

## Sermon – Obediently following Gods Plan 11 February 2018

Good Morning, it is nice to see everyone after a long time, life really keeps us busy but we must remember from time to time that we are here on earth for a higher purpose. It is already the second month of the year and before we realise it will be December and the end of another year. Some people will reflect and agree that the year was well spent while others will look back in regret and remark that it was another wasted year with nothing important accomplished.

During our walk with Jesus and the Father we sometimes have the feeling that God speaks to us and leads us to do certain things for his glory – very important his glory – we most times want and need to do things only for our glory.

The question I put to you this morning is “ Are we obedient? - Do we Listen? – Do We do what God has asked us or through our impatience - do our own thing and derail Gods master plan. This is where I believe we go wrong by not following Gods plan. Gods plan is guaranteed to work , when we intervene things go horribly wrong.

Let’s look at one man who obediently did what God told him or asked of him: He could not see the end but he faithfully did all God commanded him.

### **Genesis 6 New International Version (NIV)**

#### **Wickedness in the World**

6 When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. <sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with <sup>[a]</sup> humans forever, for they are mortal <sup>[b]</sup>; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

<sup>4</sup> The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

<sup>5</sup> 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 (very similar to our time). <sup>6</sup> The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. <sup>7</sup> 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." <sup>8</sup> But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. Question if God had to wipe out the earth today will we find favour in his eyes?

## Noah and the Flood

<sup>9</sup> 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 (can we strive that 2018 this can be said of you and I). <sup>10</sup> Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> So make yourself an ark of cypress<sup>[c]</sup> wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. <sup>15</sup> This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. <sup>[d]</sup> <sup>16</sup> Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit<sup>[e]</sup> high all around. <sup>[f]</sup> Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. <sup>17</sup> I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. <sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. (Can we make a covenant/agreement with God for our families and children) | <sup>19</sup> You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. <sup>20</sup> Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. <sup>21</sup> You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them."

**<sup>22</sup> Noah did everything just as God commanded him.** (Whats is some of our commands Go into all the world ..... Be the salt of the earth and the light of the world)

Question do we ?do everything just as God commanded us?

Lets talk about the ark for a few minutes an amazing feat of engineering.

Noah's ark measured 300 cubits in length, 50 cubits in width, and 30 cubits in height. A cubit is the equivalent of 17.5 inches/43.75 cm(just short of half a metre) . That means the ark was 131.25 metres in length - the length of one rugby field including the 100 metres play area and 15 metres on either side after the posts and try line. The width 21.875 metres – 1 third the width of a rugby field and 13.125 metres in height – the standard for mixed use buildings of 3 storeys in height ranges from 3.5 metres to 4 metres. The internal volume of the ark was 37683.11 cubed metres- – the equivalent of around 350 buses or 310 standard sized hotel rooms. So Noah also built the first 310 bedroom floating Hotel.This was an enormous structure built by just 4 people using Gods Plan.

If the average animal was the size of a sheep, it had capacity for 125,000 animals. To put that into perspective, there are 21,600 animals from 700 different species at London Zoo. That means you could fit nearly six London Zoos on board Noah's ark. Since it was the first boat ever built, it's not like it came with an instruction manual. It was back-breaking work that required blood, sweat, and tears.

It took an incredible amount of faith on the part of Noah and his family to build the ark. Who builds a boat in the desert? Who hammers away for 120 years on something they might not even need? Who banks their entire future on something that has never happened before?









Most times when you follow Jesus , Gods Plan you become the joke,ridicule and laughing sock of many people.Can you imagine how Noah was ridiculed.I am sure they had tours to the desert – to see this mad man building this boat in the desert.Noah knew who he was listening to – he did not succumb to peer pressure.

According to Jewish tradition, Noah didn't just start building the ark. He planted trees first. After they were fully grown, he cut down the trees, sawed them into planks, and built the boat. Can you imagine the planning that went

into this operation? Same principle – we need to plan in our lives not just do things spontaneously with Gods authority.

Here’s an interesting piece of information: not until the late nineteenth century did a ship that size get constructed again. Yet that design ratio that Noah used is still considered the golden mean for stability during storms at sea. Noah’s act of obedience literally changed the world – and obedience will change your world too.

