

Chapter Twelve: Walk with God

Enoch and Noah are both said to have “walked with God” (Genesis 5:21-24; 6:8-9). Walked, *hālāk* (H: 1980), is “used of one’s behavior, or the way one ‘walks in life’” (Vine 279). Also of importance is the seemingly simple word “with.” This basic preposition has great significance. Its primary meaning is “as a companion of” (Berube 1267). It indicates harmony and being of the same mind. Amos asks, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (3:3). The answer is obvious—No! We must be in full agreement or allegiance to God in order to walk with him. In fact, this phrase “presupposes reconciliation to God...and includes all the parts and instances of a godly, righteous, and sober life” (Henry *Whole* 1:49). Walking with God is a “life of communion with God,” thus a friendship with God (Henry *Whole* 1:54). Let us see how Enoch, Noah and others walked with God and how we, too, can walk with God.

Enoch walked with God, thus he was a friend of God (Genesis 5:21-24). These verses do not specifically say much about the life of Enoch. Since he walked with God, we know Enoch was a righteous man. For a little more detail about his life we turn to Hebrews 11:5. “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.” Enoch was a man of faith, *pistis* (G: 4102). Faith means “firm persuasion” (Vine 222) and represents trust and conviction that is seen through action (Thayer 512). Exactly what Enoch did to show his faith is not given in the text, but we know he lived a life built on faith that culminated in obedient action. As a result of Enoch’s faith, “he pleased God.” Pleased, *euaresteō* (G: 2100), means “to be well-pleasing” (Thayer 257). Enoch’s faith was agreeable to God. This phrase indicates Enoch lived a righteous life. The significance of this fact is seen when we realize the time in which Enoch lived. Enoch died prior to the Flood but lived close enough to it that the world was most likely already largely wicked. Enoch was likely surrounded by wickedness, yet he maintained his faithfulness and even proclaimed the Word of God (Jude 14, 15). Therefore, God was pleased with his life choices and translated him. Translated, *metatithēmi* (G: 3346), simply means “to transfer to another place” (Vine 640). Enoch stands as one of the few persons in history never to leave this earth through death. The indication is that “God took him” (Genesis 5:24) directly to heaven. The text is clear Enoch was translated because he pleased God through his faith. By faith Enoch walked with God; he was a friend of God.

Noah walked with God, thus he was a friend of God (Genesis 6:8-9). “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of Noah: Noah

was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.” Noah, too, was a man of faith. He certainly was surrounded by wickedness (Genesis 6:5-8), but Noah remained faithful. He “found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” Grace, *ḥēn* (H: 2580), means “favor” and denotes that which is “pleasant and agreeable” (Vine 101). The expression to find grace in the eyes of the Lord means “to be in a state of favor” with God (Strong 1501). This phrase is similar in meaning to Enoch pleasing God. Notice the contrast between these words praising Noah and, immediately after, the declaration the world is wicked. Thus, Noah’s character is the opposite of the wicked world. Noah is also described as just, *ṣaddîq* (H: 6662), and perfect, *tāmîm* (H: 8549). Just means “righteous” and indicates a life in accordance with God’s standard (Strong 1557). Perfect does not mean sinless. Rather, it means “blameless” (Strong 1582). “When one is described by it [*tāmîm*/perfect], there is nothing in his outward activities or internal disposition that is odious to God” (Vine 176). Like all men, Noah was not sinless, but unlike most neither was he sinful. He lived a life of faithful obedience, ever subject to God. “To be just is to be right in point of law” while perfect refers to “not only the turning from darkness to light, from error to truth, from wrong to right, but the stability of moral determination which arises from the struggle, the trial, the victory of good over evil therein involved. The just is the right in law; the perfect is the tested in holiness” (Murphy 187). Hebrews 11:7 gives a summation of Noah’s life: “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” With no concrete evidence of the coming flood, aside from God’s warning, Noah did as he was commanded. He built the ark and saved his family. He acted out his faith and godly fear with obedience. Thereby, Noah walked with God; he was a friend of God.

Abraham, though not said to have walked with God, is literally called the Friend of God. “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” (James 2:23). The context of the verse is the relationship between faith and works. Abraham was “justified by works” (verse 21). Justified, *dikaioō* (G: 1344), means “to judge, declare, pronounce, righteous and therefore acceptable” (Thayer 150). It is the “legal and formal acquittal from guilt by God as Judge, the pronouncement of the sinner as righteous” (Vine 339). Abraham’s actions, or obedience, when God commanded him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice justified him. Abraham’s “faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect” (verse 22). Wrought, *synergeō* (G: 4903), means “a partner in labor” (Thayer 603). It took both Abraham’s belief and obedience (faith and works) working hand-in-hand for him to be pronounced righteous and declared the friend of God. The text

sums this all up in one simple phrase: “Abraham believed God” (verse 23). Believed, *pisteuō* (G: 4100), means “‘to be persuaded of,’ and hence, ‘to place confidence in, to trust’” and further signifies a “reliance upon, not mere credence” (Vine 61). Here it refers to Abraham’s faithful obedience as cited in the previous verses. Hebrews 11:17-19 gives further description of that faith: “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” Abraham obeyed because he fully believed God would fulfil his promise through Isaac, even to the resurrection of Isaac from the dead if necessary. Abraham’s faith never wavered. Therefore, it was “imputed unto him for righteousness” (James 2:23). Imputed, *logizomai* (G: 3049), means “to take into account” (Thayer 379) and refers to the end result of Abraham’s active faith—righteousness, *dikaiosynē* (G: 1343). This is the “character or quality of being right or just... The faith thus exercised brings the soul into vital union with God in Christ, and inevitably produces righteousness of life, that is, conformity to the will of God” (Vine 535). Without Abraham’s righteousness, brought about through his faithful obedience, he could not be considered the friend of God; he could not walk with God. “It is a great honor done to Abraham that he is called and counted the friend of God” (Henry *New* 9:375).

