
Enoch Walked With God

by Edward Griffin

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

Enoch was the father of the long lived Methuselah and the great grandfather of Noah. It is said of him that he walked with God after the birth of Methuselah, three hundred years. It was a long time for a man to support a holy life and communion with God without any relapse worthy of notice. It is difficult for Christians now to do this for a single day: how remarkable then that he should have done it for the long space of three hundred years. Such approval did his extraordinary piety gain him, that when the time came for him to leave the world, God translated him, as he afterwards did Elijah, and suffered him not to taste the bitterness of death; perhaps to show mankind what he would have done for them had they never sinned.

We have many strong featured characters drawn in history. Some shine in all the brilliancy of martial achievements, and are renowned for the conquest of kingdoms. Others have gathered laurels in the paths of science and illumined the world with the flashes of their genius. Others by their counsels have swayed the fate of empires. And the deeds of these have been loudly sounded by the trumpet of fame. But more is said in praise of this man of God in the few short words of our text, than is said of them all. A greater character is given him in four words, than is ascribed to the most renowned warriors and statesmen by the whole voice of history and poetry.

There is something very expressive in the phrase, "walked with God." The Christian life is frequently called a walk, and believers are exhorted to "walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise." It is called walking before God. "Remember now how I have walked before thee in truth." The figure of walking before God was drawn perhaps from the position of those who worshipped in the tabernacle and temple. The Shekinah or visible glory of God sat enthroned on the mercy seat. The

worshippers stood in the outer court directly before the Shekinah. Hence the common expression of appearing before God in public worship. To walk before God meant then to lead a life of devotion. But "Enoch walked *with* God." I do not find this character ascribed to any but Enoch and Noah. I will,

I. Explain what is meant by this figure.

II. Show the consequences of walking with God.

III. State the prominent means by which such a walk can be kept up.

I. I am to explain the figure.

It seems to be expressive of something more intimate than the phrase to walk *before* God. We all know what it is for two friends to walk together, engaged in close and interesting conversation. And this is the figure by which is represented the intercourse of Enoch with his God for three hundred years. The figure is well adapted. The hidden life of the Christian, his retired habit of devotion, his separation from the world, (living, as it were, in the other world while dwelling in this,) his daily, intimate, unseen communion with God, are very fitly represented by two intimate friends walking together, engrossed with each other, unmindful of all the world besides, unseeing and unseen.

This general thought comprehends several particulars.

1. When two friends thus walk together their communion is *secret*. *So is* the communion between the Christian and his God. The world wonders what the Christian finds to employ himself about when alone. They wonder what supports him under trials, and renders his countenance cheerful when they looked for sadness. Let them know then that he draws his comforts from another world; that he lives far away from this, where the changes and trials of the present state do not reach him.

As well might they wonder whence Abraham and David derive their present joys, while clouds are darkening the world below.

2. When two friends thus walk together, their *conversation is kind and sweet*. So the man who walks with God pours into his Father's ear all his desires and complaints, and receives his kind and comforting answers in return.

3. When two friends thus walk together their *wills and governing feelings are the same*; for how "can two walk together except they be agreed?" They also keep the same course, and thus are advancing towards the *same object*. So the man who walks with God is conformed to him in moral character. Benevolence reigns in his heart, and his open arms embrace the universe. Like God, his feelings are in accordance with the holy law. He loves righteousness and hates iniquity. His object too is the same with his. The glory of his Father, the prosperity of Zion, and the happiness of the universe, constitute the one indivisible object of his pursuit. He is delighted with the government of God, and has no controversy with him who shall reign. His will is swallowed up in the divine will. He wishes not to select for himself, but in every thing chooses that his heavenly Father should select for him. He is "careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving," makes his "requests known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, "keeps his heart and mind "through Christ Jesus."

There are two other things implied in walking with God which are not exactly suggested by the figure.

1. The man who walks with God walks *humbly*. God will not walk with him else; for "the proud he knoweth afar off." The whole of man's duty is summed up in doing justly, in loving mercy, and in walking "humbly" with his God. The Christian, with all his intimacy with his Maker, does not approach him with familiar boldness, but is the more abased the more he sees of him. "I have heard of thee," said Job, "by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

2. The man who walks with God exercises a living faith. This, according to the apostle, was the main spring of all those graces which gained to Enoch the reputation of walking with God. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God: but without faith it is impossible to please him."

