

# Noah's Ark Controversy: Theologian's Genesis Flood Claim Ignites Social Media Reaction

A theologian who sparked an intense social media debate when he posited [the Bible's Noah's ark narrative](#) was potentially speaking about a regional—and not a global—flood is now speaking out to offer further context on his theory.

Gavin Ortlund, president of Truth Unites, told CBN News he initially made his argument in a highly watched social media video, explaining his belief the Genesis 6 narrative is “about a regional event that was in a huge area of the Earth, but not all over the globe.”

“I just wanted to help people understand some of the arguments for that view—help people understand that there actually are differences within orthodox Christianity,” Ortlund said. “Historically, a lot of people are not aware of that.”

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The theologian said the issue of Noah's ark often poses problems for skeptics and those within the Christian community who are scientifically minded. Ortlund said he's motivated to help people understand complex views around some of the more complex and debated issues.

As for Ortlund's own beliefs, he said he tends to lean toward thinking the flood was “local or regional,: noting, though, he doesn't necessarily believe it was small in scope, even if limited to a particular geographic area.

In the end, he said, the debate boils down to [how one interprets the story of Noah in Genesis](#). One of the factors, according to Ortlund, was the confined nature of humanity at that time.

“There really is a good case, actually, that, in its original meaning, the author and the original hearers wouldn’t be thinking of ... all of the globe of planet Earth, so this is just a matter of interpreting Scripture,” he said. “Humanity, at this point, appears to also have just been regional. This is before the dispersion of human beings that happens after the tower of Babel and Genesis 10 and 11, so all of human beings are in this one portion of the Earth at this point before they had dispersed throughout the world.”

Ortlund said his initial video discussing the issue sparked many responses on YouTube and an overwhelmingly negative reaction on X, formerly known as Twitter.

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Despite the reaction, he said there have been some traditional Christians in the past who have made this very same argument. While admitting these perspectives constitute a collective minority view, he added his belief that some people today simply don’t realize such claims have historically existed.

Ortlund also pushed back on the notion he’s a theological liberal or somehow espousing beliefs not rooted in Scripture.

“I’m an evangelical Christian,” he said. “I believe in biblical inerrancy. I think the Scripture is fully trustworthy. I think if people were to go down the line on ... the average sort of testing issues of our times, they’d find me pretty conservative, pretty classically Christian in my instincts.”

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# Pastor Ditches Traditional Pulpit for YouTube Ministry

In a rapidly changing world, where traditional church attendance is on the decline, Gavin Ortlund, senior pastor of the 100-member First Baptist Church of Ojai in California, has made a bold decision. He's leaving the pulpit to embrace full-time ministry through his Truth Unites channel on YouTube, where he's already touched the lives of millions with his theological depth and biblical insights.

With over 3.6 million views and more than 40,000 subscribers, Ortlund's online ministry has become a powerful platform to share the gospel and provide spiritual guidance. He believes YouTube offers incredible opportunities for spreading the message of Christ far and wide.

"YouTube is such a strategic place for ministry; the opportunities are just unbelievable," Ortlund declared in a recent YouTube announcement.

Ortlund acknowledges the significant shift in religious engagement in the United States. "We're going through the greatest season of religious decline in our nation's history,"

he shared. “About 40 million people have stopped going to church. And then those who don’t have any religious affiliation, which is a little different demographic, interestingly, has spiked to over 30%. Thirty years ago, it was only 5%. It’s just this massive sea change, and especially in the younger generation, [there are so many people leaving their faith.](#)”

Through Truth Unites, a ministry that “exists to promote gospel assurance through theological depth,” Ortlund is on a mission to reach those who have walked away from traditional church settings. He’s passionate about re-centering, reconstructing, revitalizing and re-stabilizing faith in those who have questioned or lost it.

Moving to Tennessee with his wife and five children, Ortlund’s ministry will operate under Renewal Ministries, led by his parents. He will also serve as a resident theologian at Emmanuel Church in the Nashville area.

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Ortlund expressed that his decision is driven by a desire to focus on his true passions. “It’s been a busy three years,” he shared. “Over the last year or so, it’s ratcheted up to one level further of busyness. This change allows me to focus a little bit more and not feel like I’m doing five different things all at once.”

With more time on his hands, Ortlund plans to write books on subjects like the sacraments and existentialism, all while accepting speaking engagements related to his online ministry. He hopes to answer questions, address pressing issues and meet the spiritual needs of a changing world.

While Ortlund’s transition is a significant step, it raises an important question: [is this the way many preachers are moving](#)

[toward a digital platform instead of a traditional church?](#)

Does this digital approach align with what the Bible says about communing together?

As believers, we must contemplate the implications of this shift and seek guidance from the Word of God. The Bible emphasizes the importance of gathering together for worship and fellowship, as stated in Hebrews 10:24-25: “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much more as you see the Day approaching.”

While Ortlund’s journey is undoubtedly impactful, it sparks a discussion about the balance between digital ministry and the biblical call to gather and fellowship. It’s a conversation worth having, especially in a world where the ways of worship are rapidly evolving.

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