

~Other Speakers M-R: Thomas Reade:

17. WALKING WITH GOD

"Enoch walked with God." Gen. 5:22

The word of God, unlike any other book, has this remarkable feature- that materials for a volume are often compressed in a few words; "God is love." Here is matter for eternal contemplation. All the understandings of men- all the capacities of angels will never exhaust the inexhaustible fullness of this short sentence.

"Enoch walked with God," expresses in its condensed form the principles and practice, the privileges and perseverance, of the true believer. These few words may be expanded, until volumes are written to display in all its loveliness the character so concisely exhibited by the apostle. "It was by faith that Enoch was taken up to heaven without dying—suddenly he disappeared because God took him. But before he was taken up, he was approved as pleasing to God. So, you see, it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that there is a God and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him."

Enoch possessed a principle of faith. He believed in the great sustaining promise of the patriarchal age- in the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head. "He pleased God;" but without faith it is impossible to please him, therefore Enoch was a believer. He was justified by faith, and by works was his faith made perfect. His practice condemned the world; so also did his prophecy. For, says Jude— "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men (of the apostates in the latter days): "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Paul declared the same truth— "And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power when he comes to receive glory and praise from his holy people. And you will be among those praising him on that day, for you believed what we testified about him."

John saw in vision the same overwhelming judgment; "Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. And the one sitting on the horse was named Faithful and True. For he judges fairly and then goes to war. His eyes were bright like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him, and only he knew what it meant. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God. The armies of heaven, dressed in pure white linen, followed him on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword, and with it he struck down the nations. He ruled them with an iron rod, and he trod the winepress of the fierce wrath of almighty God. On his robe and thigh was written this title: King of kings and Lord of lords." "Behold, he comes with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

Thus, in every age, the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. "Enoch walked WITH GOD." He enjoyed the privilege of adoption. He could call God, Father. He lived in a state of communion with the God of his salvation. But how can two walk together except they be agreed? Enoch pleased God, and was made happy in His love. He was in a state of reconciliation through faith in the promised seed; for all who lived before the advent of Christ were delivered from the curse through faith in the Savior to be revealed- Jesus Christ, the Righteous- the same yesterday, today, and forever. Oh! how great are the privileges of the saints!

"Enoch WALKED with God." This implies PROGRESSION. He persevered in the ways of holiness. He did not grow weary in well-doing. He was not offended with revealed truths, like those who walked no more with Jesus when he declared himself to be the food of their souls. He endured unto the end; and God took him, by an immediate translation, from earth to the Paradise above.

How wonderful are the ways of God, and yet how gracious! Each period of time, Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian, was blessed by the manifestation of the divine goodness. Adam was driven out of Paradise. By his transgression, heaven was barred against him; but Mercy, in the person of the Eternal Son, opened the gates of heaven to all believers. To animate the hopes of the redeemed, and to assure them of another and a better world, Enoch was translated during the Patriarchal age; Elijah during the dispensation of Moses; and the blessed Redeemer, when he had finished his work of love, ascended up on high- thus manifesting his victory over death, and entering as our forerunner into the kingdom of glory.

Do not be deceived, Oh! my soul, by false appearances. It is one thing to profess the Gospel of grace, and another thing to possess the grace of the Gospel. It is not the noisy talker about Jesus, but the humble walker with Jesus, who is the beloved of the Lord. The heart of Paul was deeply wounded by hollow professors of the truth. "Dear friends, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. Their future is eternal destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and all they think about is this life here on earth." "For there are many who rebel against right teaching; they engage in useless talk and deceive people. This is especially true of those who insist on circumcision for salvation. They must be silenced. By their wrong teaching, they have already turned whole families away from the truth. Such teachers only want your money."

The gifts of eloquence and learning may raise a man in the estimation of the world, even though he is destitute of the Spirit of Christ. The humble, but despised Christian, adorned with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great value, will be owned by the Searcher of hearts, while the pompous professor is no better than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. He that says he abides in Christ ought himself also so to walk even as he walked. Are these things so? Then, O my soul, unfold the sacred volume, and examine which is the way to heaven, and how you must walk therein. Jesus is the way- the only way, to Heaven. Hear his own blessed words; "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man comes unto the Father but by me."