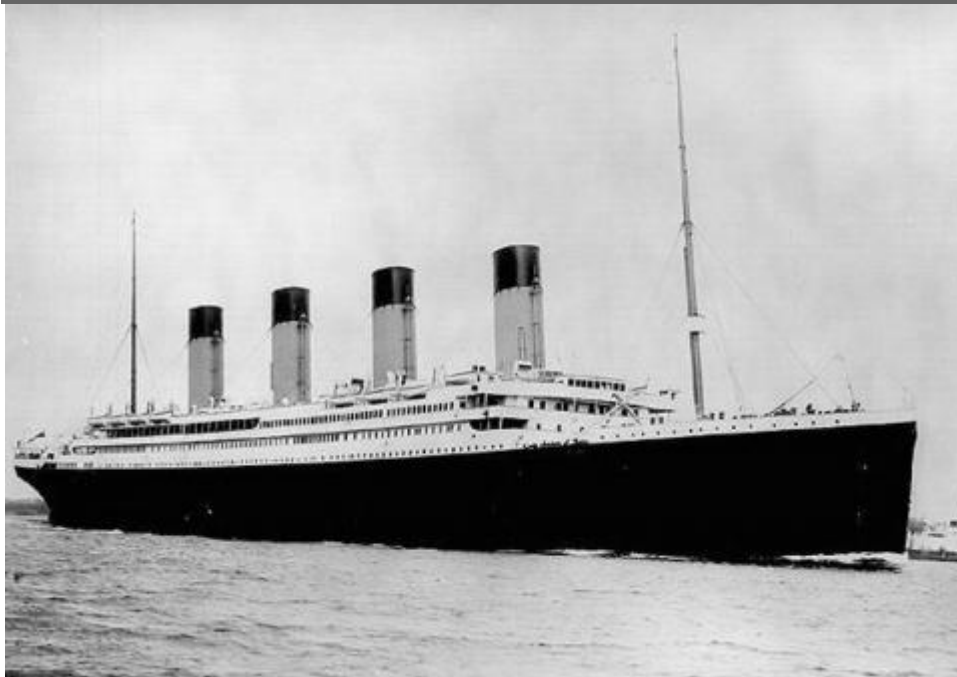
Let’s do a comparison between the renowned Titanic and Noah’s Ark. Gods Plan versus man’s plan – let’s see who is the most ingenious. Gods Plan elevates you (mountain to experience) – Mans plan sinks you to the bottom of the ocean. Choose wisely.

<b>BATTLE of the BOATS!</b>				
(advantage indicated with a check mark)		<b>NOAH'S ARK</b>	<b>R.M.S. TITANIC</b>	
<b>Boat Builders:</b>		Noah	Harland and Wolff	
<b>Boat Designed By:</b>	 	<b>GOD</b>	Alexander Carlisle	
<b>Where Built:</b>		Shuruppak (S. Iraq)	Belfast, N. Ireland	
<b>Year Construction Started:</b>		2465 BC (est.)	1909	
<b>Original Cost to Build:</b>		unknown - possibly free	\$7,500,000 US	
<b>Cost to Build in Todays Dollars:</b>		unknown	\$400,000,000 US	
<b>Number of People Required to Build:</b>		4	15,000	
<b>Approximate Man-hours to Build:</b>		1,497,600 (est.)	106,143,750 (est.)	
<b>Months to Build:</b>		1440	37	
<b>Boat Built of:</b>		Wood	Metal	

<b>Length:</b>		<b>450 feet</b>	<b>883 feet</b>	
<b>Width:</b>		<b>75 feet</b>	<b>92 feet</b>	
<b>Height:</b>		<b>45 feet</b>	<b>175 feet</b>	
<b>Ship's Weight (LWT):</b>		<b>4,100 tons (est.)</b>	<b>21,831 tons</b>	
<b>Ship's Displacement (D't):</b>		<b>24,300 tons (est.)</b>	<b>66,000 tons</b>	
<b># of Decks:</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	
<b># of Propellers:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b># of Furnaces:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>159</b>	
<b># of Lifeboats:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	
<b># of Elevators:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b># of Anchors:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b># of Sister Ships:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b># of Cats on Board:</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b># of Swimming Pools:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Top Speed:</b>		<b>0 knots</b>	<b>24 knots</b>	
<b># of Compasses:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	
<b>Captain's Name:</b>		<b>Noah</b>	<b>Edward J. Smith</b>	
<b>Age of Captain:</b>		<b>600 years old</b>	<b>59 years old</b>	
<b>Years of Prior Naval Experience:</b>		<b>0 years</b>	<b>43 years</b>	
<b>Length of Ship's Maiden Voyage in Days:</b>		<b>370 days</b>	<b>4.5 days</b>	
<b># of Passengers on Maiden Voyage:</b>		<b>8 people + 2 of each animal</b>	<b>2228</b>	
<b># of Survivors:</b>		<b>8 people + 2 of each animal</b>	<b>705</b>	

% of Passengers Saved:	✓	100%(When we place our trust in God we are 100% saved)and safe	32% read Article below Mans plan 33 % success ratio.	
# of Survivors Rescued from out of the Water:		NONE - Entire Worldwide Population Destroyed...	none	
Final Resting Place:		Mt. Ararat/Turkey – Gods Plan elevates you	North Atlantic Ocean- Mans plan sinks you	
Altitude/(Depth):		+17,000 feet	(-12,460 feet)	
Year Rediscovered:		1853	1985	

## WHY TITANIC WAS CALLED THE “UNSINKABLE” SHIP



An unknown *Titanic* crew member is reported to have once said to embarking passenger, Mrs. Sylvia Caldwell, “God himself could not sink this ship!”

