

## Have You Heard the News | No Exceptions (Genesis 9.18-29)

1. One of the themes of this narrative is God's exceptional grace despite man's unexceptional sinfulness. Our culture is constantly selling us on the idea that we are exceptional (i.e. special) and so we deserve better. How do you see that creeping into our lives and in the church?
2. The first myth of exceptionalism that this text deconstructs is that our unique skills or achievements make us exceptional before God. In the Noah narrative we see that humankind's tendency towards self-destructive sin leads God to cleanse the earth and start over with Noah and his family. The problem is that we find that after the flood humanity is still the same: Noah's sinful foolishness and indulgence gives occasion for Ham's sin.
  - a. Where do you find yourself being tempted to set yourself above others because of what you can do or what you have done?
  - b. How does the gospel address this?
3. Another myth of exceptionalism is that we are the only one who is struggling, i.e., we are exceptionally weak or damaged. As a result, we might attempt to hide who we really are so that we look like everyone else.
  - a. How have you seen or experienced this?
  - b. How does the gospel address this?
4. Similarly, we might believe that we are so exceptional in our sinfulness, that we are, therefore, irredeemable.
  - a. How have you seen or experienced this?
  - b. How does the gospel address this?
5. When we experience the exceptional mercy of God we extend his exceptional mercy towards others.
  - a. What mercies of God have caught your attention this week?
  - b. What are some tangible ways that you can show mercy to others this week?