

# Don't give up!

Charlie Brown and Linus are standing looking over a fence with their weary faces resting on their hands. They are filled with sadness. Linus depressingly says to Charlie Brown, "Sometimes I feel that life has just passed me by. Do you ever feel that way, Charlie Brown?"

In his normal melancholy mood Charlie replies, "No, I feel like it has knocked me down and walked all over me."

Have you ever felt that way? At times it feels like the whole world is against us. It seems like the world has very little interest in what we have to say about Christ. It would be awfully easy to just give up.

Every once in a while you may feel discouraged. I think we have all felt that way at one time or another.

Perhaps you felt frustrated or discouraged as you worked on a difficult project such as trying to build a model airplane when the parts would not fit together properly, or drawing a picture that did not turn out the way you had planned. You may have felt discouraged by someone's hurtful words or perhaps there was something you really wanted to do and were unable to make it happen.

What are we to do when we feel discouraged? In the Bible the Apostle Paul tells us this: "Therefore we don't faint" (4:16). This means do not give up!

How do we find the strength to keep going? Again we find the answer in the Bible. "... we don't look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (4:18).

This verse reminds us, especially when we feel discouraged, to think about those invisible things that are powerful and last forever. Can you think of what some of these powerful, invisible things might be? Yes, love is an important thing that cannot be seen, but is very powerful. When you feel discouraged think of all the people who love you.

Another powerful thing is hope. Hope comes from God's love that goes on and on forever. It is kind of like the love that comes from a grandparent. They may not live near you, but even when they are far away you still feel their love.

Since we are talking about building, what's the biggest thing you've ever built? Was it a snowman, or a race track or maybe a Legos tower? Were those things easy to build? Sometimes, I'm sure. I've built many Legos towers and even though I couldn't always reach the top, I never gave up. It was pretty easy though with all those pieces that perfectly fit together. No tools needed! Easy builds like that make you want to do more. But what about the hard builds?

Would it be easy to build a boat? How about an ark? Maybe if we had a huge crew of workers and lots of tools, we might be able to get it done. But what if you only had instructions? What if you had to make your own tools? It's getting a little harder, huh? Would you do it? Maybe you would start and realize how hard it is and just give up. Today's story is about Noah. I'm sure you remember him, he's pretty popular. His story started out with an impossible task. One that everyone made fun of him for doing, took an extremely long time and was very hard. I know you already know the ending, but remember that none of this was easy for Noah but he NEVER GAVE UP. He trusted God and finished his impossible task. Don't believe me? Let's find out....

There was a man named Noah, and God had given him a super special mission. God told Noah he needed to build an ark! A boat! For rain! But what was so funny about that?

There was no rain! Nobody had ever even heard of rain before. But God gave Noah the plans, and Noah started building that ark. The ark was to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet tall.

It took Noah 120 years to build the ark. Can you believe that? Can you imagine working on anything for 120 years? Especially when people call you crazy the entire time?!

Well, Noah did. He hammered away to build the ark the exact way God wanted it built. Then one day Noah heard God.

"Noah! Go get two of each animal to bring on the ark with you and your family." Now, imagine Noah's surprise. He just built this massive ark, right? He was probably thinking he was going to get to relax. Maybe he would get his own room on the ark. All of his kids would get their own room on the ark. They could hook it up with flatscreen TVs and all the fixtures. I mean, they had a mansion of a boat. This boat was HUGE! I'm sure Noah was thinking he was going to live it up.

But God didn't design the ark that big just so Noah could live it up. God designed the ark that big so Noah could fit all of the animals on the ark.

So pretty soon, Noah saw all types of animals heading straight for the ark:

He saw horses.

He saw ducks.

He saw alligators.

He saw elephants.

He saw hornets.

He saw butterflies.

He saw penguins.

He saw lions.

He loaded all of those animals on the boat, and it was a super chill time. No problems, no smells. Just pure bliss. Right?

