



## Thought for the Week 25<sup>th</sup> April 2021

### READING

Genesis 5:21- 24

*<sup>21</sup> When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. <sup>22</sup> Enoch walked with God<sup>[b]</sup> after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup> Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. <sup>24</sup> Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.*

Hebrews 11:5-6

*<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

### SERMON

Walking is good for you! It burns calories, strengthens your back muscles, slims your waist, is easy on your joints, strengthens your bones, shapes and tones your legs and butt, helps to lower blood pressure and cholesterol, reduces stress, aids sound sleep, improves your mood and outlook on life. It can be done almost anywhere, it requires no specialised equipment, and it's FREE! At least that's what [walkingsite.com](http://walkingsite.com) claims.

Walking on your own is OK, but it's even better if there is someone else to walk along with you. A good walk in the fresh air can be therapeutic, but what about a good walk in life? What about a walking companion through life? God is always looking for walking companions. He is looking for people whose hearts can be after His own heart, and who will only do what is well pleasing to Him.

If you look back to Genesis 3 you will see that it says in verse 8 that – the Lord God was in the garden of Eden to enjoy a walk with Adam and Eve. God created them for the enjoyment of a walking relationship that involved companionship, dialogue, intimacy, joint decision-making, mutual delight, and shared responsibility for what the Lord had created. But because Adam and Eve had sinned, they could no longer enjoy this perfect relationship and were banished from the garden and the privilege of walking with God.

At the end of Genesis 4 it tells us that “*men began to call on the name of the Lord,*” but Adam's 5 times great-grandson, Enoch was the first man in the Bible who “*walked with God.*” Enoch's example continues to witness to all generations of the great zeal God has to walk with us human beings, that he has made in his own image. When the zeal of God captures you, it will ignite you with a great passion to walk with God and to be his friend. As you draw closer to God, he's not likely to take you up to heaven as he did Enoch. However, he does desire to reveal the beauty of his face to you.

When we walk with God through his Son, the lord Jesus Christ, we can explore the glorious riches of knowing God to an even greater degree than Enoch because of the Spirit of God which has been given to us. Let's look in more detail at the whole idea of walking with God.

### **Walking with God:**

Enoch walked with God, continually conversing with him and growing closer to him. In him, we see a new kind of believer to those whom Geneis 4 describes as “*calling on the name of the Lord.*” It was like he was walking arm in arm every day with the Lord – the Lord was his very life — so much so that at the

end of his life, he did not taste death but was translated out of life. Like Enoch, those who walk closely with God are translated out of Satan's reach — taken out of his kingdom of darkness and put into Christ's kingdom of light. That's what Paul says when he is talking about "walking in a manner worthy of God" at the beginning of Colossians 1:13:

*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,<sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Enoch learned to walk pleasingly before God in the midst of a wicked society. He was an ordinary man with the same problems and burdens we all carry. He was involved in life with a wife, children and undertook all his various responsibilities. He cared for his family: he worked, ministered and occupied; but he was not earthbound. None of the demands of this life could keep him from his walk with God. In his spirit, Enoch was not a part of the wicked world around him. Each day as he walked with the Lord, he became less attached to the things of this earth. All around Enoch, mankind grew increasingly ungodly. Yet as men changed into creatures full of lust, hardness and sensuality, Enoch became more and more like the One with whom he walked. Enoch had no Bible, no hymnbook, no fellow church members, no teacher, no indwelling Holy Spirit, yet Enoch knew God. As Hebrews 11:5 says of Enoch: "*Before he was taken he was commended as one who pleased God.*" What was it about Enoch that pleased God so much? It was that his walk with God produced in him the kind of faith God loves and the kind of life that others noticed was different and as a result, admirable.

1. Walking with God implies that the prevailing power of sin in a person's heart has been taken away by the Holy Spirit of God.
2. Walking with God implies that the person has been reconciled to God the Father, by accepting the free gift of Salvation through the precious blood of Jesus Christ.
3. Walking with God implies that the person has communion and fellowship with God in regular prayers, praises and meditation in the word of God, and walking in total obedience to it.
4. Walking with God implies our making progress in the Christian life to live victorious over the world the flesh and the devil..
5. Walking with God implies yielding one's life to service in the Kingdom of God.

### **The Secret of Walking with God:**

Just as there are things we need to do in life to keep us healthy enough to be able to walk, there are things we need to know and do regularly to ensure our sustained healthy spiritual walk with God.

#### **1. Walking in the Spirit**

God is Spirit, and we cannot relate with Him in the flesh, so walking in the Spirit, is vital to enable us to do what God wants us to do, and not to fulfil the desires of the flesh. Galatians 5: 16-17

*<sup>16</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.*

#### **2. Pleasing the Lord**

Not minding who will be displeased as your love, obedience and loyalty to God must be given the highest priority above that for any other person or possession.

