

WALKING WITH GOD

"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Genesis 5:24

Out of the dimness of those early days the figure of Enoch rises, towering like a spiritual giant above the men of his generation, and impressing the imagination of all time; but when we ask what is known of him the reply is, "Nothing, but that he walked with God." But that is everything. It is the highest praise that can be bestowed on any man. He, of whom this can be said, has learned the secret of life and mastered it.

Enoch's six paternal ancestors had unvarying biographies. Three things were recorded about each of them, namely, he was born, he reproduced, he died. Enoch was an unusual man. His life was very distinctive. His gentle spirit swept through this world like a passing perfume and left a lingering aroma in the air. His brief biography, contained in only eight verses, is fascinating and impressive. It is both short and eloquent. It stands in marked contrast to the portentous volumes in which the lives of many lesser men have been enshrined. His greatness did not consist of military renown, political power, profound scholarship, successful statesmanship, splendid genius, nor even magnificent philanthropic achievement, but in godliness. What made Enoch great was the fact that "he walked with God." Isn't that a wonderful description of a truly devout life?

Of the first sixty-five years of Enoch's life it is merely said that he lived. That one statement covers all the days of his infancy, childhood, youth and early manhood. During those years he lived the ordinary, everyday, mediocre kind of life that other men were living.

It is interesting to note when Enoch began to walk with God. It was immediately following the birth of his first child. The responsibility of parenthood caused him to start walking with God. He realized that what his child was to be in this life and in the life to come would be determined largely by the father. A father who can look into the face of his child and not want to be a better man is strangely lacking in his make-up. Many parents have been made better because they have been driven to God in behalf of their children. Enoch began to walk with God when he was a young man, with the best of his life still ahead of him. One should become a Christian when he is young. God wants a man's life before it is spent in sin and wasted. He wants it with all of its ambitions, zeal, possibilities, and power.

What does it mean to walk with God? It presupposes faith in Him. It means there is mutual trust. Enoch trusted God and God trusted him. He had the most intimate spiritual companionship with God. Walking with God is not a mere formality. It means far more than just being a Christian. It means trust, friendship, congeniality, fellowship, harmony, intimacy, companionship, unity of thought, will and affection, energy, victory and safety.

I. The Requisites For Walking With God.

1. A true knowledge of God.
 - (1) An intimate acquaintance with His character and laws.
 - (2) An intimate acquaintance with His will concerning us.
2. A genuine reconciliation with God.

This does not imply a change on the part of God, but the change must always be on the part of man. This reconciliation to God can be effected only through the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. A full surrender of self to God.

The name "Enoch" means dedicated; one yielded up to God, conformed to His mind and will. The surrendered life is the strong life. It has a singleness of purpose, force and depth that the average church member knows nothing about.

4. A supreme love for God.
It would be difficult to imagine Enoch indulging in the sinful pleasures of the world. His supreme love for God separated him from the popular sins of his day.
5. A constant fellowship with God.
Enoch enjoyed an unbroken fellowship with God because he walked with Him seven days in the week. Unbroken fellowship begets an intimacy that becomes increasingly tender, beautiful, alluring and delightful. There are some people whose fellowship becomes a burden to you. There are others whom you never seem to know well enough; each new day presents some new attraction, and you are charmed by and held in the grip of the association. Good company makes the road short.

II. The Reasons For Walking With God.

1. It is proper.
"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8). God planned for us to walk with Him. It is only when we walk with Him that we discharge our duties to ourselves, to others, and to God. Only thus can we render our best service. Walking with God is the pathway of patience and not of pride, of courage and not of compromise, of humility and not of human honor.
2. It is pleasant.
While his walking with God was displeasing to many, it was exceedingly pleasant to Enoch, and it greatly pleased God. Enoch rejoiced in his relationship with God even though it alienated him from the age in which he lived. We are glad when our children do well in school and elsewhere; when they do some difficult task in a noble way. Likewise, God is pleased and rejoices when His children perform well and successfully. Unless God is pleased with us we are not living correctly.
3. It is profitable.
Enoch found it quite profitable to walk with God. It paid him well in blessings to himself and his family. The longer Enoch walked with God, the more he grew in His likeness. As we walk with Him, He directs our steps, defends us in our dangers, and comforts us in our distresses. "He was not for God took him."

III. The Results of Walking With God.

1. Assistance in weakness.
"Fear thou not for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." (Isaiah 41:10).
2. Preservation from falling.
"Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." (Psalm 16:8).
3. Guidance in difficulties.
"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." (Proverbs 3:6). "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psalm 32:8).
4. Comfort in afflictions.
"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).
"In the multitude of My thoughts within Me thy comforts delight my soul"
(Psalm 94:19).