WRONG!

Think of the smells. Animals are gross. They smell REALLY, REALLY bad. But there is Noah... and his family.... And 1,000 of his closest animal friends, all crammed into this boat.

Waiting.

Waiting.

Waiting.

Now it's been three days since they got on the boat. Still sunny outside. Maybe people are playing frisbee right outside the boat's window. But not Noah.

Waiting.

Waiting.

Waiting.

Okay... Maybe Noah didn't hear God exactly right? Maybe he got something wrong... Maybe he wasted 120 years and has been smelling bad for a week and he's wrong... Maybe all of those people were right?

Waiting.

And then. Seven days later. Something starts to happen. It starts to rain... It's now been raining for 150 days. That is a very, very long time. That is the distance from New Years Day to June 7th. That's how long Noah has been on

this boat. That's how long he has been surrounded by these smelly, dirty, animals.

And meanwhile outside, all there's been is water. A lot of water. Water from everywhere. Water from the sky. Water from the ground. Water from the left and the right. So much water.

A massive flood. But then.... The rain stops. A huge gust of wind is heard. No rain coming from the clouds. No water coming from the ground. Nothing.

So Noah just opened the door and walked right out on to dry land, right?

No way! It was still wet out there! There were still puddles. And by puddles I mean oceans! Oceans of water outside. There was no way Noah was getting off that boat.

So Noah waited 40 days after it stopped raining, and then he opened the window and sent out a raven, hoping the raven would come back with dry land. But the raven didn't.

Then, Noah sent out a dove and.... Nothing. The dove came right back to him.

So Noah waited another week. There is still wind outside, drying up all of the rain. Noah sends a dove out again.

This time, the dove comes back with a leaf. A small piece of a tree, but even just a small piece of a tree signals to Noah what he has been hoping to find! There are trees above the water! There is dry land somewhere close by!

Noah waits another seven days. He hopes it'll dry up even more and the boat will be able to land. He sends the dove out again... but the dove never returns.

Now, Noah knows there's dry land somewhere. But Noah still waits. He waits on God. He waits on God to tell him what to do next. Most of us would have tried to rush out that ark as soon as possible! We would want to get away from the smells and the people and get in our own rooms! We would want off that boat!

And I am sure Noah did too, but Noah waited. Do you know why Noah waited? Because Noah knew. Noah knew that God had a plan. The same God that created all of the living things. The same God that told him exactly how to build an ark. The same God who knew what rain was before it even existed. The same God who kept the animals from being so hungry they would eat each other. That

same God who had a plan for everything up until this point? Noah knew he had a plan for everything past this point too.

So Noah waited for God to tell him when to come out of the boat. And then, God did.

And God said, “Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.”

So Noah listened. He and his wife and his sons and their wives. All of the animals that were on the ark. They all piled out of the ark.... It probably looked like some sort of mass chaos getting everyone out of that cramped little space! But they did it.

And God was so proud of Noah for following his plan, for not giving up. God put a rainbow in the sky—the first rainbow in all of time. And He said to Noah, “Never again will I send a flood to destroy the earth.”

Do you know how rainbows are made?

Rainbows are made when rain hits light. God was telling us something, when he put the rainbow in the sky. He was telling us that even when we mess up. Even when our lives are stormy and yucky. If we look to Him, the light of the world to fix it, it will all be okay. Our stormy lives, mixed with the light of God, creates something beautiful and colorful. It creates a rainbow.

God always has a plan for us. No matter what is going on in our lives, God is there for us. His plan is the best plan. Trust in God and never give up.

He has made you stronger than you think, He will always be there to help you to keep going. I heard a story once about a little cork that was floating in the middle of the ocean. How small do you think this cork would feel in the middle of the ocean? Pretty tiny.

A whale was swimming by and happened to see the little cork floating there so the whale flipped him tail at the cork and playfully pushed it deep into the water. Do you know what happened? The cork popped back up!