#### **3. Being strong against the Devil.**

In I Peter 5:8 it says, “... be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”<sup>9</sup> Resist him, firm in your faith.” The devil will do all he can to hinder and interfere with our walking with God.

#### **4. Obeying God’s Word.**

James 1:22-24 says: <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a person who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup> For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup> But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

**5. Maintaining devotion with God.** Which involves to praying, praising Him regularly and meditating on the word of God.

#### **6. Growing in the grace of humility.**

No one can work effectively with God, unless they can humble themselves. God will not want a proud person around Him.

#### **7. Seeking to glorify God**

Every step we take in life should be done with God in mind, and we must be willing to allow Him to take all the glory.

### **3. The Stumbling blocks to Walking with God.**

There are, of course, some things in our life that can hinder our relationship and intimacy with God. Some of these include:

#### **1. Unconfessed sin**

We must confess our sins unto God and receive the assurance of His forgiveness if we are to walk with Him effectively.

#### **2. Lack of faith or doubt**

*“...ask in faith with no doubting, the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.”<sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.*

*James 1:6-7 “Without faith it is impossible to please the Lord.” Hebrews 11:6*

#### **3. Deliberate disobedience.**

Each time we deliberately walk in disobedience to a clear instruction from God, we are denying His Lordship over us and this will hinder our effective walk with Him. 1 John 3:21-23.

#### **4. Keeping malice, and unforgiveness.**

If we keep malice with people, and do not forgive those that offended us, our walk with God will be hindered. *“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”* Ephesians 4:32

#### **5. Keeping idols in our lives.**

Anything we cherish above God is an idol in our hearts, and to whatever we give the first position in our lives becomes an idol unto us.

#### **6. Not being thankful:**

God want us to be grateful and give thanks to Him at all times over every situation in our lives. When we ignore this, our walk with Him will be hindered. *“In everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”* 1 Thessalonians 5:18

## **7. Not being faithful in Church attendance and participation.**

God gave us the Church for our blessings and for our spiritual development, so that our lives will be pleasing to Him and our walk with Him will be effective. It is difficult, if not impossible, to be a solitary Christian.

### **Conclusion:**

God desires that all true believers, like Enoch should have a healthy and effective walk with Him at all times, and if we do, it shall be for our blessing and uplifting and for His own glory. Remember - the closer you walk with God, the less room for anything to come between. **Amen**

### **PCI Let's Pray**

#### **Moderator**

Pray for the Moderator as opportunities to visit congregations may start to open up as Covid-19 regulations gradually relax. Pray for his ongoing ministry of encouragement and pastoral care to all ministers and their congregations.

#### **Gary & Mary Reid (global mission workers in Kenya)**

Pray for Gary and Mary Reid as they continue to work remotely from their home in Northern Ireland. Pray especially for their youngest son who has been studying online through his school in Kenya for over a year and is having to sit his school exams remotely.

#### **Steve & Rosie Kennedy (global mission workers in Romania)**

Give thanks for new people coming along to the Cluj Christian Fellowship services and pray for the wise nurturing of these new relationships. Pray also for the wider networks that Steve and Rosie have begun to establish and that these will prove fruitful.

#### **India**

Pray for the work and witness of the Church of North India as it seeks to be an effective witness. Pray too for the Covid-19 situation in India for those in need of medical assistance and for the vaccine roll-out.

#### **Sonya Anderson (deaconess in Shore Street, Donaghadee)**

Pray for the congregation, leaders and staff whilst the congregation is vacant. Pray too for the various children, youth and adult groups which have met online over the past year. They are thankful for the online platform, but long to have in-person groups again.

#### **David Boyd (Irish mission worker in Dublin)**

Pray for the International Cafe team planning new online events to get to know, entertain and build relationships with students from overseas. Continue to pray for a woman who is doing Bible studies with David online. Give thanks she is getting a good understanding of the gospel.

#### **Howth & Malahide**

Pray for this congregation and others in the Republic of Ireland who long to be allowed to hold public, corporate, weekly worship on the Lord's Day. Pray for a deepening grasp of why it is so important.

#### **Inch (Co Donegal)**

Pray for this small island church as they continue to witness for God to neighbours and friends. Pray for them as they discuss future plans with the Linkage Commission and other local congregations.

#### **Schools**

Give thanks for those who voluntarily serve on school boards of governors and management across the island of Ireland. Pray for great wisdom and discernment as they seek to support principals and staff in making the best decisions for pupils in the midst of Covid-19 restrictions and other stresses.