Gracious Savior! I bless you, I praise you for this soul-invigorating declaration. There are many ways to hell, but only one to heaven, and You are that Way. Oh! that I may never leave this true, this living, this consecrated way, on which the Patriarchs and Prophets, the Apostles and Saints, have journeyed to the celestial Canaan. But how may I be assured that I am walking on this sacred road; that I am in the way to everlasting glory? You have said; "Search the Scriptures; for in them you think have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."

O, blessed Jesus, open my understanding, that I may understand the Scriptures. Show me Yourself in all the fullness of your power- in all the freeness of your love. Guide me by your Spirit, for it is not in man that walks to direct his steps. Study, O my soul, the records of eternal life. There you will discover, through the teaching of the Spirit of Truth, whether you are a pilgrim on the road to Zion. In that precious Book you are informed how you are not to walk, if a believer in Jesus—

Walk not after the flesh.

Walk not after the course of this world.

Walk not in darkness.

Walk not by sight.

Walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.

These important passages stand as beacons, to guard you against the threatened danger. Whatever your profession may be, if you are walking in any of these downward ways, you are going, with hasty steps, to the torments of hell!

Lord! you have said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Fulfill this gracious promise to your servant, who is now seeking to walk in the light of your countenance, and by the guidance of your Holy Spirit. Cause me to walk in your statutes faithfully unto the end. Renew my strength that I may run and not be weary, and walk and not faint; yes, that I may mount with wings like an eagle, until I reach your abode of glory.

Search the Scriptures again, O my soul, and learn from these oracles of truth, how you are to walk as a believer, and how you may be assured that you are a believer, if your walk be correspondent to these sacred marks—

Walk with God.

Walk after the Spirit.

Walk in Christ.

Walk by faith.

Walk in love.

Walk in truth.

Walk in wisdom toward those who are without.

Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.

Walk in the light.

Walk as a child of light.

Walk in the fear of the Lord.
Walk worthy the vocation with which you are called.
Walk in newness of life.
Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.
Walk worthy of God, who has called you unto his kingdom and glory.
Walk as Christ walked.

Thus must you walk, if you will be a disciple of Jesus— a child of God— a temple of the Holy Spirit. And if, through grace, you thus walk and endure unto the end, hear what the Lord says for your unspeakable comfort. "You shall walk with me in white." "You shall come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon your head; you shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Blessed Emmanuel! you know that I desire to walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, but to walk with my whole heart "in the way of your laws, and in obedience to your commandments," to walk by faith in your blood and righteousness, to the honor and glory of your holy name. Like Enoch and Noah may I walk with you. Like Abraham may I walk before you with a perfect heart. Like David may I set the Lord always before me.

Oh! allow me not to walk in the vain imagination of my heart; but in mercy teach me the good way wherein I should go. Then when I walk in the midst of trouble you will revive me; yes, when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I shall fear no evil, for you will be with me, your rod and your staff they shall comfort me. O God, who declares your Almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity; mercifully grant unto me such a measure of your grace, that, running in the path of your commandments, I may obtain your gracious promises, and be made a partaker of your heavenly treasure through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

Oh! that like Enoch I may walk
With God in fellowship divine,
Enjoy the witness of his love,
And in his blessed image shine.
When you shall call me hence away,
I then shall prove the promise true;
While hastening to the eternal world,
Your glory, Lord, bursts on my view.
Like Abraham may I talk with You,
As friends converse who dearly love,
And taste the comforts of your grace,
'Till I shall reach the world above.
As blessed Elijah, strong in faith,
Was borne aloft on wings of fire,
So may my heart on You be fixed,
Ascending on intense desire.
O may I walk with You in love,
And live, as ever in your sight,
Until far removed from sin and woe,
I walk with You arrayed in white.