

Three Dams



A young man stood on the bank of the Catawba River and steadied the inflatable boat so his friend holding her small dog could step into it. Recent rains had muddied the Catawba. Brown water flowed past them. Small eddies swirled around the occasional log or rock breaking the surface of the river. This stretch of the Catawba was relatively mild. A large dam a few hundred feet upstream from where the two entered the boat controlled the amount of water flowing in the river. The dam supplied power to a nearby textile mill.

After the two were settled in the boat, several pulls on the oars propelled them out into the center of the river. At places large boulders jutted out of the river. It was by one such bolder at midstream that the small dog always playful decided to jump out of the boat. Both persons reached out at the same time to bring the little dog back into the boat. The sudden shifting of weight to one side of the boat caused it to capsize.

The two were thrown into the frigid waist deep water. Quickly they scrambled out of the water and onto the large rock. The dog frightened by the commotion, swam to shore. The current carried the raft out of reach. Soaked to the bone they stood on the rock, angry with themselves for being so careless.

The engineer in charge of the dam was completely unaware of anyone boating near the dam much less of the accident. At this moment, he decided to open the floodgate on the dam and release some of the pent-up water that had been rising behind the dam. He wanted to release some of the pressure that was building after the recent rain. A great wall of water came hurtling through the floodgate. The river quickly increased in depth and breadth. The current that had been mild became a torrent. The two young people had to climb to the very top of the rock to keep from being swept away. Just when it seemed that they would be swept off the rock the water leveled off.

Fortunately some person on shore saw their predicament and called 911. In minutes a rescue truck from a nearby fire station drove up to the rivers edge. Rescue workers saw at a glance the extreme danger the two were in and immediately called for a helicopter. A short time later it arrived. It hovered over the two unfortunate people stranded on the rock. A fireman trained for such emergencies was lowered on a cable by a winch from the side of the helicopter. First, he gave each of the two a helmet and a life jacket. He made sure these were securely fastened on. He tried to convince the girl to put on a harness so she could get hoisted up into the helicopter. She at first refused. The ordeal had left her badly shaken and the prospect of being hoisted through the air on a cable terrified her. It was only after the fireman said several things to reassure to her that she agreed to put on the harness and was hoisted up. The process was repeated a few minutes later and the fellow also was hoisted up. The helicopter then brought them to safety.

What a shock to see the floodgates open and the torrent of water come racing towards them. Can you imagine how the two felt when after the misfortune of tipping their raft over they realized the dam was opening and in all likelihood they would be swept away and drowned?

This story happened in February of 2003. It makes for a good storytelling but it doesnt directly involve you. The second story of a dam and how its floodgate was opened happened nearly two thousand years ago and although it seems like so long ago it does directly involve you.

It wasnt until the Lord Jesus Christ went to the cross and died for sinners that the floodgates of Gods love were opened wide and his love and grace could flow out to all the world. Because of the death of his Son, God can now freely offer the gift of eternal life to every person. Old Testament believers surely had a sense of Gods love and goodness.

Yet the fullness and depth of his love and grace can only be truly known by those of us who live after the cross and see what God was willing to give in order that we might be saved. When Jesus died on the cross it was if an overpowering flood of His love flowed forth. This wonderful love in all its freshness and greatness still flows out to people today. It flows out to every sort of person, rich or poor, young or old, high or low. Telling them that if they trust the Savior the blood that was shed on Calvarys cross can wash away every stain of sin.

You might be the guiltiest, most vile sinner who ever lived, yet because of what the Lord Jesus did on the cross you can find complete forgiveness if you will only place your trust in him. The blood that was shed at the Calvary is sufficient to wash away the sins of the entire human race if they should decide to place their trust in him. Dont think your sins are too bad for God to have anything to do with you. This isnt true. But rather believe the testimony that God gives about Christ in his Word. Unto him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

Since these floodgates of Gods love have been opened, his love has flowed out to every person ever born, in every clime, in every culture. It flows out in overwhelming power able to sweep all before it. It does the most miraculous thing. It takes sinners who deserve nothing but wrath at the hand of God and instead gives them eternal life when they believe on Gods Son! The same love that brought the Lord Jesus to the cross, the same love that the Father showed the Son when he raised him from the grave, the same love that filled the Fathers heart so that he spoke from heaven and said, this is my beloved Son hear him, is now reaching out to you. It swirls in eddies around you. God waits for you to realize the

immensity of his love towards you and the priceless ness of the gift of eternal life he offers. As soon as a person realizes this love and trusts in Gods Son they receive the gift of eternal life.

This is love indeed. It is love that surpasses all other loves. This is love the world would never have known had it not been that the Lord Jesus died on the cross to show us what was in Gods heart. If you havent found out for yourself how great this love is, wont you trust in the blessed Savior right now so he can save you and become part of your life?

The third dam I would ask you to consider is as terrible and bleak as the previous one was wonderful for it has the power to sweep men to destruction and everlasting death. It is the dam that holds back Gods wrath in order to give men time to consider their ways and repent. The Bible solemnly speaks of sinners Treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. What does this treasuring up mean? It means that every moment spent in careless indifference to the claims of Christ, every selfish act, every sin committed is like floodwater gathering up behind some dam and when the pressure behind the dam reaches a certain point God will open the floodgate of his anger to destroy such a one in hell. It is true God loves sinners, but it is also true that he hates sin. One sin is more hateful in his eyes than ten thousand sins are in our eyes. If you remain unrepentant, and never come to Christ for salvation, when you die, you will find out the terrible extent of Gods hatred of sin. Impenitent souls will be sent to a hell where the suffering will never cease.

By not obeying the gospel message to repent and believe in Christ in this life you are showing God that you do not want him. When God banishes you out of his presence forever in the next life he will only be finalizing the decision that you yourself already made. Wont you realize the extreme danger you are in and come to the Savior for forgiveness of sin? It is only by so doing that you can be certain that the dam that holds back Gods wrath his righteous indignation will never be opened in your life.

In the first story it was foolish for the two to try to relax and have a good time boating so near a dam that might be opened at any moment. More foolish by far are the multitudes of people today who are trying to make their lives as happy, pleasant, and prosperous as possible apart from God when really what they are doing is treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. Some day that wrath will break forth and sweep them away in irresistible power.

A verse in Proverbs reads, Fools make a mock of sin. That is they think lightly of it, when in truth it is the gravest of all issues. Wont you realize the seriousness of sin that you might recognize your need of the Savior and come to him at once?