

01-08-12

Walking With God

Gen. 5:21-24

A promise from God is a statement we can depend on with absolute confidence. Here are some promises for the Christian to claim.

God's presence -- "I will never leave you" (Heb. 13:5)

God's protection -- "I am your shield" (Gen. 15:1)

God's power -- "I will strengthen you" (Isa. 41:10)

God's provision -- "I will help you" (Isa. 41:10)

God's leading -- "And when He brings out His own sheep, He goes before them" (John 10:4)

God's purposes -- "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jer. 29:11)

God's rest -- "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28)

God's cleansing -- "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9)

God's goodness -- "No good thing will He withhold from them that **walk uprightly**" (Psalm 84:11) ...

Walking with God – Let's look at Genesis 5:21-24 to start with. This is going to be an exploration in the Bible so keep yours open and be ready to move around a bit.

Gen 5:21-24 - *When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. 22 And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23 Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. 24 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.* NIV

We've all heard this little story and many of us have read it as part of our reading schedule just as we did this past Thursday. This was the reading for that day as we look at biographies of people in the Bible. There's not much to this passage as far as the number of words given to this individual, yet what is written speaks volumes about him. He was a prophet, as we'll see in a few minutes. He spoke out against the evil ones of his time – People haven't really changed all that much in thousands of years since the Fall.

As I read Gen. 5, I started to get into a cadence as the accounts of each of Adam's descendants were documented. You almost don't realize what you're reading as the rhythm starts to take over. It was almost like reading 1 Chronicles. There we read through a litany of unpronounceable names until our eyes glaze over and we start thinking as our eyes scan the pages ... yada, yada, so-n-so, and so-n-so, another 10 names I can't pronounce and will never remember – yada - yada - yada. The first time I tried to read the whole Bible that is where I stopped and put the book on a shelf for a while. There was a pattern to the listing of the names of the descendants and tribes that becomes boring and redundant.

Then – just when you least expect it – something changes – It's not the same pattern of words. We read the prayer of Jabez in the midst of this otherwise terribly dry section of Scripture. Maybe God knew what He was doing when He inspired the writers after all 😊

Back in Gen. 5 we get the same feeling as we read about the early descendants of Adam and the pattern of words that are use until something suddenly changes. Let's look at our Bibles in Gen. 5 for a minute.

Gen. 5:3-20 – read through the patterns quickly

With the exception of the first account of Adam in v. 3 – there is a word pattern going on.

X lived so many years and fathered Y – After the birth of Y, X lived so many more years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether X lived Z many years and **Then He Died**. Next X...

The pattern continues until we get to our text. Suddenly there is a break in the cadence. It starts off the same, but then we are introduced to additional information when we read about Enoch. He Walked With God... v. 22. Again in v. 24 – Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

Certainly it was not for punishment that Enoch lived the shortest life in the listing of the 10 patriarchs in this chapter. God, in His grace, took Enoch to his eternal reward – maybe early, but it was all good.

The repetition has created a reason for us to stop and take notice. Every living being before Enoch, lived, bore children and then died – It's the destiny of all humanity, after the sin of Adam and Eve – or is it? Enoch didn't die – He was taken by God – WHY? Because **he walked with God all his days**. He started out normal like everyone else – He lived 65 years and bore a son – **and he walked with God for 300 years after his son was born**. He had other sons and daughters like all the others, but **he walked with God** the whole time. He only lived 365 years, but he had favor with God and did not taste death.

Was Enoch someone special? – maybe he couldn't sin or couldn't displease God? Let look back at Gen.

Gen. 5:1-4 – READ

First – This is the account of Adam – life from the beginning to the flood – the largest span of history ever. Ten generations are named and briefly written about.

When God made/created humans in His likeness and image – male and female (no confusion there, by the way) – He blessed them and called them “human” – (Heb. adam) – what we now call Adam or Man.

When Adam fathered children – they were in “his” likeness and image – That means they/we still inherited attributes of Adam’s creator, God – but also in Adam and Eve’s likeness – tainted by sin. This is significant. Humanity is born in the likeness of our original parents – stained by sin, but with a desire to be with God in His likeness and image.

