



**July 16, 2006**

Preaching: Pastor Rich French

Genesis chapter 6 verses 6-19 and again chapter 7 verses 1-5

I Samuel 3:1-11

Luke 2:1-20

## “We care about God’s Children”

Prayer; Good morning Lord, and thank you for bringing us safely through the night.

My prayer this day is that what I say and how it is heard will glorify you. AMEN.

It has been said that the greatest encouragement is a good example.

This morning we are going to read and witness some great examples and hopefully they will leave you encouraged. I have chosen three stories that are pictured in our nursery’s stained glass, and I am encouraged by the wonderful example of my friend Pastor Doh, who created the image for the cover of your bulletin. Please take your bulletin home and cut out the image of these three windows and use it as a bookmark. This will not only encourage you to read, it will also make you a good example in the eyes of all librarians, because you won’t need to fold over the corner of the last page you read. Let’s begin with the first reading.

Genesis chapter 6 verses 6-19 and again chapter 7 verses 1-5

*These are the descendants of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

*Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth. And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth. Make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.*

*Then the Lord said to Noah, 'Go into the ark, you and your entire household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.' And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.*

Noah and the Ark a very familiar story, usually teaching us about obedience or maybe about the promise God made to never flood the earth again. I want to highlight obedience and one other thing. First obedience, I have a sign in my office that reads “The secret of ministry is not success, or skill, but obedience.” How very true.

The other piece of the Noah story that I want to highlight is one that a professor of mine pointed out to me. Togetherness. If you were to put a lion in the same room with a lamb today, the outcome would be less than good for the lamb. However,, in God’s story, they can coexist. This is a great example for us. If we obey God, we too can coexist, city kids and rural kids playing basketball, bikers and small children riding together... the possibilities are endless.

Song # 467 – “Trust and Obey”

This next story is one that that teaches us about faith as a two way street, and by that I mean that we have to listen to what God says and we have to respond. My hope is that we can know the importance and the benefits of responding with action. That we can do something! Something positive, something glorifying God and benefiting our neighbors and His children.

I Samuel 3:1-11

*Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.*

*At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ and he said, ‘Here I am!’ and ran to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ But he said, ‘I did not call; lie down again.’ So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, ‘Samuel!’ Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ But he said, ‘I did not call, my son; lie down again.’ Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” ’ So Samuel went and lay down in his place.*

*Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel said, ‘Speak, for your servant is listening.’ Then the Lord said to Samuel, ‘See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle.*

Wouldn't you like to participate in whatever it is that God is going to do "that will make the ears of anyone who hears it tingle" That makes me excited, just thinking about it. We see that kind of excitement year after year with ASP and I would say we

will see that kind of ear tingling excitement on the faces of motorcycle riders and their passengers when they see us out there this morning cheering them as they ride past.

Song # 593 “Here I am Lord”

Our last story is the Greatest story ever told. It is the most encouraging example, we will ever have.

Luke 2:1-20

### *The Birth of Jesus*

*In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.*

### *The Shepherds and the Angels*

*In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,*

*'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'*

*When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.*

A simple woman who trusted, obeyed, who heard and responded, was given the opportunity to serve God in the ultimate way. She brought into our world an example of what God intends for us all to be...

Simple, humble and obedient servants to Him.

Song # 277 “Tell me the Stories of Jesus”

We don't get to hear that ear tingling message of Christmas enough, and every time we do we all seem to act a little bit better for having heard it. Whether we study, serve, or simply offer example of encouragement, it is good for God and doing the things that are good for God is how we show we care about His children.

AMEN