Brother Bob, is that right?

Brother Bob, Sister Charlotte.

Thank you all for coming and being with us.

I'm going to say something about you.

I haven't got to be around you

in just a little bit.

Y'all know what I'm talking about

when I say a crusty old man.

You're the opposite of a crusty old man.

And that's what I want to be.

Y'all got a sweet spirit about you.

And that's talent, you know.

I don't want to grow old at heart.

I want to grow a little
more older and sensitive

and sweeter and kind things to say.

Genesis, sir, amen, amen.

It makes a difference.

Genesis chapter 11.

Bear with me tonight, y'all.

I hope I got enough voice
to share with a little bit

the Lord has laid on my heart.

Genesis chapter 11.

This is a passage.

This is a scene that we don't hear
taught on much, preached on much.

And in 21 years, I've only
preached on it one time.

But tonight, this is where I feel led to go

and continue on this thought
of the records of God in men.

And this is one that is really unique,

a little different.

But we find it here in the Bible.

In teaching and preaching,
particularly out of the Old Testament,

I think we need to do more.

We need to strive to do more
than merely teach history lessons.

There's things to learn from history.

But every bit of this is, can be applied.

Every bit of this is applicable.

We learn through the successes of people.

But we also learn through
the failures of people.

We learn the patience of
God and the grace of God,

the judgment of God that
we looked at this morning,

along with his grace.

But Genesis chapter 11, verse number one.

And the Bible says in verse one,

And the whole earth was of
one language and of one speech.

And it came to pass, as

they journeyed from the

east, they found the
plain in the land of Shinar,

and they dwelt there.

And they said one to another,

Go to, let us make brick,
and burn them thoroughly.

And they had brick for stone,
and slime had they for mortar.

And they said, Go to, let us
build us a city and a tower,

whose top may reach unto heaven.

And let us make us a name,

lest we be scattered abroad
upon the face of the whole earth.

Verse five, it says, And the Lord came
down to see the city and the tower,

which the children of men built it.

And the Lord said,
Behold, the people is one.

It means these people are united.

They're in pact.

They're in agreement.

Behold, this people is one,
and they have all one language.

And this they began to do,

and now nothing will
be restrained from them,

which they have imagined to do.

Verse seven says, Go to, let us go down.

And there confound their language,

that they may not understand
one another's speech.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from
thence, upon the face of all the earth,

and they left off to build the city.

Therefore is the name of it called Babel,

because the Lord did there
confound the language of all the earth.

And from thence did the Lord scatter
them abroad upon all the face of the earth.

Let's pray.

Dear God, I pray tonight
that you would take your word,

Lord, that it's spirit-inspired.

Lord, that it is only through your spirit
that we can understand and we can see.

Lord, that you would take this record

of the actions of these men
and your dealings with these men.

Lord, that you might use it to teach us,

to strengthen us.

Lord, to make us wise,

that we might walk in your way.

Lord, give me strength
tonight to share in wisdom.

Lord, to speak and teach in a way

that is right in your eyes.

We thank you for the

privilege of being here tonight.

Lord, the songs that have been sang

and the spirit that is here.

Lord, again, we ask you to take this time,

you use it and bless it.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

Amen.

There's a question I may
come back to a little bit again

and again as we begin to
study some of these things.

And, you know, if I were
to ask you what is the Bible,

I would think here at this church

the answer would be, or it should be,

that it is the inspired word of God.

It is the voice of God.

It is the instructions of God.

It is the will of God.

It is the actions of God.

God spoke to men and through men.

It is the word of God.

But what is the Bible about?

In other words, what is the
primary purpose of this book?

And I believe it's found in one
answer, but it's three different things.

Folks, the Bible is the revelation of God.

It is God revealing himself to men.

The Bible is the salvation of God.

The revelation of God
that leads to salvation.

And most of all, the Bible
is about the glory of God.

From Genesis 1 to the end of Revelation,

it is God revealing himself.

It is God revealing his salvation,

all for the glory of God.

And in this great record
of God revealing himself,

God's salvation, God's glory,

we find many records of God in men.

Men is part of the story.

Man is not the main subject of the Bible,

nor was he ever intended to
be the main subject of the Bible.

But we find him in the Bible.

And thanks to the grace of
God, man is part of this story.

This morning we looked at men and God,

primarily the record of
Noah and those in his day,

the flood and the grace.

But tonight I want us to tackle this record

of men and God in the Bible.

