

“Cover or Tell; How do You Rebel?”

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As most of you know, our daughter Mary has recently given birth to our first grandchild, a son, and his name is Christopher John. He was named after two significant people in Mary and Matt's life; his father Christopher, and I am humbled to say he was given my name as his middle name. Of course, being the proud grandparent, I am going to show you some pictures but decided to do it in the form of a music video. The song you are going to hear is one of the lullabies Gina and I used to sing and play to Mary and her sisters when they were infants. As you look at the pictures, listen closely to the words of the lullaby – they will have a significant link to the message today.

Show Video:

The last verse of this song is a powerful one:

“Welcome now, little stranger
To a world filled with wonder
To a world torn asunder
To a world that's in pain
My son, life's a battle
So you be a rebel
Stand ready to fight
And never stop loving the Light.”

I don't know if you noticed that when the line, “So you be a rebel” was played, the picture of Christopher in his Redskins garb was shown. . . Matt is from the Maryland area and is a diehard Redskins fan and of course is considered a rebel in our region where most of us are diehard Eagles fans. You see a rebel is one who rejects or resists authority or doing something different compared to what is normal.

In truth, we rebel in every decision we make; 1) we have the choice to rebel against God and do what everyone else is doing, or 2) we have the choice to rebel against everyone else and do what God wants us to do. Today we are going to take a look at the story of Noah's sons and how some of them rebelled against what was normal, and some what was of God. The same two choices each of us has to make when we make decision or choices.

Let's pray!

Rebel means to reject or resist

So let's take a look at Noah. Noah was a righteous man. He was a follower of God, maybe the only follower of God, left on the earth. The Bible says he was "blameless among the people of his time." It also says "he walked with God" living in a society saturated with sin and rebellion against God. Noah was a man who pleased God. During a time where there was no rain and the people reminded him of his foolishness for investing time and energy in an assignment that made no sense, Noah stayed faithful and obedient to God until God sent the rain. He was willing to risk his reputation just to follow what God told him to do. Noah was a great man, faithful to God, and had a love for God's people.

Because of Noah's obedience in a time when it seemed more rational not to obey God, God gave Noah a new assignment. Noah has become elevated from a herdsman to a church planter, He has been ordained and appointed to be Senior Pastor of the New Promise Church of God.

Here we read this is Genesis 9: 1-3

"Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. 2 The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. 3 Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything."

A couple verses later God makes a promise to Noah and establishes a covenant that He will never destroy the earth again by the waters of a flood and set a rainbow in the clouds as a sign of the reminder of this covenant.

Show Rainbow Slide

As we can see, God honored Noah for Noah's obedience to God and for him honoring God with his life. Although Noah was a godly man who choose to rebel against what was common and follow God's lead, one day Noah did something that caused him to become indecently exposed.

Let's see what happened as we look at the rest of Chapter 9 starting with verse 18:

18 The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth.(Ham was the father of Canaan.) 19 These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth.

20 Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. 21 When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. 22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked.

24 When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said,

"Cursed be Canaan!

The lowest of slaves
will he be to his brothers."

Why Canaan and not Ham? There are different opinions regarding why Canaan, but that is not out focus today.

26 He also said,

"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Shem!

May Canaan be the slave of Shem.

27 May God extend Japheth's territory;
may Japheth live in the tents of Shem,
and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth."

28 After the flood Noah lived 350 years. 29 Noah lived a total of 950 years, and then he died.

So as we just heard and read, Noah planted a vineyard, drank some of the wine and became drunk, and he lay uncovered in his tent. The developer of the new human race, who has been faithful to God, now finds himself inebriated and uncovered. A man sold out to following God becomes drunk.

Activity: Why do you think he was drunk? Turn to your neighbor and spend about 30 sec to discuss.

Review Answers:

Nowhere does scripture tell us why he was drunk. There is no reason given for his state of drunkenness. Perhaps it was the only way he could relax in dealing with being on a large boat with thousands of animals; wait, even scarier and stressful, his family.

Scripture doesn't tell us so therefore it doesn't matter. You see, so often we all, me included hurt others because we look at them and make conclusions, or write stories about them based upon our own interpretation of a situation or sin in their life.

Look at your neighbor ask ***“Do you Cover or Tell? How do you Rebel?”***

Why do we need to know? For someone like me who asks lots of questions, and like you, wants to understand why so and so did such and such, that's a hard question – a “nosey” one. I have learned very quickly, that when I find out those details, I wish I never knew them and discover that some things are not for you or me to understand but to leave alone. I may not understand it but I know God's got it!

You see, we like Noah are imperfect, flawed people, and we too are not excluded from failures and transgression, making mistakes and falling short.

So let's look at how Noah's sons rebelled and what we can learn from them.

