

Making A New Start Genesis 8:16-22 – Part 2

Introduction:

1. Previously, we began to examine Noah's life, post flood. We saw God's extension of grace to Noah and his family. God delivered them from judgment and protected them in the ark of safety.
2. But, after being on the ark for over a year, the time came for Noah to leave the ark.
3. Noah and his family received a second chance. In the same way, 2015 is gone, and 2016 is here.
4. God in His grace has given you a new year. It is a new beginning, a fresh opportunity, a brand-new start with a new year. But how do you successfully make a new start?
5. Let's continue to look at Noah's life. From the text, we will gain some biblical and practical insight into how to make a new start. Every person can make a new start! How?

First, you must acknowledge your need of others. vs. 16, 18

Second, establish worship as your number one priority. vs. 20-22

1. We saw how Noah responded to God's extension of grace.
2. We learned about Noah's example in worship to God.
 - **Noah had a definite time and place of worship.**
 - **Noah did not allow the issues of life to crowd out his worship time.**
 - **Noah worshipped God when others did not.**
 - **Noah's worship moved the heart of God.**

Third, move forward out of the past. vs. 16-19

1. We see the word "*forth*" in every verse in verses 16-19.
 - "*Go forth...*" (vs. 16)
 - "*Bring forth*" (vs. 17)
 - "*And Noah went forth...*" (vs. 18)
 - All the animals "*...went forth out of the ark.*" (vs. 19)
 - Webster's defines the word "*forth*" as "forward; onward in time." It says that synonyms are "onward; ahead; forward."
2. Noah and his family were in the ark for over a year, but now it was time to leave that stage of their lives and move forward. God said, "*Go forth...*" (vs. 16)
3. Noah didn't sit around in the ark and say, "No, I'm staying right here. I know this ark. I know I'm safe here, and I just want to stay here. I want everything to stay the same. I am satisfied right here!"

4. No, he realized that he had to move forward. Things would never be the same as they were the past year for Noah and his family. The previous year was unique and different. He couldn't sit around talking about the way things used to be.
5. It was time to leave this chapter of his life, move on, and launch out into new territory to pioneer new ground.
6. What a lesson for us today! This encourages me personally and as a pastor, especially as it pertains to this ministry, CrossRoads.
7. CrossRoads is at a "crossroads." We can live in the past or move forward and go forth into the future. We can say, "No, we are comfortable in the ark. We aren't moving." Or we can say, "The ark has stopped moving. God is calling us to make some changes."
 - **Illustration:** A sailboat is trying to get to the other side of the lake. The sails have been set in order to utilize the current winds. But the winds change and the boat quits moving. Somebody suggests, "Let's change the sails in order to take advantage of the winds and reach our goal. Our current paradigm is not working." Somebody objects and says, "But we have always set our sails this way in the past. I am comfortable with the past and the way we have always set the sails." That is fine, and it is an option. But you must concede to sitting on the lake and not moving. Therefore, you must be okay with living in the past, not moving forward, and not reaching your goals.
 - Personally, I am not okay with this as it pertains to our church.
 - We are no longer in 1996 or 2006; we are now in 2016. What we did to reach people and to help people grow in 2006 is irrelevant. Truthfully, what we did last year really doesn't matter. We have to move forward. We have to constantly adjust and reset the sails. If not, we become immobilized – spinning our wheels. We quit moving.
 - I want to encourage you, as we endeavor to make changes in order to reach people and optimize our effectiveness as a church, don't live in the past. Don't be a person who wants to just sit in the ark or sit idle in the sailboat on the lake. Be a forward-thinker. Be a person that is all about going forth and moving forward.
 - A church is a living organism. It is like a person. It cannot stay the same forever. Just as you have to press forward and make changes based on where you are in life, a church has to do this too. Especially, if it is to continue to be vibrant and impact people for Christ. Life has its seasons, and this is true in the life of a church. We have to move forward.
8. But this is also true in your personal life. Think about last year for you personally. 2015 – it was unique. It may have been a wonderful year or you may view it as a terrible year. I am sure that there were mountaintops and valleys. But one thing is for sure. It's gone!
9. 2016 is now here, and it is a new beginning. God has allowed you and me to see another brand-new year.
10. You must press forward. I like what Paul said in Philippians 3:13-14. In this context, Paul was desiring to know Christ in a greater way. But he knew he had to make a conscious decision to forget the things which were behind.

- You cannot know someone in the present if your heart is dwelling on the past.
 - **Illustration:** Many married couples live in the past. They can't get past the past! Living in the past will kill your future and make your present miserable.
11. This can be a year in which you grow spiritually in your relationship with Christ, greater than you ever have before. But you can't allow the past to keep you in bondage. Paul said, "... *forgetting those things which are behind...* " (vs. 14)
 - Forget doesn't mean that you fail to remember. We are human beings, and though we wish we could erase bad memories, we cannot.
 - The idea behind the word "*forget*" in the Bible is that we are no longer influenced or affected by those past things.
 12. You can't change the past, but you can change the meaning of the past. Paul had a rough past. He could have allowed this to weigh him down and destroy him; instead, it became an inspiration to him.
 - The events from Paul's past didn't change, but Paul's understanding of them did.
 13. Too many Christians are shackled by regrets and events of the past. You cannot run a race effectively looking back all the time. You will stumble and fall. When you live in the past, it will do nothing to change the past. Also, it will hinder you in growing in your relationship with Christ.
 14. Don't dwell on your past failures; don't dwell on things you cannot change; don't dwell on past grudges; don't dwell on hurtful events. It will not help you, only hinder you. The call to you is the same as it was to Noah – "*Go forth.*"

In Conclusion:

1. Paul said to press forward. Noah had to move forward out of the past. We all have to do that.
2. I challenge you to make a decision today to look to 2016 as a year of change in your life. Don't allow yourself to be shackled to the past, but determine to make this year, 2016, a year in which you allow God to make glorious changes in your life.