The Lord says something
here in verse number,

excuse me, verse number six.

And the Lord said,

behold, the people is one.

These people are united.

They're unified.

They're in pact with one another.

And folks, unity is a tremendous thing

when people are unified around good.

You find a church at
harmony with one another.

You find a church that is unified.

And they're all unified
around the one common goal.

And that is the glory of
God and the revelation of God

and the salvation of God.

It is a glorious thing.

It is a powerful thing.

It's a fragile thing.

Now let me just say that.

I was going to say that.

Harmony within a church
is a very, very fragile thing.

But it's a glorious thing.

But folks, it is a deadly
and dangerous thing

when that unity and harmony and pact

is outside the will of God.

And this is where these people are.

The days of Noah,

the days of Noah,

I mean the days of Noah,

the days of Bible,

and the days of today,

unfortunately we see

that the way of the majority,

the way of the day

is most often the wrong way.

That was the case in Noah's day.

That's the case here
in the days of the Bible.

And the reality is that is the case in Jesus'
day and that is the reality in our day.

But there's some things in this
passage of Scripture that I want us to see

about these men that sort
of describes their attitude,

describes their actions

in an effort that we'll learn from these
things and not repeat these mistakes.

But the first thing I
want to share with you,

it was a day of self-rule

and rebellion.

It says in verse one
and verse number two,

and the whole earth was of
one language and of one speech.

And it came to pass as they journeyed
from the east that they found the plain

and the land of Shinar
and they dwelt there.

Basically,

sort of nutshell,

I'll paraphrase this with you.

The people said,
we're stopping here

and we're not going any further.

This is where we're going to land.

This is where we're going to make our home.

This is where we're going to stay.

And we may ask,

hey, preacher,

what's the problem with that?

You have to bear with
me for just a minute.

Folks, the Bible
is not a collection

of just stand-alone stories.

It's all part of one great story.

And we see in this great story,
it's all part of a much larger

and important one

that we have to go
back to the flood.

This is in Genesis chapter 11.

We look at Genesis chapter 6,

Genesis chapter 7.

The flood came.

Everything was in it.

Everyone died.

Everything died.

And then God made a command

in chapter number 9.

He says,

be fruitful and multiply
and replenish the earth.

That was his command.

Go and replenish this earth.

Fill the earth.

But the attitude here,
the actions here, is no,

we're moving to Nimrod's
land over around Babylon

and we're going
to settle right there.

This wasn't a failure
to understand.

This wasn't confusion.

This wasn't an accident.

It wasn't a mistake.

Every one of us make mistakes.

Every one of us say
things we shouldn't say.

We've done things
that we shouldn't do.

This is far more than that.

This is an act of defiance,

rebellion,

and self-rule where God,

we know what you have commanded

but we have determined

to do things our own way and this
is where we're going to camp out.

Folks, the actions of these
people are almost a head-scratcher.

folks today may deny the flood,

they'll discount the
flood, they'll say it's more

of an allegory or a
parable than it is a reality.

But Jesus referred
to it as a reality.

Peter referred
to it as a reality.

Miss Peggy said this morning,

Jesus says, as it was
in the days of Noah,

so shall it be in the coming

of the Son of Man.

But what I can tell you for sure

is the Bible crowd,

I promise you,

they knew the
reality of the flood.

They knew the truth.

Yet here they are

rebelling against
God's clear command.

I say it's almost
a head-scratcher

and the reason it's really
not a head-scratcher,

there's a long list of folks

that have followed this
same practice in their life.

We can look at
the life of Jonah.

Jonah's received instructions
from the Lord that were crystal clear.

You're to go, you're
to go to Nineveh and

you're to preach the
word of God in Nineveh.

Jonah knew exactly what
he was supposed to do,

but he was to fight

and decided to do
something different.

He wasn't going to

walk in the Lord's way.

He wasn't going to

do the Lord's
bidding in his life.

We look at the life of Saul.

The Lord was clear.

By the way,

I watched that movie David the other
day with my little one, four years old.

Can we watch young David?

Can we watch young David?

And it talks about, if you haven't
seen it, it's a good movie to watch.

King Saul is anointed.

Can I remind you,

that wasn't God's
choice for a king.

That was the people's
choice for a king.

God's choice for
a king was David,

but Saul is this king
and the Lord gives him

this command that
he has destroyed

the Amalekites.

Everything there.

Saul knew what he
was supposed to do,

but he made the decisions.

We're going to keep
the best of the flock.