II. I am to show the consequences of walking with God.

1. By thus walking with God the soul contracts a holy intimacy with him. The consequence is, 2. That it makes advances in the best of all knowledge, the knowledge of God. An intimate walk with God affords an

opportunity to study his character, to see it developed in the free communications he makes, and to listen to his instructions. He is the great instructor of mankind; but his teachings are not extended to those who live estranged from him.

3. This closer inspection and clearer discernment of God, are the most powerful means to sanctify the soul. Views of God are transforming. While "with open face" we behold "as in a glass the glory of the Lord," we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory." Therefore,

4. A sure consequence of such an intimacy between God and the soul, is an increased mutual affection. The more the soul knows of God the more it will love him, and of course the more it will be beloved. What a most tender friendship did Enoch and Enoch's God contract for each other during their intimate communion for three hundred years. If we would enjoy the same blessedness, we must, like Enoch, walk with God.

5. Such an intimacy between God and the soul cannot fail to establish mutual confidence. The more God is seen the more securely can the soul commit the management of all its interests to him, and venture its everlasting all upon the truth of his word. On the other hand the more this confidence is found, the more God can confide in such a soul. He will not trust those to whom he can say, "I know you not;" but of those who are intimate with him and confide in him, he will say, "Surely they are my people, children that will not lie." It is the greatest happiness to feel this confidence in God and to know that he has this confidence in us. If we covet this, let us walk with him.

6. Such an intimacy with God will preserve us from bad company. A man who is walking with an honorable friend, is not likely to be annoyed by disagreeable intruders or to break away after low society. When the soul is in the immediate presence of God, neither sin nor Satan dares to invade; neither the world nor any of its perplexing cares will venture to intrude. Every Christian knows what distressing and dangerous companions these are. If we would avoid them and more fully enjoy the profitable and delightful society of Enoch's God, we must do as Enoch did.

7. Another consequence of such a close walk with God is, that we shall find support under the unavoidable trials of life. When we are in distress, very soothing is the company of a prudent and sympathising friend, who, from the stores of his knowledge, can suggest subjects of

consolation. But how much more blissful the society of God, whose heart is all tenderness, and who can open to the soul the most comforting of all truths. There is no consolation like this. Indeed it is well worth while to be a while in the furnace, for the sake of walking there with one in "the form of the Son of God."

8. Another consequence of walking with God is the enjoyment of his protection. Myriads of enemies and dangers swarm in all the way to heaven; but while God is near he will not suffer them to annoy us. When one of Enoch's spirit hears the thunders at a distance, his refuge is nearer than the danger, and he steps in and is safe. He hides himself where no evil or enemy, though searching for him throughout the world, can find him.

9. Another consequence of walking with God is, that we shall always have a faithful monitor at hand, to throw in timely cautions to keep us back from indiscretions and sin or to reclaim us when we have wandered. The conscience of one who walks with God is preserved tender, and God is faithful not to suffer a son who cleaves to him to err by his side without rebuke. To possess such a monitor is one of the greatest blessings of life. Let those who would enjoy this exalted privilege, take care never to depart from the side of their Saviour and their God.

10. Another consequence of walking with God is an enlightened view of his providence and government, a clear discernment of the glories of the heavenly world, and a peaceful assurance of his eternal love. Tell me what is happiness if this is not. What, of all the enjoyments of the world, can be *exalted* happiness compared with this?

11. Another effect of walking with God is a higher enjoyment of ordinary blessings. By the placid love which by this means is kept alive, the mind is put in a frame to enjoy every other comfort. And the gratitude which is thus mingled with the enjoyment of God's gifts, renders them all the sweeter.

12. Another effect of walking with God is a greater preparation for usefulness. In proportion as the mind becomes wiser by converse with God, and holier by near and transforming views of him, it is fitted for stronger and more persevering and better directed efforts for the happiness of others.

In proportion as its faith and benevolent desires are enlarged, its prayers will be mighty for the salvation of men. Its very breath will penetrate their conscience and their heart as no other means can do. And it will throw out upon the world the all commanding majesty and winning sweetness of a holy example. One such man will have more influence upon the order of society and the salvation of men, than millions who never walked with God.

13. Another consequence of walking with God is a peaceful death. In Enoch's case it was not death, but a triumphant translation. And in every other case, in proportion as a man has walked with God, his end, though he leaves his body behind, is still triumphant, or at least serene. How unspeakable a comfort, when one is struggling with the king of terrors and about to enter on eternal and unchangeable scenes, to have "the full assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost." How much better than to sink under awful fears of eternal wrath, or even under doubts which leave the soul to measure over the dark valley alone. Would you enjoy this triumph, or even this serenity in death, you must prepare for it by walking with God.

