

There are a number of parallels that can be made between the ark and church. For one, they both were planned by God because of man's sinfulness. In the days of Noah, man's thoughts were on evil so much so that God repented that he ever made man, so he put a plan in place to punish the wicked and save the righteous. Of all the population, only eight righteous were saved, Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives.

Likewise the world of Jesus' day as well as our world today focuses on evil continuously. The setting is similar to the days of Noah and God again has a plan to punish the wicked and reward the righteous. ***John 5:28-29 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, (29) And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*** Paul in his defense to Governor Festus said ***Acts 24:15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.***

Like in the days of Noah, the majority of the people are going to be lost. ***Matthew 7:13-14 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: (14) Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*** So the setting was right for God plan to build the ark as well as for the church.

God told Noah to build the ark and gave him specifics on how to do it. One thing God did not do was to give it a name. He did not say call this Noah's ark to distinguish it from Enoc's ark, or Methuselah's ark, or Laban's ark. No name was given. It was simply called the ark. The reason no name was given is because there was only one and when there is only one of anything it needs no name. Names are given to distinguish one thing from another similar thing. This ark could be described as Noah's ark since he was building it. It could be described as God's ark since he was behind the planning and building of the ark. However it is mostly known as the ark.

Jesus promised to build his church. ***Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*** How many churches do you see in this promise – one? We see this church coming in existence on the Day of Pentecost

in Acts 2. ***Acts 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*** To which church were these people being added – Christ’s church.

In the book of Colossians and Ephesians we learn that the church is also called the body. ***Ephesians 1:22-23 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, (23) Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*** Now you can go to Ephesians 4:4 and read where there is “one body.”

Since there is only one church that you read about in your New Testament, it needs no name. So most of the time you read about the church it is simply called “the church.” Sometimes it is call the church at a particular location like the church in Corinth. Sometimes it is call the church of God, the body or the church of the firstborn. But these are all descriptive terms for the one church. They are not a name so you never see the term “church” capitalized.

In the days of Noah, the ark was the place for salvation. Noah was told to build the ark for the saving of his family and did just that. Once the ark was completed, Noah and his family were the only ones to go inside. Once they were inside, the LORD closed the door behind them. Seven days later the flood waters came and the ark floated them safely on top of the water. Interestingly enough, it was the water that destroyed the multitudes, and it was the same water that saved Noah and his family – what made the difference? The difference was whether you were inside of the ark or not. Inside the ark was the place of salvation. Were there any saved outside the ark – No. One needed to be inside the ark to be saved.

Now let’s consider the church. Just like the ark, the church is the place of salvation. Let’s consider a few scriptures. We have already noted that the church is also called the body. ***Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*** Notice that Christ is the savior of the body, the church. He came once into the world to provide salvation to the world but when he comes again the saved will be the church – his spiritual body. Christ is not the church – he is the head of the church. The people make up the church. The Greek word for church is “ecclesia” – “the called out, assembly” These are the people that are obedient to the Lord’s teachings after which the Lord adds them to the church. ***Acts 2:47b ... And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.***

**2 Timothy 2:10** *Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.* Notice a couple of things from this passage. One is the expression “in Christ Jesus.” That is another way of saying in his body, which is the church. The second expression is “obtain salvation.” That means to receive salvation. Putting them together we learn that we receive salvation in Christ – the church. Just like people of old had to be in the ark to obtain salvation, people today have to be in Christ to obtain salvation.

If you jump back up to v1 of this chapter you will see that GRACE is also found in Christ, and according to Titus 2:11 this grace brings salvation. **Titus 2:11-12** *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Grace brings salvation.* You don't go out and “get” salvation; it is available for you to receive it. It has appeared to all men. There is one gospel of grace for all men. God doesn't have a gospel of grace for some and a gospel of law or self-justification for others. All men can find salvation by the grace of God.

Notice what John writes. **1 John 5:11** *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* Where is eternal life; in his Son, i.e. in Christ, in his body, in the church. Ephesians 5:23, 1Timothy 2:10 and 1 John 5:11 all teach that salvation of the man today is in the church, just like salvation in Noah's day was in the ark.

Not only is salvation found in the church, all spiritual blessing are found in Christ. **Ephesians 1:3** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:* This describes both the *kind* of blessings and the *location* of those blessings. These are **spiritual** blessings, which are far better than material blessings. These blessings are ours in the heavenly places **in Christ**, they are higher, better, and more secure than earthly blessings.

**Colossians 1:12-14** *Giving thanks unto the Father, ... (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: (14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:* In verse being is Christ is described as being in His kingdom. In the kingdom of His dear Son, we have the spiritual blessings of

redemption and forgiveness of sin. If forgiveness and redemption are spiritual blessing found in Christ, what about those outside of Christ. The conclusion is that they are not forgiven nor have they received redemption.

What about grace? We mentioned Titus 2:1 a few minutes ago but let's notice it again. ***2 Timothy 2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*** Grace is unmerited favor. The unmerited favor of God is given to those that are in Christ, i.e. the Christian.

Since things like forgiveness, redemption, grace and salvation are found in Christ. The next logical question is how does one get into Christ; faith/belief does not do it neither does confession. ***Romans 10:10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*** Notice the phrase “unto” means going toward. These things are important and essential to your salvation, but they do not put one into Christ.

What about repentance. Repentance is important because Jesus said ***except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish Lk 13:3.*** So what about repentance? ***Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*** Like belief and confession, repentance is “unto” life; going toward.

What about baptism? ***Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*** There you have it – into; term of entrance. Baptism washing away sin so you are in a saved condition thus the Lord adds you to the church (Acts 2:47). Belief, repentance, confession does not remove sin; only baptism washes away sin. Once your sins have been washed away, you are forgiven thus forgiveness is found “in Christ.” Once you are baptized, you are redeemed, thus redemption is found in Christ.

Notice two more “into” passages. ***1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*** This passage reinforces the thought of one body, which is the church, and that you are baptized in that one body. There is one more passage that mentions being baptized into Christ. ***Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?***

So is baptism important? Yes it is; otherwise one is not in Christ where salvation is located. It's like not being in the ark during the flood.

One final thought from Peter. *1 Peter 3:20-21 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.* Peter is using the ark as illustration similar to what we are doing today. He tells us that because of disobedience, God suffered long while waiting on the preparation of the ark. Once finished, only eight souls were saved and they were saved by water. Now we see the comparison in v21.

*(21) The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:* Like Noah was saved by water, we too are saved by water. The water that saves us is the water of baptism. Really it was Noah's obedience that allowed him to be saved. Likewise it is our obedience that lets the water save us. Peter says it is the **answer to a good conscious**.

In summary. Noah obeyed and built the ark to saving of his family, but the family had to be in the ark to receive this salvation. Likewise, Jesus built a church for the saving of man, but man has to be in the church to receive this salvation. Are you in the church? Have you been baptized into Christ for the remission of you sins and have the Lord add you to his church, the one spiritual body of Christ?

Invitation