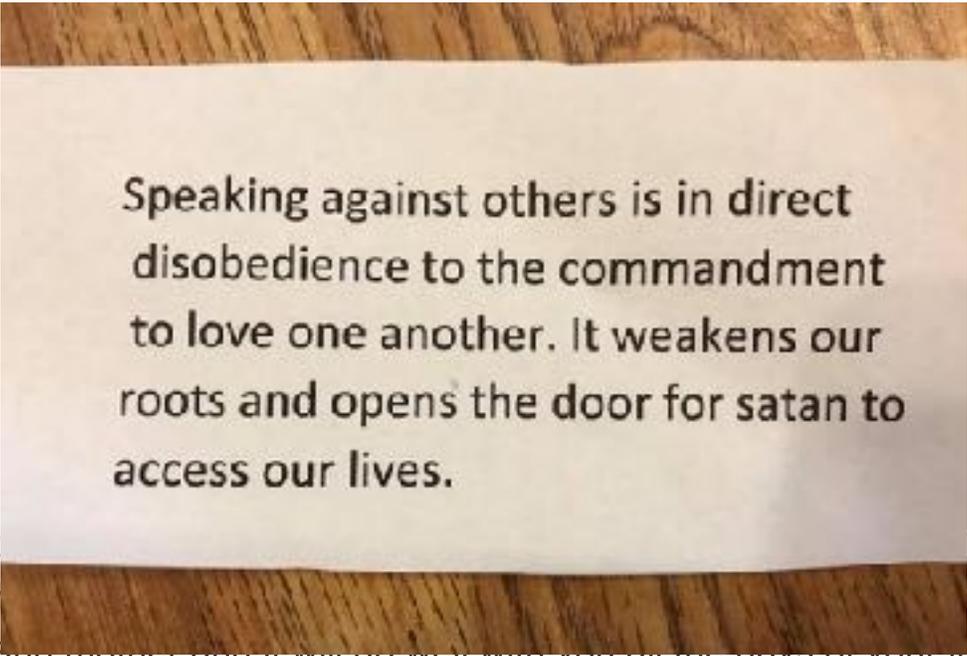
Verse 22 tells us how Ham rebelled.

22 “Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside.”

Ask: Did Ham rebel against what God said he was to do or against what the world said he was to do?

Most people when they see or hear of someone who has messed up, will immediately go and run their mouths. They will involve themselves in gossip talk such as: “I heard” and “they said.” This is what Ham did. The first thing Ham does is gossip. Ham did not keep his father’s name safe, rather he injured his father’s reputation and character.

1 Corinthians 13:7 says “love always protects” – that is certainly not the case here.



The interest in Ham's story is not just in it before they ever write the commandment to honor your father and mother and it will go well with you all the days of your life" or the many truths that shares the downfall that occurs for those with a gossiping tongue. The Hebrew word translated "gossip" in the Old Testament is defined as "one who reveals secrets, one who goes about as a talebearer or scandal-monger."

Ham's form of rebellion was to Tell, or gossip, and the outcome is found in verses 24-25

24 When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said, "Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers."

God longs for us to communicate the Gospel and not gossip! The Gospel brings healing, restoration and transformation; Gossip tears down and destroys another person.

How did Shem and Japheth rebel?

23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked."

They rebelled against what was common to our flesh (gossip), and sinful for man to do. In contrast they carried out grace and mercy. What was the outcome of them choosing to cover and not tell?

Noah says, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. 27 May God extend Japheth's territory; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth."

They received their father's blessing and God's favor. Instead of gossiping about their father's situation, they covered it. This is what God has done for us. God covered our indecent exposure instead of exposing it. By covering it, God protects us from being harmed in the midst of our fallen state of sin. Look at your neighbor and tell them, "God covered you!" Now say, "God covered me!"

God directs us in 1 Peter 4:8 "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."

How do we choose to cover and rebel? Recently Gina and I had someone very close to us, who has yet to receive Christ as their Lord and Savior, make some bad sinful decision and is now dealing with a situation none of us would want for our lives, or for anyone else. Unfortunately this person has come under harsh judgment from their family and hasn't had a safe place to talk through the situation and get healing. We prayed like crazy and had this person over our house. When they came, we just listened as they shared their heart, their pain, and their brokenness. I will not lie; I wanted to ask why they chose to make such bad decisions and what were they thinking? But God reminded me that those questions didn't matter and would bring judgment and not healing. This person is quite aware of the outcome of their situation. We had the opportunity to love them and ask questions about what were their next steps in bringing healing to this situation, share God's truth with them, and pray with them. Several days later, a family member of theirs called me to ask what they talked about and what we shared. In covering this person, I did not share what they discussed, but shared that everyone in their family needs to provide a safe, loving place for them to share and that

would help bring healing in their life and this situation. The family member on the phone was not thrilled with what I told them and then shared some expletives and hung up on me. Choosing to cover will not get the applause of men. Choosing to cover does not condone the sin or the situation, but chooses to protect and bring healing.

This is what God did and does for us. God sent His son to cover us with His blood. It was His blood that washed away all of our sins. Jesus cried out to the Father, "My God! My God! Why have you forsaken Me?" God decided to turn His back when Jesus was on the cross because Jesus took on our sins so that we would have no more sin in His eyes. God decided not to look at sin so that we could be covered. Because God didn't look at my sin, your sin, our sin, we can rebel and choose to cover and share and live out the gospel.

As we look at this truth, turn to your neighbor and ask,

"How will you rebel? Will you Cover or Tell?"

There may be some of you here today who have never asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior and receive His covering and healing in your life. It's as easy as ABC. . .

Admit that you have chosen to rebel and sin by living your life your way, and not God's way.

Believe that Jesus died for your sins, past, present, and future.

Commit your life to Christ and live for Him and in a relationship with Him.