5. Abiding peace.
"I have set the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8). How often when God's children begin to tremble before approaching danger, does God say, "Fear thou not for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).
6. Abounding joy.
"In thy presence is fulness of joy" (Psalm 16:11). There is no greater joy than that which comes from right companionship. Who would not rather live in a hut with congenial companions than in a palace with disagreeable associates? Who would not rather live on a bleak and barren isle among real Christians than in the fairest land the sun ever shone upon among infidels, blasphemers, drunkards, ruffians, and libertines?
7. Spiritual enlightenment.
Communion with God rather than scholarship opens to us the mind and thoughts of God. There is no hint that Enoch was a man of science or letters. Yet, this plain man, by walking and talking with God, got such an insight into the purposes of God as no other man of his age had. Walking with God is the condition of great spiritual insight, wisdom and understanding.
8. Purity of life.
Nothing else is so cleansing as the consciousness of God's presence. Herein lies the secret of a holy life, namely, the consciousness of the presence of God.
9. Beauty of character.
We tend to become like those with whom we habitually associate. How like their parents children become! The person who associates with God will become like Him. If we walk with God, His beauty will more and more illumine and reflect itself in our lives.
10. Eminent usefulness.
The highest usefulness lies in the silent, almost un-noticed, but potent and pervasive influence of a holy life, whose light illumines, whose beauty cheers, and whose nobility elevates all who contact it. Friends, if you wish to be really, permanently and eternally useful, walk with God.

IV. The Rewards For Walking With God

1. A blessed companionship.
In view of the fact that most people like to be associated with others whom they consider to be great, it is exceedingly difficult to understand why any would be reluctant to be intimately associated with God.
2. An intense satisfaction.
"He had this testimony that he pleased God." What a joy to know that one has been able to do that. However, Enoch displeased many people. This fact is a reminder that God is easier to please than some of our dearest loved ones and most intimate friends. There is no satisfaction in this life like the knowledge that one is well-pleasing to God.

3. A future blessedness.

Enoch went home with the Lord "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." He was no longer subject to sickness, suffering, or sorrow. God took him out of a world of snares, temptations, and afflictions into a world of peace and glory. He had walked with God on earth, and God took him to live with Him in heaven. He took him to behold His glory, to sing His praises, and to enjoy His perfections.

What must we do to enter into this joyous and blessed experience of walking with God?

1. Trust in the atoning blood of Christ. The record says, "By faith Enoch was translated."
2. Obey God.
Surrender to His will absolutely.
3. Practice the presence of God.
Aids to this:
 - (1) The study of His Word.
 - (2) Prayer.
 - (3) Thanksgiving.
 - (4) Worship.

God calls us to "come and walk with Him." Of course, there are various objections offered to walking with God. Youth says, "There are not many going that way, and it will be a lonesome journey." It will never be lonesome walking with God. Business says, "It is an unprofitable proposition." Age says, "There is too much effort." But God will make it worthwhile in time and in eternity. If we will accept His invitation to walk with Him, He will lead us on and some day take us home with Him. Wouldn't you like to have this epitaph on your tombstone, "He walked with God?" All of us can walk with the Lord if we will.

If we walk with God, what will be the character of the life which we live?

1. It will be a safe life.
God always leads in safe paths. He knows every danger of the road of life. He never tempts us to do wrong.

An incident in the history of the Scotch Covenanters comes to mind. When bloody Claverhouse was seeking to kill those Covenanters they were driven to the hills and mountains to worship. There was one old minister that Claverhouse for two years had been longing to seize and kill. But God took care of His servant. One Lord's Day morning in one of the highland glens of Scotland, John Brown was preaching to his faithful flock. Claverhouse and his troops were approaching and they were much nearer than anticipated. John Brown, the faithful minister of Christ, rushed into a cave. Claverhouse said, "We have him at last." There were at least thirteen caves in that glen, and they started to search the caves one after the other, but there was no John Brown there. They were about to enter the last cave where Brown was. It was about two hours after he had entered and Claverhouse said to his troops, "No use to go in there, he is not there. He has escaped once more." "Why?" they asked. He replied, "Don't you see that spider's web over the mouth of the cave? He could not get in there without breaking it." God sent the spider after John Brown had entered the cave. Once more he was free. There is safety if you walk with God as Enoch did.

2. It will be a peaceful life.

All worry and care in the life of the Christian arises from forgetfulness of God. The remembrance that God is in one's life, and has made Himself responsible for us, leads us to cast all our care on Him; and to realize that He is ever ready to deal with any emergency that may arise in our lives certainly brings rest to our souls.

3. It will be a brave life.

Life is difficult, and to live requires courage. Unless a man is brave, the disappointments of life, the dangers of life, the difficulties of life, the losses and the failures of life will take all the heart out of him. Life is difficult, and never was it more difficult than today. But the person who walks with God will be brave. If we walk with God we can face the worst that life can bring, and do so without fear.

4. It will be a useful life.

Walking with God takes us to those who are lost, needy, troubled, and distressed. To walk with Him means to walk in paths of service.

5. It will be a joyful life.

The sense that God is with us in every detail of life fills the soul with the bliss of heaven. Happiness belongs to those who walk with God. "In thy presence is fulness of joy."