So each of the 10 patriarchs in our chapter was subject to sin – yet – Enoch was considered by God and taken without experiencing the death sentence. Why? He was just as subject to the sin nature as all the rest in the lineage. Why was Enoch granted special favor? All we can surmise is “**he walked with God.**”

In Gen. 5 – as we move forward, we immediately see that the patten is resumed for a couple of generations. Then we get to Lamech in v. 28. Lamech lived and fathered a son – so far so good – He called his name Noah (rest) – and he gives an explanation – a prophetic explanation. Noah was to become the salvation of humanity as proclaimed in the next few chapters. Then **Lamech died...**

We see in **Gen. 6:8 – Noah found favor with God – Grace again –**

Noah – had great faith – He built an ark no knowing what rain was – in obedience to God’s command. He blindly did what was asked of him – in spite of his peers, community, family and friends. Everyone thought he was nuts, but he did what God directed him to do regardless. **Noah walked with God.**

God determined that humankind was totally wicked and all their thoughts and intents were evil all the time (Gen. 6:5). God decided to destroy all living creatures on the earth that He created. Hence the flood – where all living creatures died except for Noah and his immediate family (8 in all).

While not specifically recorded in Genesis – both Enoch and Noah lived a life of Faith in God. They obeyed blindly and carried out great works for God. Both are mentioned in the great Hall of Faith of Hebrews 11...

Heb 11:5-7 – *By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*

It was due to the faith of Enoch, somehow, that he was taken up by God and did not taste natural death.

Then the writer of Hebrews goes on to say... Enoch pleased God... **v. 6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.***

Heb. 11:7 – *By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.*

God established a covenant with Noah – never to destroy humanity again by flood...

Noah, Noah, Noah ... He was doing so well – so what happened to Noah?

Gen. 9:20 – Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. 21 When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent.

Noah – walked with God – and was shown the favor by God. He was the salvation for the earth and humanity because he was the only one found righteous on the earth. Noah and his family alone were saved from the devastating flood that wiped out all living creatures and humanity – because **he walked with God.**

But then – Noah – “proceeded” – or “turned” or “desecrated” himself to the soil and planted a vineyard... He took the fruit of the vineyard and became drunk – became naked. Adam took of the fruit of the Garden and realized they were naked – parallels. The final state of humankind after the flood was the same as the state of fallen humankind before the flood. Humanity was hopelessly and helplessly lost in sin – in need of a Savior – in need of the Grace of God. Humanity needs to be **walking with God.**

While Noah is considered the savior of the human race – by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8) – still holds true today – He was not humanity’s spiritual savior. He could not attain true salvation in his own righteousness. He eventually succumbed to sin as all humanity does and **stopped walking with God.**

The final condition of Noah was ... **Gen. 9:29 – “Altogether, Noah lived 950 year, and then *he died.*”** This brings us back to the reality that **all are dead in sin. Rom. 3:23 – “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”**

Humanity needed and still needs a Savior – One who will redeem us from the life destined to death and restore us back to the fellowship with God that He intended from the beginning.

Walking with God – by faith is the way to eternal life – not following rules and the Law, etc. The Bible seems to show this clearly. Humanity is only evil all the time according to Gen. 6:5 – so God destroyed all living things except Noah, his family and the livestock he brought onto the Ark with him. Even still – humanity was only evil all the time as we are to this day. We read more about **Enoch** in Jude’s letter ...

Jude 14-22 - Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones 15 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." 16 These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

17 But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. 18 They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." 19 These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

20 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. 21 Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. 22 Be merciful to those who doubt; 23 snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear-hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. NIV

God will judge the ungodly – ultimately. Our job as Christians is NOT to convict the world of sin – That is the job of the Holy Spirit according to John 16:8 – Our job is to walk in God’s love – be merciful to those who doubt – save those we can in love – show mercy to unbelievers, without agreeing with their sin.

Our marching orders are pretty clear ...

Mic 6:8 - *He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

Are you walking with God today?

You can't do that in your own strength or knowledge. It is by the grace of God on His part and by faith on our part. He gave us Jesus to redeem us from the curse of sin and death. We only need to trust in Him and believe. The choice is ours.

You Tube Video Clip – Life in Six Words – the Gospel in 4 minutes.

Prayer.

Doxology:

Jude - 24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy - to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.