We're going to keep
the best of the sheep.

We're going to keep
the best of these things.

It was absolute defiance of what
the Lord had called him to do.

But the truth is,

y'all, many of us
have been there.

It wasn't a question
of not knowing.

It was a simpler question,
I don't like the plan.

I'd rather not
go this direction.

I'd rather not do it this way.

I'd rather not camp out here.

I would rather not stay here.

So here's a question that
I jotted down for myself.

What led to this rebellion?

What led to this defiance?

What led to this self-rule?

We get two answers in
this passage of Scripture.

And the first one I
want to share with you

is an attitude of
self-exaltation and pride.

Look at verse 3.

Verse 2 says, And it come to pass
as they journeyed from the east

that they found a plain in the
land of Shinar and they dwelt there.

And they said one to another,

Go to now,

let us make brick and
burn them thoroughly.

And they had brick for stone

and slime they had for mortar.

Verse 4,

And they said,

Go to,

let us, build us a
city and a tower

whose top may reach into heaven

and let us make us a name

lest we be scattered abroad

upon the face of the earth.

There's a phrase
that we see repeated

a couple of times here in
this passage of Scripture.

It shines a light on
their self-exaltation

and their arrogance
and their pride.

And it's the two words, let us.

Look at it

in verse number 4.

Let us, build us a city.

Let us,

make us a name.

Now let's be clear,

these people's goal

was not trying to reach God.

The city in the tower called Babylon
literally means the gate of the gods.

It was a city and tower of
arrogance and defiance and pride.

And folks,

it is the unavoidable fruit that
flows from a heart that believes

I can do things my way.

That's what comes from it.

These men had
the clear directive,

these people had clear
instructions from the Lord.

The Lord

had destroyed the earth, He
started all over again, so here they are.

They've seen the power of God and
the grace of God to give Him a new start.

You are to go and I'm going to bless
you with babies and family and land.

You go and replenish
the earth and they said, no.

No,

this is where
we're going to sit.

This is where we're going to be.

We're going to exalt ourselves.

We're going to make
a name for ourselves.

Pride comes in.

Folks,

pride,

I believe, may be the most

dangerous sin

in all the Bible.

And it is so easy

to slip into our minds,

to slip into our lives.

It led to the fall of Satan.

It's led to the fall of many.

Folks,

marriages break up, I
believe, most of the time

not due to failures
within the marriage itself,

not due to arguments over money or maybe
even infidelity or these types of things.

The reason it don't get fixed is
people have too much pride to fix them.

It's to confess

that this is where

these people are.

But this phrase,

let us, but I was reminded
there's other places in the Bible

where we find the
exhortation to let us.

Talk with me, if you would,

to Hebrews chapter 10.

Folks, unity isn't
always a bad thing.

It's a great thing.

Let us mind it ain't
always a bad thing.

It's a great thing.

I love Hebrews
chapter 10, verse 19.

The Bible says,

having therefore brethren
boldness to enter into the holiness

by the blood of Jesus,

by a new and living way,

which he hath consecrated for us
to the veil, that is to say his flesh,

and having a priest over
the house of God, I love this,

let us draw near

with a true heart and
full assurance of faith,

having our hearts
sprinkled from an evil

conscience and our bodies
washed with pure water,

friend,

if you have been saved and
trusted in the grace of God,

we have the exhortation,

the encouragement,

the invitation

to command,

to draw near to God.

Let us hold fast the
profession of our faith

without wavering, for
he is faithful that promise.

And let us consider one another to
provoke and to love and to good works.

But my favorite,

we find in chapter 4,

Paul writes,

it says,

let us therefore come boldly

to the throne of grace

that we may obtain mercy

and find grace to help

in time of need.

I love the picture of this big throne
and I thought about it this afternoon,

this throne that the Lord
beholds is called a throne of

grace and I thought about
the attitudes of these people.

They're prideful.

Folks, it takes humility.

When you come before the
presence of a king, there's no pride,

there's humility.

There's no self-exaltation

you're paying homage to, you're
worshiping the one who is exalted.

Folks, let us, attitude's a tremendous
thing when it's in the will of God.

I'm convinced there ain't a thing in
the world that God can accomplish

through New Bethel
Missionary Baptist Church.

Not one thing.

He can do all that
he desires to do.

He can reach the lost.

He can strengthen the saved.

He can grow us spiritually.

He can grow us numerically.

But here's what's
going to have to happen.

