

21 Leadership Lessons from Noah and the Ark

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Or: Everything I need to know about leadership I learned from Noah and his Ark.

Read: Genesis 6:1-8:4; Hebrews 11:7

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. Hebrews 11:7

1. You are never too old to build.

Noah was about 500 when he got the word of the Lord; it took him about 100 years to build the ark. He lived another 350 years after that. In relation to our current life spans, that would be the equivalent of us beginning to build at the age of 45 or 50 to launch out to fulfill the word of the Lord (See: Gen. 5: 32; 6:3; 7:11; 9:28-29).

There is no retirement from the purpose of God. It takes our whole life to fulfill our destiny. What would have happened if men and women of God would have accepted “retirement” at the typical age?

- Noah would not have built the ark.
- Abraham and Sarah would not have had Isaac.
- Moses would not have delivered God’s people.
- Joshua would not have led the Israelites into Canaan.
- Caleb would not have possessed his mountain.
- Simeon would not have seen his salvation.
- Paul would not have made his second and third missionary journeys.

See: Acts 13:36

2. God will often ask you to do what has never been done before (Heb. 11:7).

No one had ever seen rain in his or her lifetime. You could research all the way back to Adam and not find one person who could verify what you think you heard from God.

3. Before you can go into realms where others have not gone, you must prove your walk with God (Gen. 6:9).

Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

This is the foundation on which your life will stand. If you go into the realm of faith without the foundation of integrity and character you will eventually fail.

4. Rely on the Word of the Lord, not your feelings or past experiences.

I am sure that over the next 100 years that Noah had many days where his experience did not line up with the vision and he could have been discouraged had he gone by his personal feelings. “Lord, could you send just a couple of drops of rain to encourage me and bear witness to my call?”

5. Whenever you follow God the world will mock you.

Others will think you are crazy to put so much effort into the ark. They don't see the need. To them it is waste of time. But then, they did not hear the voice of God.

6. When following the voice of God expect the criticism of those who have not heard from God.

What you are doing makes no sense. It may even appear to be rather crude (remember, it only has to float not sail).

7. Don't listen to your critics; just get on with the job.

Your critics will be silenced by God after your success. Your faith will prove itself. Don't let the critics cause you to slacken your pace, there is an urgency (due date).

8. Though your work seems overwhelming, it will be accomplished one board at a time.

Every journey begins with the first step.

9. Trust the initial word that God has given to you even though it will be tested.

You don't need constant signs and confirmations. Don't change course unless God gives you a new word that is just as clear as the previous word. You don't need a word to stay; you need a word to go. There is no evidence that God spoke to Noah to encourage him along the way (100 years of silence).

10. Build according to God's pattern, you don't know enough to construct a plan of your own.

Remember that it has to work the first time. God has a plan for the church—trust it!

11. Put all of your energy into this plan, because there is no other plan.

There is no plan B. Put all of your eggs in this basket. Burn your bridges behind you (no fire escapes). Paint yourself in a corner. Half-hearted efforts yield half-hearted results. God does have a plan. There are other sources from which you can get a plan. Don't put God's plan to a committee for a vote.

12. Make sure your vision is big enough for everyone that God wants to include.

Sometimes we limit God. There is room for every kind in God's plan; don't make your filter, your net or your target too small. God's desire is for every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue.

13. We must be willing to be in close quarters with others if God's plan is going to be fulfilled.

You will have to endure the closeness of the local church and all of the smells and other issues that go with it. But don't give up on the plan and jump ship (Acts 27:30-32).

And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, 31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.

14. Don't walk into the future without bringing the next generation into your experience and work.

Without the next generation Noah would not have been able to repopulate the earth and all his labor would have been in vain. It would have been terrible to save yourself only for humanity to die off later by natural causes.

15. You must get on the ark first if you expect others to join you in your vision.

People need to see that you are willing to put your own time and resources into your vision. If you do not believe in it enough to go for it alone if necessary, no one else will make it a priority.

16. If you lead, God will choose the right ones to be with you.

Two of every kind were drawn by God. They may not have been the most attractive lot, but they had the right DNA to produce everyone you see today. Remember that the ark was built by amateurs the titanic by professionals. Don't judge team members by their outward appearance (could have been some very ugly dogs but they had the right DNA).

17. When you are in the doldrums, know that the Lord has not forgotten you (Gen. 7:24-8:1).

And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days. Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.

Sometimes the hardest times are not when all hell is breaking loose; it is in the quiet times when nothing seems to be happening at all. Remember they shall run and not be weary; they

shall *walk* and not faint. God remembered Noah, that is, He again began working in his behalf.

18. Trust that the wind of the Spirit will go before you to remove all of the obstacles that hinder you from reaching your final destination (Gen. 8:1).

On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ship landed on the Ararat mountain range.

19. Following God's instructions will always lead to higher ground (Gen. 8:4).

Even though you can't see the destination clearly, know that He always leads us from glory to glory and level to level.

20. Your efforts will eventually bring salvation to others if you do not give up in hard times (I Cor. 15:57-58).

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

With all this going for us, my dear, dear friends, stand your ground. And don't hold back. Throw yourselves into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for him is a waste of time or effort. –Msg

21. Don't miss the boat; when God is in something get on board!