

Thought For The Week

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Articles, 1200 word, followed by 400 word

The Urgent Call to Speak for God

Jim's recent sermon delivered a powerful message on the end times, urging believers to remain faithful and actively evangelize in a world increasingly filled with violence and division. The service opened with two key scripture readings that set the thematic foundation. Mike presented the first reading from Genesis 6:11-13, where the text describes a corrupt earth overrun with violence: "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come near before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

Roger then read from 2 Peter 3:3-7 in the New American Standard Bible, emphasizing warnings for the last days: "Know this, first of all, that the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lust, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation. But when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that the word of God, the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But by his word, the present heaven and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction among godly men."

Jim began by acknowledging the small size of the congregation, quoting Mark 13 where Christ warns that all will hate believers, but those who stand firm will be saved. He declared his belief that we are in the end times, encouraging mutual faithfulness amid declining church attendance since COVID. He pointed to a surge in violence and hatred as evidence, attributing it to Satan's influence in stirring division since the beginning. "Satan is stirring the pot of division, and that's what he's done since the beginning. Feed him a lie, cause division, divide and conquer," Jim explained.

The sermon delved into humanity's sin problem, linking the scripture readings to global punishment. From creation to Noah, mankind's godly character devolved into animal-like behavior due to improper reasoning and bad moral choices. Jim recounted Adam and Eve's failure to challenge the serpent, leading to their expulsion. Cain's rejected offering fueled jealousy, resulting in Abel's murder—the first act of violence. God warned Cain that sin crouched at his door, but he failed to master it, earning banishment and establishing two opposing camps: the disobedient "sons of men" from Cain's line and the faithful "sons of God" from Seth's.

Jim highlighted Genesis 4:25-26, where Eve bore Seth as a replacement for Abel, and men began calling on God's name. This reflected the "seed promise" of a Messiah to crush the serpent. Chapter 5's genealogy omits Cain, confirming the divide between God's kingdom and Satan's. Intermarriage corrupted the godly line, leading to widespread wickedness: "Yahweh saw that the wickedness of

man was great on the earth, that every imagination of his thoughts of man's heart was continually only evil." The earth filled with violence, prompting the flood that destroyed all land life, sparing only Noah's family.

Jim drew a profound connection to baptism, citing 1 Peter 3:20-21. The flood's waters purged wickedness while saving Noah, foreshadowing baptism's cleansing of sin for a good conscience toward God. He reiterated Peter's warning in 2 Peter: the world ignores past destruction by water, but current heavens and earth are reserved for fire and judgment of the ungodly. Believers must urgently warn others, as God delivers on His promises.

Post-flood, division reemerged quickly. Noah cursed Ham and Canaan for evil, restarting the ungodly camp, which became the perverse Canaanites practicing child sacrifice to Molech (Satan). The faithful line through Shem led to Abraham, whose promise blessed all nations via the Messiah. This lineage formed Israel, enslaved in Egypt until Moses—a type of Christ—led them out.

Jim explored Moses' reluctance in Exodus 4:10-17, where he made excuses about eloquence despite his elite Egyptian education, as Stephen later revealed in Acts 7: "Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and works." God paired him with Aaron through divine providence, setting a precedent for sending speakers two by two for support and wisdom. Jesus followed this in Mark 6:7 and Luke 10:1, sending apostles and the seventy in pairs.

Unlike Moses, Jesus' followers eagerly shared the Messiah's discovery, as Andrew did with Peter. Before ascending, Jesus issued the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." This generational mandate falls to modern believers.

Jim referenced Ivan Stewart's book "Go Ye Means Go Me," stressing personal responsibility to evangelize within one's sphere—family, friends, neighbors—without excuses. Even the healed demoniac in the Decapolis was sent to share his testimony, despite limited knowledge. "If you know a little, talk about that little. If you know a lot, pour it upon them," Jim advised.

Rejection shouldn't deter, as they rejected Jesus first. Instead, persist to save souls from judgment's fire. Paul urged Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-2 to preach urgently, and in Romans 10:13-17 explained faith requires hearing the word: "How can they hear without someone preaching to them?" Jim called believers to emulate Isaiah's response: "Here am I, send me."

The sermon ended with an invitation for prayers or baptism, reinforcing the need to warn of impending doom and share Christ's saving love. In a violent world like Noah's, Jim's message compels action: stand firm, evangelize boldly, and guide others to eternal paradise over hell's flames.

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The Urgent Call to Speak for God

In a recent sermon delivered by Jim, the congregation was reminded of biblical warnings about end times, drawing parallels between the days of Noah and today's world. The service began with scripture readings: Mike read from Genesis 6:11-13, highlighting the corruption and violence that filled the earth, prompting God to declare destruction upon it. Roger followed with 2 Peter 3:3-7 from the New American Standard Bible, warning of mockers in the last days who ignore God's past judgments, such as the flood, and the future destruction by fire reserved for the ungodly.

Jim emphasized that humanity has always grappled with sin, influenced by Satan, who sows division and chaos. He traced this back to Adam and Eve's failure to question the serpent, leading to expulsion from Eden, and Cain's murder of Abel, marking the start of violence. This divided mankind into two camps: the godly "sons of God" from Seth's line and the ungodly "sons of men" from Cain's. Intermarriage between them led to moral decay, culminating in the flood that destroyed all but Noah's family.

Jim connected this to modern times, noting increased violence and hatred since COVID, which he sees as Satanic influence. He likened the flood to baptism, a typology where water saves by cleansing sin, as Peter describes. Urging urgency, Jim stressed that just as God sent Moses (despite his excuses) and paired him with Aaron, believers today must evangelize. Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 calls all to make disciples, baptizing and teaching obedience.

Referencing Paul's words in Romans 10:13-17, Jim argued faith comes from hearing the word, so Christians must preach. Like Isaiah's eager response, "Here am I, send me," believers should share the gospel boldly, warning of judgment and offering salvation through Christ. Even simple testimonies, like the healed demoniac's, can plant seeds. Jim concluded with an invitation for prayer or baptism, encouraging the flock to stand firm amid hatred, as Christ promised in Mark 13.

This sermon serves as a call to action: in a world echoing the violence as in Noah's time, speak God's truth to save souls from impending doom.

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