Finally, another consequence of walking thus closely with God, is an enlarged share of immortal glory. In heaven the blessed inhabitants all walk with God, every day and hour. And they find it no burden but a happiness which they would not exchange for the whole creation. Why was it not then a happiness on earth? And yet for an exemplary march in that happy course, millions have found their blessedness eternally increased. The enhanced joy of a single soul for a few hours, will outweigh all the pleasures of all the wicked on earth. The time will come when that additional blessedness of a single soul, will have out-measured all the happiness enjoyed on earth from Adam to the conflagration. A little further, and it will have exceeded all the happiness enjoyed by saints and angels in heaven before the day of judgement. And further still, but imagination faints and turns back from the pursuit, and can only exclaim, How infinite the good resulting from one degree of additional faithfulness.

From the weight of all these reasons for a close walk with God, I hope you are now prepared to give your whole attention while,

III. I state the prominent means by which such a walk can be kept up.

Humility and faith, as we have already seen, are not means merely, but are involved in the very idea of a walk with God. Without these we cannot approach God, much less walk with him. The same may be said of obedience generally. These in the inquiry are not considered so much in the light of means, as a part of the walk which means are to keep up. And yet *particular acts* of disobedience may be mentioned as things to be avoided and particular acts of faith may be named as means to be employed. The means involve two things, the guarding against what is injurious and the attending to what is useful.

I. The guarding against what is injurious.

(1.) It is absolutely impossible to preserve the soul in the habit of conversing with God, without avoiding improper conversation with men; not only every thing false or impure or profane or malicious or revengeful or passionate, but every thing deceitful or slanderous or uncharitable or uncandid or vain. It is even said "that every *idle* word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

(2.) Vain thoughts are another hindrance to an intimate walk with God. This led the pious Psalmist to say, "I hate vain thoughts." There cannot exist a great degree of spirituality, unless the mind is habitually employed in spiritual contemplations. People who consume most of their leisure hours in thoughts of vanity, do not walk with God. It betrays a heart full of idolatry: and as well might the worshippers of Baal claim to walk with Israel's God. These cold thoughts diffuse chills of death through all the soul, and can no more coexist with its spiritual activity, than paralysis can coexist with the activity of the body.

(3.) No known sin must be indulged. One such Achan fostered in our camp, will prove that we have not only no intimacy with God, but no acquaintance with him. One indulged sin is as decisive against us as a hundred. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

(4.) Undue worldly affections and cares must be excluded. Those affections for the world are undue which are not constantly subjected to the love of God; that is, are not ready, at all times, cheerfully to submit to the rules which he has made to regulate our use and management of the world, and to any sacrifices which his providence may extort from us or

require at our hands. And those cares are undue which, from their number or pressure, seduce the heart from God. Every worldly care necessarily draws the *attention* from God for a season, as we cannot fixedly attend to two things at once. But if the *heart is* not enticed away, the thoughts and affections will spontaneously return to him at every interval of care and with ever fresh delight. Those affections and cares which, according to these definitions, are undue, obstruct our communion with God and abate our intimacy with him. Of course they must be guarded against if we would walk with him.

These are the things to be studiously avoided. And now,

2. Let us see to what we must attend.

(1.) We must punctually and earnestly attend on all the means and ordinances of God's appointment. Any neglect or irregularity or carelessness in this attendance, will cut the sinews of our spirituality, and diminish our strength to achieve victories and resist temptations in the future. Separate yourselves from means, and you may as well separate your fields from culture, and even from the rain and dews of heaven. All our light and grace come through the medium of means. This in general; but to be more particular, (2.) We must pray the prayer of faith and "pray without ceasing." Prayer is the Christian's life. Though every other ordinance be attended to, yet if this one be neglected, all is in vain. It is as impossible for the soul to be spiritually alive and active without a punctual course of fervent and believing prayer, as for the body to be alive and active without breath. Prayer has more influence on the sanctification of the soul than all other ordinances. It is going directly to God to receive the life-giving Spirit according to an absolute and often repeated promise. "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him." This is decisive if any language can be. The promise is absolute, and there must be an unwavering belief in the promise in order to give the application success. "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all

men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." But the faith instilled is not a belief that I shall receive, but that I shall receive if I ask aright. It is not a belief in my goodness, but in God's truth. It is a firm, unwavering, confident belief that God will "give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" *aright*. This strong confidence in God's truth may be exercised whatever doubts we have of our own goodness or election. If we are troubled on these points it ought not to keep us back. We may leave them to be decided afterwards, and go right to God with unlimited confidence in his truth and consequent willingness to hear the cries of all who sincerely seek him. Whoever is elected, this is true of all. Say not, God will hear me if I am elected, and not without. Election or no election, he certainly will hear the cries of all, (be it Judas or be it Peter,) who seek him with the whole heart. This ought to be the strong confidence of every man, whatever opinion he may have of his own character or destiny. This, as the apostle testifies was the faith of Enoch. "Before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe [what? that he himself is good? that he himself is elected? no such thing: must believe] that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." There is a full chance then for doubting Christians to exercise this sweet and successful confidence in God. Tell it to the nations.

