

“And Enoch walked with God.”

Genesis 5: 22,24

WALKING WITH GOD

***“Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest
to approach unto Thee.”***

Psalm 65: 4

WALKING WITH GOD

A LETTER TO THOSE WHO OWN THE NAME OF THE LORD¹

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST,

Those saved by grace have a wondrous privilege. Rather they are filled with privileges.

“A new creation”, they have a new standing, sphere, attitude, life and hope. All things are changed. I am surprised that we are all so slow to realize the *far-reaching results*. The old life is *not* non-existent, but it *is* judged, and if we *manifest* instead of *mortifying* it, we deny the precious doctrine of the Gospel (Gal. 2: 20). If believers *illustrated* the salvation they have received, and were as distinct from the world as light is from darkness, there would be a wondrous witness. Men would see the “reality” of their testimony that Christ died for their sins. But if a child of God appears partly like a worldling, and has some evident wishes of success, pleasure, physical luxury, bodily adornment, etc., which are contrary to the claim of a *heavenly* setting aside of the things on the earth (Col. 3: 1-4), can we wonder if the men of this age misunderstand the position? Some go away with the impression that there is *much hypocrisy*; others with the thought that salvation is quite different from what it really is, and so they flatter themselves they are saved, whereas all the while they are dead in trespasses and sins.

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This is a solemn thought. It is vain to be “religious” and to sing praise, and to say prayers unless the heart is near to the Lord. He said, “This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Mark 7: 6,7).

If we say “Lord, Lord,” and *do* not the things which He commands, “we lie and do not the truth”. There is so much *self*-deception among those who say “Lord, Lord”. *Thrice* are we told that those who glibly use this name will seek and expect to enter glory, and will be surprised that the Lord does not know them! Why are we told this *thrice*? Because the Lord knows our forgetfulness, and our tendency to ignore this painful teaching. Observe in *each* case the ones who *think* they are saved are those who have a fluent tongue concerning Christ. The life must be as spiritual as the tongue, or there will be confusion. Many know they are not saved, many are indifferent to salvation, but there are those who imagine they are born from above, and they often show “activities”, but with all their ready speech there is no deep work. We would feel concern for those who believe they are among the Lord’s people, who attend meetings and take part in the same (Luke 13: 25), who use the name of Christ now very earnestly (Matt. 7: 22), who may learn much of the Scriptures, and emphasize the coming of Christ (Matt. 25: 1), and yet to whom He will say that He has no recognition! *Three* times this fact is brought before us. These verses are not dealing with the profane and outwardly evil, but with the

talkative professor of Christ, who sometimes appears very encouraging. It is possible to humble ourselves as Ahab, to hear gladly as Herod, to receive the word with joy awhile as the rocky ground hearer, to be baptized as Simon the sorcerer —and yet to remain lost. There are many hypocrites who know their hypocrisy, but our great concern just now is as to those who are carelessly ignorant of this, and who believe they are right. How necessary it is to test ourselves by God's own standard, and from God's standpoint.

Is there a *real walking with God*? Notice Gen. 5: 22-24; 6: 9; Micah 6: 8, contrast v.16. What does “walking” imply? May we not answer (a) an evidence of *life* ; (b) uprightness ; (c) continuance ; (d) spiritual progress ; (e) an object in view; (f) leaving of other companionships ; (g) deep fellowship and acquaintance with the Lord ; (h) harmony “with” His will. Observe that there is *not* the thought of isolation from others who walk with Him, but we meet *them* with *Him*—*they* are not first! And if there is walking with God there *is* a measure—a large measure—of isolation (Ps. 1 ; 2 Tim. 3: 5). The contexts in Genesis 5 and 6 suggest this. Enoch and Noah seemed to stand almost alone. If we cling to earth's friendships, we shall not know the meaning of the Lord's. We cannot serve God and mammon. Further, harmony as to His will is not only wrapped up in the word “walked”, but in the word “with”. It suggests that God Himself appoints the direction and the rate; the believer is lovingly submissive, glad to be guided. He walks “with”; he does not decide!

I do desire for you, and for myself, *this* walking with God.

Those who experience it will understand Gal. 5: 16; Eph. 2: 10; 4: 1; 5: 2, 8, 15; Col. 1: 10; 2: 6; 4: 5; 1 Thess. 2: 12; 4: 1, 12; 1 John 1: 7; 2 John 4; 3 John 3, 4. Thus Scripture bears a very definite witness as to the possibility of going onward in the paths of the Lord. No believer should be satisfied with anything else. His heart should be exercised: "Am I walking in the Spirit? Am I walking with God?" It is well to be concerned as to these simple, practical subjects. Some seem more ready for a "prophetic" address than for plain speaking as to daily life. But how solemn is the latter. Can I honestly say that I am *walking* with God? Let us think what this means. If I am walking with God, how can I stoop to business dishonesties, however trivial? If I am walking with God, how can I scheme for myself and leave out His *authority*? If He is at my side, I shall seek, instinctively, His will and guidance at once. Israel took of their victuals and made friendship with the Gibeonites, yet asked not counsel at the Lord's mouth. Jehoshaphat went to see Ahab, and said he would unite in warfare, before he sought the will of God. Such impulses are quite natural, but they ruin the completeness of testimony. Further, if we, beloved friends, are walking with God, how can we be despondent? Can you imagine a man *murmuring*, or becoming bitter or slanderous while he walks *with* God? *His* realized presence will become such a check on common conversation!

Far from suggesting "familiarity" of a wrong character, this Divine expression involves a true reply of lowliness to God's own gracious condescension. It is, indeed, marvellous

that the Lord should say of anyone, "I loved thee," and that He, Whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, should graciously give His people the privilege of being closely with Him, hour after hour. If I am offered the continual readiness to instruct me of one who is learned, I cannot think it means he will always be with me whenever I desire his guidance. But God is beyond men, and will be always with His people who delight to trust Him. For a thousandth part of His instruction, yea, a millionth, men would give much, when perplexed; but His fellowship is free, and so tender. He does not force Himself upon us when we wish to ignore His nearness (*cf.* Song of Solomon 5: 5). But how solemn is this! We can erect a barrier between Him and ourselves. We can *draw away* and spend time away from *Him*. He does not compel unwilling friendship. He does not demand "unloving" obedience. How can He? The commandment *is* love, and He will not lower His precious appointment. To walk complainingly is not to be with Him; it is to speak against Him (Mal. 3: 14). How *unwise* to walk away from God, but sadly possible! Do *we* walk with God, and dread any and every departure? Do *we* walk with God and *expect* His regulation of our life according to His word? Is our *consistency* marked? Are we in step with His revealed will? Can men see we have been with the Lord in a spiritual parallel to Ex. 34: 29, and in a measure of likeness to Acts 4: 13? I would feel a concern, beloved brethren, for you and for myself, that by our fruits we may be known, and that our temperamental angles may be smoothed, and our self-will

laid aside as we walk with God. The *gradual* results of living with another are very real. The *habit* of dependence on God for everything may become a spiritual *characteristic*, so that it becomes, as we say, "habitual", and manifestly a part of our very nature, with the effect that we do not take steps without definite prayer and thanksgiving. The "theory" of salvation which ignores walking with God is very dangerous. It is impossible to be sleepy, impossible to be worldly, impossible to settle down while we enjoy the great privilege of "walking with God."

With all earnest wishes for this joyous privilege,

Yours in the Lord Jesus, by everlasting grace,

PERCY W. HEWARD.