We've got to lose the pride.

We've got to lose the
let us, build us a name.

And what we've got to do is
get the let us be unified with God

that pride turns into humility.

Self-exaltation comes in self-lowering
and he is the one that we follow.

Self-rule and rebellion,

self-exaltation and pride.

But there's another
phrase right here that I

think that has something
to do with it too.

It's self-preservation.

Verse 4.

And they said,

go to,

let us build us a city and a tower
whose top may reach into heaven

and let us make us a name.

Boy, don't that just,

I mean,

that just gets all over me.

We could spend our entire
lives trying to do this right.

Build and build and build
and build and build and build

and seeing it successful
and man, they just made it.

No!

We haven't just made it

if we haven't humbled
ourselves in the process

that those things don't
belong to the Lord.

But they said something
here at the end of verse 4.

It says,

lest we be scattered abroad

upon the face of the earth.

Were they literally scared

was this legitimate fear?

Were they really worried about, I
don't know the answer to this question.

But here's what I think.

I know their
hearts weren't right.

I know their pride wasn't right.

I know their
obedience wasn't right.

But I can look and see

that there was a fear there about
them being scattered or brown,

about them being separated.

But what I do know for sure,

and this is where it
really hit me and I look

back in my life and maybe
you can say the same.

Folks,

when faith is absent,

fear will fill the void.

And that's what we get down to.

They had to trust this God

who said be
fruitful and multiply.

They had to trust
this God who said go.

They had to go

by faith,

trusting the Lord.

And when faith is not present

in our life, when we truly
are not believing Him,

it's just not some empty hole.

Fear

fills that.

But folks,

when faith is present,

when true faith is present,

I love that book of Hebrews.

You can walk up Mount Moriah with
wood in one hand and knife in the other

knowing that the Lord

will provide a lamb.

When faith is present,

you can get up and
you can build on that ark

every day even if you're
having to build a loan.

When faith is present,

friend,

you can walk to the
wilderness knowing the Lord

will provide manna.

Well, how can we do all of this?

I love what Jesus said.

He says, if you being evil

know how to give good
gifts to your children,

how much more shall
your Father in heaven?

I think about that all the time.

We had lunch today
with some folks

from Pleasant Hill,

the church where I come from.

And it's funny.

She said, well, I can see why
you left our church for this one.

I said, that ain't how,
thankfully, Mitchie spoke up.

That's not how that works.

That ain't what we did.

But I think about

how good

God is

and that He's not going
to send me to a place

that He ain't going

and that ain't good for me.

Now, it may not be easy.

It may not be pleasant.

It may be a challenge.

But what we've got to wrap our
mind around is who is this God?

Now, I mean, this God,

He loves us more than
we could possibly fathom.

He knows what's best for us.

He knows,

He's got all this
stuff figured out.

So if He tells you,

listen,

you just,

we're making Abraham
in just a minute.

I'm going to call you out
and I'm going to send you

to a place you didn't even
know where you're going.

It doesn't really matter.

You're just to mind me
and trust me and obey me

because I'm God and I promise,

I promise,

I promise

to take care of you,

to look after you.

But when that faith

isn't there,

pride sets in,

fear sets in,

determination to rule our own lives
and do things our own way sets in.

And folks, if y'all could find me one
place in the Bible where that works out

for anybody, I'd love
for you to show them.

They don't.

This is where

these people are.

But can I tell you,

even here,

we find the grace of God.

You say, Preacher,

where do we find

the grace of God in this story?

Look here with me.

The Bible says in
verse number five,

And the Lord came
down to see the city and

the tower which the
children of men built it.

And the Lord said, Behold, the people
is one and they have all one language

and this they begin to do and now
nothing will be restrained from them

which they have imagined to do.

I did not plan on commenting to this
but the Lord just put this on my mind.

Just as God God saw

the wickedness of
men in Noah's day.

God saw what was going on here.

And it's the grace of God that saw
what was going on and the grace of God

that now begins to intervene and
disrupt what's about to take place.

I love verse seven.

Go to,

I just underlined this
today for the first time.

Go to,

let us go down.

What do you reckon
he's talking about there?

God the Father,

God the Son,

God the Holy Spirit.

Go to,

let us go down and there
confound their language

that they may not understand
one another's speech.

So the Lord scattered them
and brought them from the

face of all the earth and
left off to build the city.

It says,

therefore is the name of it called
Bible because the Lord did there

confound the language
of all the earth and from

then it said the Lord scattered them
abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Even here

we find grace.