Jesus referred to Lazarus as “our friend” (John 11:11), thus he, too, walked with God. Though the Bible records very little about Lazarus, these two words speak volumes about friendship with God. Consider first Jesus says *our* friend. “Those whom Christ is pleased to own as his friends all his disciples should take for theirs” (Henry *New* 5:59). Likewise, those whom Jesus would not consider his friends neither should his disciples consider their friends. James writes, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (4:4). We must be careful of the company we keep for “evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33). Notice second, Lazarus was already dead, yet Jesus still considered him a friend. “Death itself does not break down the bond of friendship between Christ and a believer” for it is an eternal bond to the faithful (Henry *New* 5:59). Abraham was even referred to as God’s “friend for ever” (2 Chronicles 20:7). When used with the preposition *for*, ever, *‘ōlām* (H: 5769), means “into the indefinite future” or “perpetuity” (Vine 72). God’s friendship outlasts time due to the future resurrection of man and the eternal heavenly reward for the faithful. God’s friends, the faithful, will be granted entrance to heaven at judgment while his enemies, the unfaithful, will be eternally

condemned (Matthew 25:31-46). Friendship with God is designed to be an eternal bond, and we should look to God to aid us as we choose our friends here on earth.

Jesus referred to the obedient as his friends, thus the obedient walk with God. “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (John 15:14). We see here friendship with God is conditional. We must do, *poieō* (G: 4160), the commands of God. This verb is “a generic term of action or performance” (Strong 1637) and simply stands as a call to obedience. If we are not obedient; if we do not do what God commands, then we can not be his friends. Furthermore, to befriend the world is to make an enemy of God (James 4:4). Throughout the Scriptures friendship with the world is equated with sin and unrighteousness. Such a life of disobedience makes us the enemy of God rather than his friend. We must, therefore, be obedient to be considered God’s friend and walk with him. Such a life of faithful obedience is characteristic of all the persons, directly or indirectly, referred to as friends of God. Obedience is the key. “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (John 15:10). Keep, *tēreo* (G: 5083), means “to observe, to give heed to” (Vine 340). It is, quite simply, obedience. The result of such obedience is abiding in the love of God. Abide, *menō* (G: 3306), means “to stay, remain...to be in a state that begins and continues” (Strong 1626). Those who love and obey God will continue to receive God’s love; they will remain God’s friends. John writes, “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him” (1 John 2:3, 5). Know, *ginōskō* (G: 1097), means “to understand completely” (Vine 346). If we are obedient “we are truly acquainted with him...we are truly his friends” (Barnes 1472). It is through this friendship the love of God is perfected, *teleioō* (G: 5048), or brought “to an end by completing” (Vine 466). Man’s love toward God “receives its *completion* or *filling up* by obedience to the will of God. That obedience is the proper carrying out, or the exponent of the love which exists in the heart. Love to the Saviour would be defective without that, for it is never complete without obedience” (Barnes 1472). This, obedience stemming from love, is what it means to be the friend of God and to walk with him. We, too, can be the friends of God and walk with him if we live in such loving obedience.

“It is the life of a good man to walk with God” (Henry, *Whole* 1:49). Only those who please God through faithfulness and righteousness, like Enoch and Noah, can walk with God. Only those who have been justified by works, like Abraham, can be the friend of God. Only then can we enjoy a friendship with God that endures even through death, like Lazarus. If we maintain a life rooted in love

and obedience, then we, too, will abide in God's love and be his friends forever. Let us, therefore, follow after obedience with love in our hearts so we can walk with God. "There is a covenant of friendship between Christ and believers, and a friendly affection and communion pursuant to it, which our Lord Jesus will own and not be ashamed of" (Henry *New* 5:55). Neither let us be ashamed to live a life of obedience, thus allowing us to walk with God, our friend, both now and for all of eternity.

Questions:

1. How do we know Enoch was a righteous man? _____

a. What was the result of Enoch's faith? _____

b. How did God reward him? _____

2. How do we know Noah remained faithful in a time of wickedness? _____

3. Who was literally called the "Friend of God"? _____

a. How was he justified? _____

b. What worked hand-in-hand with what justified him? _____

c. How did he show his faith? _____

4. What two things do we learn from Jesus calling Lazarus “our friend”? _____

5. In general, who did Jesus consider his friends? _____

a. Why is friendship with God conditional? _____

b. How do we know if we are God’s friends? _____

6. What do all the Bible characters who are called friends of God or are said to have walked with God have in common? _____

7. Describe in your own words what it means to walk with God. _____
