

Few There Be

Gulf Coast Dispensational Church

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You may have wondered how many people actually believe God and take Him up on His wonderful offer of salvation. The Bible tells us that there are a lot of people who don't.

Take the story of Noah and the flood. Before the flood, things got so bad on earth that God wondered why He had ever made man in the first place!

Genesis 6:5-6

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. **And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.**

God decided to do something about it: He wouldn't "unmake" man but He would destroy everyone whom He had already made if they would not want to be saved!

Genesis 6:12-13

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for **all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.** And God said unto Noah, **The**

end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

God gave everyone a chance to change. In the case of the flood, God gave Noah 120 years to build an ark and tell everyone that judgement was coming. Everyone who believed Noah, would get on the ark, and be saved, those who did not, would be drowned.

Genesis 6:3

And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: **yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.**

Even after 120 years of warning everyone on earth of the coming judgement (and telling them how to escape it,) only Noah and his family and the animals that were chosen, got on the ark and were saved from the flood.

2 Peter 2:5

And spared not the old world, but **saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness,** bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

Google estimates that there could have been 750 million people in the earth when the flood occurred! That means just 8 people (Noah, his wife, their 3 sons, and their wives) out of 750 million people were saved!

Genesis 7:5-7, 23

And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. And **Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark,** because of the waters of the flood.

²³And **every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.**

Peter says that Noah and his family were saved by water. You probably think they were “saved from water.” While they were physically saved from drowning, they were saved by God for

eternal life by believing God about the flood, and getting on the ark.

1 Peter 3:20

Which sometime were disobedient, when once **the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.**

The flood gave Noah and his family a chance to show their faith in God, something that was required to be righteous before God..

Hebrews 11:6-7

But **without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet,** moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

In every age, it is only a small group of people who have faith in God. A very large percentage of people choose to disobey God and are lost.

Remember the story of Sodom and Gomorrah? They were very great cities, yet after His conversation with Abraham, God could not find 10 people who were righteous in them, so He destroyed both cities.

Genesis 18:20-21, 23, 32

And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

²³And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

³²And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

In another example, there were only 2 men who believed God out of the entire nation of Israel. After 400 years of slavery, Moses led Israel out of Egypt. After they had escaped Egypt, God told Moses to count the number of men aged 20 and older in each of the tribes, except Levi.

Numbers 1:2-3

Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, **with the number of their names, every male by their polls; From twenty years old and upward**, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.

There were 603,550 men, aged 20 and older, not counting the tribe of Levi, the tribe responsible for the priesthood.

Numbers 1:45-47

So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel; Even all **they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty**. But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them.

There were 603,550 men, aged 20 and older, and we can assume there were at least that number of women, so there were about 1.2 million people aged 20 and older. We don't know how

many of the Levite males were 20 and older, but even if they are not counted at all, at least 1.2 million people (all of those who disobeyed God) died out in the wilderness during those 40 years of wandering because of unbelief. There were only 2 exceptions, Joshua and Caleb.

Numbers 14:26-34

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: **Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.** But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. **And your children shall wander in the wilderness**

forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

How do we know those 1.2 million people who murmured against God and refused to go into the land they were promised, were lost? God told Moses that whoever sinned against Him, was blotted out of the book of life.

Exodus 32:33

And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

Revelation tells us what happens if a name does not appear in the book of life. (The Book of Life is a register of people for the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth.)

Revelation 20:15

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Hebrews tells us that those who grieved God in the wilderness would not enter into His rest, His eternal Kingdom of Heaven on the earth for believing Israel.

Hebrews 3:7-11

Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: **When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.**)

The writer of Hebrews goes on to explain that they will not enter into the Kingdom because of unbelief.

Hebrews 3:17-19

But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he **that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.**

Isaiah wrote that though the people of Israel were as numerous as the sand of the sea (as God promised Abraham that his descendants would be,)...

Genesis 22:15-18

And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: **That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore;** and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

...only a remnant will be returned to the kingdom when Jesus Christ returns to set up His kingdom of heaven on the earth.

Isaiah 10:20-22

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon

the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.

Isaiah also prophesied that because of Israel's continuing disobedience, more and more people were going to hell. Hell was enlarging!

Isaiah 5:13-14

Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. **Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure:** and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

Jesus told His followers that the number of people who would be saved, have eternal life, was few. There were many that would follow the broad path to destruction.

Matthew 7:13-14

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and **broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:** Because strait is the gate, and **narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

Here it is in Luke.

Luke 13:23-24

Then said one unto him, Lord, **are there few that be saved?** And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for **many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.**

There were at least 5,000 men (maybe 10,000 with women and children) at one time who had listened to Jesus.

Matthew 14:21

And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

Another time 4,000 men (maybe 8,000 with women and children) were following Jesus.

Matthew 15:38

And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

Out of those thousands that followed Jesus, only 120 were there to see Him, after His resurrection, ascend to His Father in heaven.

Act 1:13-16

And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, **(the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)** Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

After the Jews rejected God, God blinded them for a time.