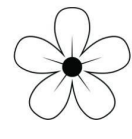
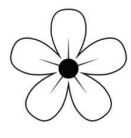
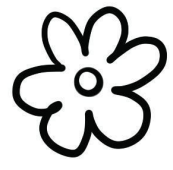
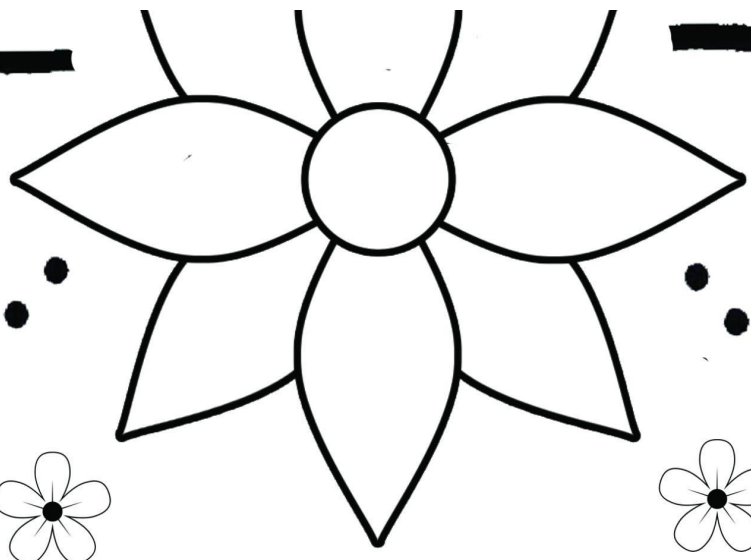
The whale was confused and swam back by and this time it jumped into the air and landed on the cork with all of its massive weight. A few moments later do you know what happened? The cork popped back up to the surface.

Soon other whales gathered around and each took turns trying to sink the cork, but each time it would slowly pop back up.

Finally the cork looked at the whales and said, "I'm not made of the stuff that sinks."

Neither are you! When tough things come at us and try to sink us, do not give up! God doesn't want us to give up, he wants us to keep going strong no matter what comes at us in life.

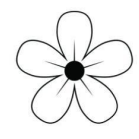
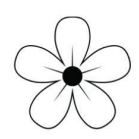
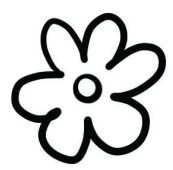
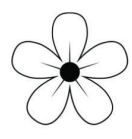
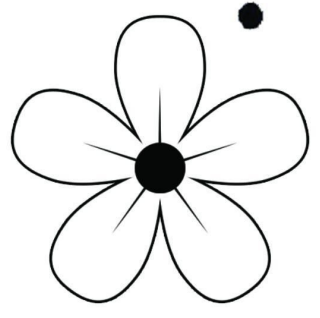