The R.M.S. *Titanic* was the largest and most luxurious passenger ship of its time. *Titanic*’s keel was laid on March 31, 1909. For the next twenty-six months, Harland & Wolff’s shipyard workers labored to construct her massive hull. The White Star flagships would have both reciprocating steam engines and a turbine engine to power the center of *Titanic*’s three propellers. In addition, she was equipped with a double-plated bottom and sixteen watertight compartments on the hull of the ship with doors that would close if water entered them, allowing the *Titanic* to stay afloat. This was designed to provide the utmost in security.

Three thousand carpenters, engineers, electricians, plumbers, painters, master mechanics, and interior designers fit *Titanic* with the latest in marine technology, and the most extravagant

fixtures and furniture. Once finished, *Titanic's* size and technological advancements were primary reasons why it was believed to be a practically unsinkable ship in the public's estimation.

### Hebrews 11:7 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.

Noah built the ark because God commanded it. It's what he was called to do in life. Sawing planks and hammering nails for him was an act of obedience. And when everything was said and done, it was the longest act of obedience recorded in Scripture. From start to finish, Noah's one act of obedience took 43,800 days!(120 years) And with each daily act of obedience, he glorified God. No matter what tool you use in your trade – a hammer, a keyboard, a mop, a rugby ball, a spreadsheet, a microphone, a farming equipment – use it is an act of obedience. It's the mechanism whereby you worship God. It's the way you do what you're supposed to do. What are you called to do – find your purpose – ask God will show you.

The Bible says, 'Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him' (Colossians 3:17 NIV 2011 Edition).

Stop putting yourself down and thinking what you do is not important. Remember the old proverb, 'For want of a nail'? It goes like this: 'For want of a nail the shoe was lost. For want of a shoe the horse was lost. For want of a horse the rider was lost. For want of a rider the message was lost. For want of a message the battle was lost. For want of a battle the kingdom was lost. And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.' In God's eyes, small acts of obedience are big things. When you joyfully do little things like they are big things, then God will do big things like they are little things. That's how His kingdom advances.

'Noah walked with God.'

Genesis 6:9 NKJV

What went through Noah's mind when God told him to build a boat in the middle of dry land? Nobody had ever done it before. Yet the Bible says, 'Noah did everything just as God commanded him' (v. 22 NIV 2011 Edition).

How did he do it? Answer: 'Noah walked with God.' Walking takes place step by step.

The trouble is, we want God to reveal the second step before we take the first step of faith. But until we take the first step, He won't reveal the next step.

We've got to be obedient to the measure of revelation He has given us, if we want more of it. That's why we get stuck spiritually. We only want to follow Christ to the point of precedence – the place where we have been before – but no farther. We're afraid of doing what we've never done before because it's unfamiliar territory.

So we leave unclaimed the new gifts, new anointing's, and new dreams God wants to give us. You've got to push past the fear of the unknown. You've got to do something different. The impala can jump 3 metres high and 9 metres long, yet it can be contained in a small enclosure with 1.2 metre -high walls. Why? Because it will not jump if it cannot see where it's going to land. We have the same problem, don't we? We want a money-back guarantee before we take a leap of faith, but that eliminates faith from the equation. We are called to 'walk by faith, not by sight' (2 Corinthians 5:7 NKJV).

'Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD.'

Genesis 6:8 NIVUK (2011 Edition)

You ask, 'What is the favour of God?' It's God doing for you what you cannot do for yourself. It opens doors of opportunity. It turns opposition into support. It can help you land a promotion, make the list, or seal the deal. You want to know the favour of God in your life – think on the hymn – Count your blessings name them one by one .....

The Bible says, 'Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men' (Luke 2:52 NIVUK 1984 Edition).

Note, just as you can grow in wisdom and stature, you can also grow in favour with God and men. So instead of being content with the level of favour you enjoy, ask God for an increase. You ask, 'How do I find favour?' Obedience!

It begins by surrendering your life to Christ. 'No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly' (Psalm 84:11 NASB).

And God's favour is not limited to the spiritual realm; it extends to the material realm as well. In Noah's life, it translated into ingenious inventions. He didn't just build the first boat and pioneer the shipbuilding industry, he also held a wide variety of patents. According to Jewish tradition, Noah invented the plough, the scythe, the hoe, and a number of other implements used for cultivating the ground.

