

The First Epistle of Peter
"Preaching in Noah's Day"
1 Peter 3:18-22

- Intro. 1. Preaching is God's ordained method of getting out the good news concerning His salvation.
2. The ministry of the Word of God through appointed vessels is not a new innovation, but something which has a healthy heritage. The text for this sermon leads us back to the days of Noah!
3. Consider the following aspects of the preaching of Christ in the days of Noah:

1. The VISITATION of Christ. v. 19.

Two particular thoughts are given attention in this facet of the truth:

a. The fact of it. The verb "went" is the verb which speaks of His actual and definite "proceeding" to the place of preaching.

b. The manner of it. "By which" notes that Christ did NOT go to preach to the situation mentioned here in the same form of existence by which He was known to Peter. He went "by the Spirit" and the thought links the matter with His preincarnate state (before Bethlehem).

2. The DECLARATION of Christ. v. 19.

In a simple and direct word, Peter notes that Christ acted as a herald. The Greek verb here includes the matter of faith. Rom. 10:11-17 gives indisputable proof that a messenger of God will provide something to believe!

3. The MINISTRATION of Christ. v. 20.

The ministration of our Lord was related to the following:

a. Particular people. They are noted as "spirits in prison." They are not people living when Peter wrote, but people now "spirits." They now abide in "prison."

b. Prominent attitude. There was a time when these people had the opportunity to express themselves

to be either "obedient" or "disobedient" and they chose the latter. This was characteristic of the time.

c. Perilous time. "in the days of Noah." How frequently that time is referred to as a perilous one and very crucial. The very known world was at stake. What a time to preach! What a time to plead with men to obey the Lord of Glory!

4. The PRESENTATION of Christ. v. 20.

There was one huge message which came thundering from heaven to the people of those days: the inexhaustible "longsuffering of God." What a topic on which to preach. Could anything else move a hardened group of people? Two descriptions of this are noted:

a. Its expectation--"waited." With arms extended, the longsuffering of God looked to welcome weary hearts to the Lord.

b. Its protraction--"while the ark was a preparing." For 100 years God restrained His hand of judgment.

5. The REACTION to Christ. v. 20.

The pitiful results of the preaching of our Lord are indicated--"wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." The power of the specification "eight souls" has been felt by all who read these words.

6. The ASSOCIATION of Christ. v. 21.

The implication of the words of Peter concerning our Lord now come before us. Three items need attention:

a. Answer to faith. The phrase "now save us" suggests that God, in grace, is still giving a message which needs to respond to faith.

b. Answer to conscience. The thought is that there has been a sincere surrender to God.

c. Answer to baptism. Water in both instances denoted salvation, not destruction.

Concl. How does this touch us in these days? The Word of God is preached. Many hear and believe. Multitudes now come. Will you be one of them?