Folks, we find it all the way
back in Genesis chapter three.

For somehow,

some reason,

it's just the wrong teaching.

I mean, it's just wrong.

It's wrong teaching.

Wrong teaching.

We think that grace is New
Testament and the law is Old Testament

and those two things stand
opposed to one another.

That's wrong.

We find grace from
the very beginning

and though we are not
bound to the letter of the law

like these Old Testament Jews,

Jesus Christ himself

fulfilled the law

that the righteousness
of the law

might be fulfilled in us.

God's moral law ain't been flushed
down the toilet either by the way.

These things go
hand in hand together.

But we find grace
at the very beginning.

I was reading just as somebody was singing
that's the sin of Adam and Eve and then

what's happened?

Where's grace in that?

God.

God came pursuing.

Where art thou, Adam?

Where are you?

God clothing.

We find that

wretched story

of Cain and Abel

yet we find grace

in that God provided Seth.

We find grace in the
story of knowing that

God provided a plan
and provision and power.

So where's the grace of Babel?

Folks, here's the
grace of Babel.

God disrupted the plan.

God said,

nope.

I'm not going to allow

this to happen.

I wrote this down one
way as we said this.

It says, God in heaven

is never perplexed or paralyzed

by what people do on earth.

Babel's conceited,

let's go up,

was answered by heaven's calm,

let us go down.

Amen.

Amen.

Amen.

Now listen,

we know through word

and experience God does not

stop every

foolish deed of man.

But here's what I do know is
that God stopped it right here.

And I can tell you what else I know
and this is what we need to thank God for.

I know

that if you and I

had done

all that we were
capable of doing,

we'd have done a whole lot
more damage than what we have.

See, pride can
slip in right there.

Think about it.

Think about it.

Why haven't we messed
up more than we messed up?

Why haven't we done more
wrong than we've done wrong?

I want to tell you why.

It's the unseen hand of God's grace
who gets in there and goes, no, no, no, no.

I'm not going to
allow this to happen.

This doesn't take away

from free will.

The Bible says, well,
if so every man sow,

that shall he reap.

We make our own choices.

But I look at God's word and go,

Lord, you stopped me.

You stopped this.

It says they're confounded here.

The Lord did there

confound

the language of all the earth
and the word really got me.

It's confusion.

so many people's lives.

Can I tell you what's
happening to me as I get older?

Life is becoming,

even when it gets harder,

it's becoming simpler.

And what I mean by simpler is

like what I'm here
for and what's really

important and
what really matters.

but so many people's lives
are just full of confusion.

Like it is here in the Bible.

The Lord come in and do
something and you're not

even going to be able to
understand one another.

There's no way.

You're going to accomplish this.

I'm not going to allow it.

But I've met with so many people
and talked with so many people.

And everything is just
chaos and it's confusing

and confounded and
all this stuff is going on.

You know why?

Most of the time it comes from
an attitude of self-determination

self-exaltation

self-rule

rebellion

pride

and God says you know
the result of those things

is confusion

and chaos.

Maybe it's like a lot of these folks I
hope it's not true here but it can be.

Y'all know that phrase misery
loves company don't you?

People going the wrong
way love company too.

They love to have
somebody with them.

Confusion and chaos comes from being united
with people who aren't united with God.

In harmony with people that
aren't in harmony with God.

In harmony with a plan and united
with a plan that's other than God's plan.

What's the answer?

Folks it's obedience

and faith.

It's that simple.

See the Lord

had something better

in mind.

Say that again.

I want you to hear me on this.

The Lord

has something better

in mind.

and the only way

to experience the better
that God has in mind

is to mind the
instructions of God.

Submit to the will of God.

Pride replaces humility.

Faith replaces fear.

Yes is the answer even when we don't
know where we're going or what we're doing.

God's got a better
place in mind.

Let's pray.

Dear Lord, we thank
you for your word.

God, that I do see these

attitudes in my own life

at times Lord, how
easily they can creep in.

But God,

I just

overjoyed

by a Lord that doesn't
just see our victories.

He sees our potential failures.

Lord, it intervenes.

God, help us to live

not with just an intellectual
faith but with a practical one.

To where we do the things
that are clearly told to do.

Trusting in God who has proven
himself over and over again.

Lord, thank you for who you are.

I thank you for this place.

In Jesus'

name I pray.

Amen.

330.

Let's stand.

330.