Acts 28:24-28

And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, **Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:** For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

God does not want anyone to be lost.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; **Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**

Peter told the Jews in the future that God is not slack concerning His promise, He wants to give everyone a chance to repent so as many people as possible can be saved.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

God began working directly with the Gentiles. He sent the apostle Paul straight to the Gentiles to tell them the message of salvation. The Gentiles would hear the salvation of God.

Acts 28:28

Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

It is important to understand that faith comes to a person by hearing the word of God.

Romans 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Paul breaks down the steps:

1. Hear the word of truth (the gospel of salvation)
2. Believe the word of truth
3. The Holy Ghost indwells your heart to seal you.
4. You are sealed until Christ meets you, as part of His body, in the clouds, in the event known as the Rapture.

Ephesians 1:13-14

In whom **ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also **after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit** of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

But Paul tells us that we, who were Gentiles, are no better than the Jews. We are all sinners, no one understands, and no one does **But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: good.**

Romans 3:9-12

What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, **they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

Paul was upset with the Galatians. The Galatians were trying to follow the Law for their salvation, even after being saved by hearing and believing the word, the “hearing of faith.”

Galatians 3:1-5

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, **Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?** Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and

worketh miracles among you, **doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**

It is probably safe to assume that the percentage of Gentiles who hear the word and believe God is comparable to the percentage of Jews who heard God's word and believed God. It is only ever a small number compared to the total number of people.

But Paul tells us we are never on our own against the world. He wrote to the Romans and told them that Elijah told God that all of Israel had forsaken God's covenant, and it was only Elijah that was left. But God told him that there were 7,000 faithful Jews left in Israel. God said He had "reserved to Myself seven thousand men..."

Romans 11:2-4

God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? **I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.**

Paul compared this story to his present time. A remnant is a small part of the whole, but he said there was a remnant of believers in the grace of God, not of salvation by works, but by grace alone. These would be members of the Church, the Body of Christ.

Romans 11:5-6

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Paul tells the Corinthians that those people who most would consider to be wise, mighty, and noble here on earth, “after the flesh,” are not the ones who make up the remnant who are God’s people today.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29

For ye see your calling, brethren, **how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:** But **God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to**

confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.

How about the future? After we are raptured, there will be no believers on earth! There will be no remnant! God has a plan for that, too.

John saw into the future and recorded it in the book of Revelation. Before God pours out His wrath upon the earth, God will seal 144,000 Jewish men in their foreheads, whose job it will be to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the ends of the world.

Revelation 7:1-4

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and **he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to**

whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

John was also allowed to see into the throne room of God.

Revelation 6:7-11

And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. And when he had opened the fifth seal, **I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? **And white robes were given unto every**

one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants **also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were,** should be fulfilled.

Here is the rest of the story. There are an incredible number of people who are going to believe and be saved (probably by the preaching of the 144,000) on earth during the Tribulation, and then killed because of their belief.

Revelation 7:9, 13-15

After this I beheld, and, lo, a **great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;**

¹³And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, **What are these which are arrayed in white robes?** and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

Even though many people are going to be saved during the Tribulation, there will be many more who are unbelievers and rejoice over God's 2 witnesses being killed, and allowed to lay in the street for 3 ½ days before being taken to heaven. Revelation says simply "they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry," so it sounds like most everyone who is on the earth is an unbeliever."

Revelation 11:3, 7-10

And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

⁷And when they shall have finished their testimony, **the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.**

Unbelievers will always be the majority of people. After Christ set up His 1,000 Kingdom of Heaven on the earth, where everyone is a believer, those mortals will have children, and many will be unbelievers. Jesus Christ will rule with a rod of iron.

Revelation 12:5

And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Unbelievers will be judged immediately. They will be cast into pits to be seen as a reminder to those living in the kingdom, that judgement is real.

Isaiah 66:22-24

For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, **shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall**

not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

John also saw the great white throne judgement at the end of the one thousand year kingdom of heaven on the earth. This is when the unsaved from all time are resurrected, judged, and sent to the lake of fire. John does not say how many people will be sent to the lake of fire, but based on what the Bible has said about the number of unbelievers of all time (remember, hell enlarged herself in Isaiah chapter 5,) it will be a very large number.

Revelation 20:11-15

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. **And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God;** and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and **the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their

works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Throughout the Bible, there have been a very small number of people who believe God, compared to a much greater number of people who do not. It is hard to say—percentage wise—how many people are saved compared to those who are not. Paul tells us that the people we may consider to be God’s people while we are in the flesh, may not be. One take-away from this lesson is that we are never alone against the world. Even Elijah thought that he was completely alone in having faith in God, and God told him there were 7,000 others who believed God. There is always a remnant of believers that God saves for Himself.

One exception to having a remnant will be after the Rapture, when the entire Church, the Body of Christ, and the Holy Ghost is taken off the earth. There will be no believers, not even a remnant of God’s people left on the earth. That is why it is necessary for God, before He begins to judge and punish the earth, to seal 144,000 young, Jewish

men and protect them as they go to the ends of the world preaching the gospel to every creature. They are God's remnant, firstfruits, to preach to a world of unbelievers.

Revelation 14:3-4

And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song **but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.** These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. **These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.**