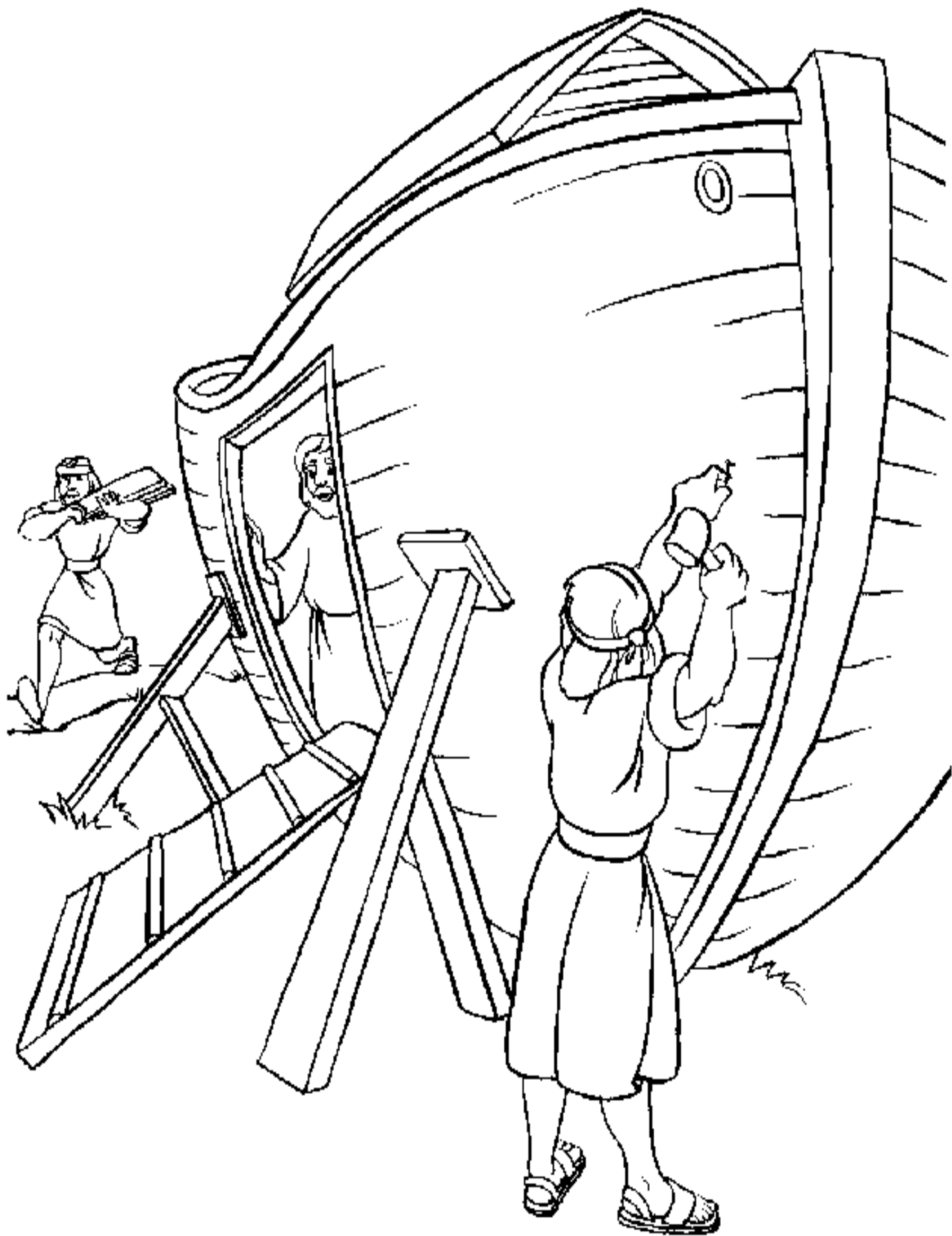


DON'T

GIVE

UP!







# Noah and the Ark

Noah did everything just as God commanded him.  
Genesis 6:22 (NIV)

Based on Genesis 6:9-22; 7:24; 8:14-19 (NIV)



P B L A M E L E S S Z C M I F  
 A F V Z H Y F H H O Y Y N I I  
 V I R C N O A H M O A P H R I  
 I Z F P P C V M W O W R D O P  
 O P R E L O A R K Z U E P O Y  
 L R J O W H G A P H F S G M D  
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 U U F X O T O E B E D I T L Y  
 F R S F N Q V O K W A M F D D  
 L E B T S J F K D X S A B T K  
 V S R I G H T E O U S L J I T

BLAMELESS	SONS	CREATURES	DECKS	PITCH
BUILD	PEOPLE	ANIMAL	ARK	EARTH
WOOD	DESTROY	ROOF	VIOLENCE	ROOMS
RIGHTEOUS	WIFE	CYPRESS	BIRD	NOAH

# Noah's Ark Maze

BY TERRI ADAMS

Help the mouse find the door to the ark before the rains come.

