



Boyd Ratnarajah – Live Your Best Life: Lessons from Noah

Welcome

Boyd began by sharing a funny story about how Noah might have got on building the ark in modern day Britain. Are there things that have made you smile or laugh over the last week or fortnight? Why not share some of them?

Word

Boyd said that when people become Christians, they sometimes think that life is going to be plain sailing from then on, but that this is far from the case, and he said that in fact the reverse is true, quoting John 16:33, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” Why not share about your early days after choosing to follow Jesus? Did it seem like everything was going to be great from then on? When did trouble first hit? And what difference does it make being a Christian when we face troubled times?

Read Genesis 6:9-22

Boyd talked about four pitfalls that we can fall into as Christians that can prevent us from fulfilling our potential. The first is the **voice of doubt – a dreambuster** that can prevent us from fulfilling our God given dreams. Noah kept going when all those around him would have been thinking he was crazy. “Failure is only final when you refuse to get back up”, he said.

Boyd shared about his dream as a young man of becoming a pastor, but how a man who had let him stay had spoken extremely negative and discouraging words to him. He had to ask him to stop and refused to listen. Have there been any times people have sown negativity or doubt in your life?

The second pitfall is **tempting shortcuts**: moral, financial, relational or ethical shortcuts. But such shortcuts are always short-sighted and they only create more mess. By contrast, Noah was a man who always tried to do things God’s way (Gen 6:9, Gen 6:22). The third is **discouraging delays**, when things take longer than we think they should and we lose our momentum. He told of how he and his wife were told that they were never going to have children, but now they have a son and another child due imminently. He shared how he had not been healed of poor sight at a healing meeting, but he had then prayed for a man whose sight had been made better.

Does God use the delays to work within us? Or sometimes does he delay the breakthrough because we are not ready to handle it? When we are waiting for our own miracle, should we learn to celebrate someone else’s miracle?

The fourth pitfall is **cultural distractions**: pleasure, possessions, popularity and profit. He suggested it is a question of priorities, that these things are not wrong in themselves, but that we should put God first. We cannot serve God and money and that we should live for God’s approval, not people’s. Do you agree that today we face many distractions that can make us ineffective for the kingdom of God? How can we stay effective?

Prayer

Before praying read **Galations 6:9**.

Pray for each other, for any needs or any issues that this study has brought to the surface.

Pray for others outside of your Connect Group, those you know who are ill, who don’t yet know Jesus, or who need God’s touch in some other way.

Pray that we will all listen to the voice of God, not take shortcuts, not get discouraged by the delays, and not get distracted by the unimportant.

Pray that we will all dare to be different for Jesus!