and Genesis 6:5-22.*

1. What “things not yet seen” did God tell Noah about (Hebrews 11:7)?

2. Why did God choose Noah and his family to be the survivors (Genesis 6:8-9)?

Those who believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior are also “survivors,” like Noah and his family. Why has God chosen to rescue us?

3. In what tangible ways did Noah express his trust in what God had told him?

4. What does Noah's example tell us about the relationship between confident trust in God and the hard work of preparation?

What is the danger of imbalance on either side?

5. Do you think the fact that Noah actually heard God's voice helped him obey God in building the ark? Explain why or why not.

6. Describe the condition of human society just before the flood (Genesis 6:5, 11-12).

7. What would you have found most difficult about raising three sons to maturity in a culture like that?

8. It may have taken Noah 120 years to build the ark and yet, in all that time, it seems that only his own family believed his

witness. What do these “results” tell you about God’s expectations of us as his followers?

9. The apostle Peter called Noah “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5). The author of Hebrews says that by faith Noah condemned the world. What warning from God do you think should be raised in our society?

10. What is something difficult God is asking you to do?

How does Noah’s example encourage you?

Pray about your own willingness to stand true to God in a world that is drifting away from him. Ask for “holy fear” to obey his Word.

Now or Later

Find a quiet, solitary place and sit in silence before the Lord. Listen as you ask God one question: “Where is one place in my life where I need to step out in faith?” Write down what you hear in your spirit from the Lord. Share it with a trusted friend. Then, in serious respect for God, do it!