The favour of God translated into good ideas. It doesn't matter what you do, God wants to help you do it. He wants to favour your business plan, your work, your home, your farm, your family. But you've got to position yourself for that favour by acting in obedience. If God knows He'll get the glory, He will bless you beyond your ability and beyond your resources.

'God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise.'

1 Corinthians 1:27 NIV 2011 Edition

As long as you need man's approval, God is limited in what He can do through you. Faith is the willingness to look foolish. That's why faith and humility go hand in hand.

Noah looked foolish building an ark in the desert. Sarah looked foolish believing she could conceive at ninety. Moses looked foolish asking Pharaoh to let his slaves go. The Israelite army looked foolish marching round Jericho blowing trumpets. David looked foolish attacking Goliath with a slingshot. The wise men looked foolish following a star. Peter looked foolish stepping out of the boat in the middle of a storm. And what about Jesus hanging half naked on the cross.

But the results speak for themselves, don't they? Noah stayed afloat during the flood. Sarah gave birth to Isaac. Moses delivered Israel out of Egypt. The walls of Jericho came tumbling down. David defeated Goliath. The wise men found the Messiah. Peter walked on water. And Jesus rose from the dead.

There comes a moment when you must quit hedging your bets, quit playing it safe and doing what you've always done.

You need to build the ark, or at least plant some trees or saw some planks! Faith is acting as if God has already answered our prayers, and acting as if God has the means to answer our prayers, as in the case of Noah, it takes 120 years. Jesus said, 'Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours' (Mark 11:24 NIV 2011 Edition).

'You need to persevere.'

Hebrews 10:36 NIV (2011 Edition)

Try to imagine what life on the ark must have been like for Noah. He probably didn't get much sleep. He was feeding, cleaning, and caring for thousands of animals around the clock. And it must have smelled to high heaven. Did you know that elephants produce 40 kgs of waste per day? (Circus story) Circus once – stopped show – elephant let it go – stink – guy had to pick up mess with spade – 2 barrow full.

It was smelly and messy. And that's a pretty accurate picture of what obedience sometimes looks like. It's hard work, and it gets harder. The blessings of God can complicate your life. But unlike sin, they bring a level of joy and fulfilment you have never known (see Proverbs 10:22).

No matter what vision God has given you, it will take longer and be harder than you ever imagined. Noah offers a little reality check, doesn't he? If a decade sounds like a long time to patiently pursue a God-ordained passion, try twelve decades! It's amazing what God can do if you just keep hammering away year after year! We tend to overestimate what we can accomplish in a year, but we underestimate what God can accomplish in a decade. The key is to be a planner and a plodder.

Planners see into the future and cast a vision; plodders put one foot in front of the other and keep going one day at a time. Success is not just about getting where God wants you to go, it's about who you become in the process. It's crossing the finish line the way the apostle Paul did: 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful' (2 Timothy 4:7 NLT).

Question what has God asked you to do? Are you going to be obedient? Walk with him? Depend on him?

Here is some advice for you this year to persevere and reach your spiritual goals.

1) Put God first. He wants you to succeed; what good parent wouldn't? So work on your relationship with Him. 'Acquaint now thyself with him...thereby good shall come unto thee' (Job 22:21 KJV).

2) Help others to become successful. 'Whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord' (Ephesians 6:8 KJV). Don't just be interested in yourself, become interested in others too.

3) Create a climate of confidence around you. As long as you keep speaking words of doubt, you'll never experience victory. Remind yourself that your 'sufficiency is of God' (2 Corinthians 3:5 KJV).

4) Stay informed. 'A wise man will hear and increase in learning' (Proverbs 1:5 NASB). Observe, read, and grow. If you're willing to pay money for a good meal but not for a good book, perhaps you value your appetite more than your intellect.

5) Visualise yourself attaining your goal. Think and talk in success pictures. Moses did that: 'He had his eye on the One no eye can see, and kept right on going' (Hebrews 11:27 MSG).

6) Write down your plan and establish deadlines. Make a detailed list of required activities, and set checkpoints. Guard your mind and prioritise your time. 'Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get' (Ephesians 5:16 MSG).

7) Set a realistic goal. And work towards it one priority at a time. Many things in life fail for one reason – broken focus. So avoid distractions: ‘A double minded man is unstable’ (James 1:8 KJV).

This year we will face storms but are we going to enter the spiritual ark – to weather the storms of life – will you be obedient and let God have control.

Important fact – the Ark had no engine – God was in control – no compass – God gave direction – Let God be the engine of your vehicle.

At the end of your storm – know this – if God was in charge you will be levated above the rest – not sunken to the depths of the ocean.

I implore you follow Gods Plan – you will be all safe.

Be blessed , stay faithful and obedient to God this year – listen for his voice.