Let the joyful tidings circulate, through all the region of despondency and gloom. There is no confidence required of you respecting your goodness or election. The only faith demanded is to "believe" in God, "that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," whoever they are, whether it is I or another man, elect or non-elect.

(3.) We must watch. In that most trying moment when the powers of hell were let loose upon the suffering Saviour, he gave his disciples no other direction than this, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." So much emphasis did he lay on these two duties. In regard to watchfulness, I would suggest the following rules.

First, be vigilant to observe the first motions of the enemy. If he has made considerable advances before you move, your exertions will

probably be too late. It is dangerous to parley with temptation. Check it early or it will probably prevail. Keep your eyes open to watch the different avenues by which the enemy makes his approach. He will often vary his mode of attack. Through all his variations keep your eye steadfastly upon him. Acquaint yourselves with his numerous devices.

Secondly, watch another enemy greater than this; watch your own heart. Keep an attentive eye upon the movements of corruption within you: otherwise some evils will gather too much strength for you to resist; others will work unseen, and go in to form your character unknown to yourselves. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Thirdly, watch opportunities for doing and getting good. Much is lost in reference to both by overlooking the favorable moment.

Fourthly, watch the motions and expressions of divine providence. It will throw much interesting light on the character and government of God and illustrate and confirm many things taught in the Scriptures.

Fifthly, watch the motions of the Spirit upon your minds. Sometimes the Spirit whispers an invitation to prayer or divine contemplation. If the suggestion is followed we may find the duties easy and pleasant, and the effect lasting. But perhaps we refuse to attend to the impulse. The consequence is, our hearts grow cold and lifeless; and then though we attempt to pray or meditate, we find no relish for it. This remark goes no part of the way towards denying God's efficiency, but only assumes that he leaves us sometimes by way of punishment. It may be illustrated by a passage from the Song of Solomon, understood to relate to the intercourse between Christ and the Church. The Spouse, half aroused from lethargy, says, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew and my locks with the drops of the night. [Now mark how her indolence pleads.] I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?"

[Now the heavenly Bridegroom makes a more effectual effort.] My Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my Beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles

of the lock. I opened to my Beloved, but, [see the effect of not opening to Christ at first] my Beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone: my soul failed when he spoke: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him but he gave me no answer." This is enough to confirm my idea of watching and obeying the first suggestion of the Spirit of Christ.

I have thus shown what it is to walk with God, the blessed consequences, and the means. May I not now, my Christian brethren, urge upon you this delightful duty? It is what you owe to the blessed God, your Father and Saviour, who has astonished heaven by his kindness to you, and whose mercies, if you are not deceived, will hold you entranced to eternity. It is what you owe to him, and it will secure you a happy life, more than all the wealth and honors of the world. It is heaven begun below. Do you not wish to be happy? Bend all your cares then to walk with God. Be not satisfied with *a general desire* to do this, but fix systematically on the means prescribed. Pursue those means hourly, daily, yearly. Reduce your life to a system under the regulation of these rules. Good old Enoch could walk with God three hundred years. And he has never seen cause to repent it. Could you have access to him in his glory, would he express regret for the pleasant mode of spending the last three hundred years of his life? We are apt to think that we are not expected to aim at the superior piety of the ancient saints. But why paralyse every power by such a stupid mistake? Are we not under as great obligations? Is not God as worthy of obedience now as in the days of old? Have the increased displays of his mercy in the Gospel impaired his claims? Has the affecting scene of Calvary rendered him less lovely in the eyes of sinners? Are the means used with mankind less than in the patriarchal age? Or are the happy consequences of a walk with God worn out by time? Why should we then content ourselves with being scarcely alive, when so many saints have been through life rapt in communion with God? Do we thirst for honors? What honor is so great as to be the companion and son and favorite of the everlasting God? Do we wish for riches? Who is so rich as the heir of him who owns all the treasures of the universe? Do we prize the best society? What better society can be found than Enoch had? Does any valuable consideration move us, or any ingenuous motive, O let us never cease to walk with God. Amen.