

Summit Presbyterian Church
Preached by Rev. Sue Cyre
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Text: Genesis 5:21-24
Title: Walking with God

Walling and I babysit our grandson on Fridays so that we can have the joy of spending time with him. Cameron is 15 months old. Last Friday took him to Wal-Mart. All went well as he sat in the cart and we picked up a few items. But then we decided to let him out of the cart to walk around a bit and use up some of his boundless energy. That was a mistake.

I've never noticed how colorful and exciting cans and boxes and bags are on the shelves. But, Cameron noticed and he ran from shelf to shelf, touching and pulling at all those wonderful colors and shapes and sizes of items.

We tried to get him to hold our hand and walk where we walked ...but to no avail. He was enticed by the colorful items and had no desire to walk where we were walking. The temptation was too great to follow his own desires. He refused to walk with us.

This morning I'm beginning a series of sermons on Walking with God. This series will take us at least to Advent. What does it mean to walk with God? What does it look like when we are walking with God? How do we know when we're walking with God as opposed to walking after our own desires and temptations?

READ Genesis 5:21-24

The text says twice that "Enoch walked with God." Scripture repeats when it's trying to emphasize a point. Enoch was born into a corrupt and fallen world. In fact it is so bad that during his great-grandson Noah's life, God destroyed every living thing on the earth except for those creatures in Noah's ark and Noah's family.

Genesis 6:5 says, "The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time." Pretty bad. "EVERY inclination was evil ALL the time."

Enoch was out of step with his society. He wasn't going along with the crowd. He stood against everyone else in his society. Only he walked with God. Notice, this not about God walking with Enoch but Enoch walking with God.

Picture the image of a Father and his son or daughter walking. When the dad turns left, the son turns left. When the dad stops, the daughter stops. They are going to the same place, at the same time. And as they walk there is fellowship and communication and joy between them.

Adam and Eve had that kind of relationship with God until they disobeyed God. Then the Scripture says, "The man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD GOD as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD." (Gen 2:8) That's what sin does. Sin separates us from the fellowship that we were created to have with our Father. Adam and Eve no longer walked with God. They hid from him.

The prophet Micah told Israel and he tells us: "What does the LORD require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

Walking with God means enjoying close fellowship with God; going with God where God is going; stopping when God stops.

Enoch is mentioned three more times in Scripture: In the genealogy in Luke 3. But also in Hebrews 11:5. The author of Hebrews writes, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. ...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. 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."

So, to walk with God we have to have faith. The disciples walked with Christ; but today we can't see God or see Christ, so we walk by faith. Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. Enoch had faith. He pleased God because by faithnot by sight...but by faith, he was certain, even though he could not see, that God exists and that he rewards those who seek him. That gave him confidence that he wanted to walk with God and joy when he did.

We're not told how God revealed himself to Enoch. Maybe through nature. Maybe through a vision, or a dream. But, somehow, Enoch knew that God exists and he knew that God was personal God because he rewards those who seek him. Those who think God is their inner voice, or the ground of their being or some intellectual theory don't know God. God is personal. He rewards those who seek him.

Those who think God is just a collection of wise saying, have it wrong. God is a person. He exists; He rewards those who seek him. He wants us to walk with him.

Jude, the one chapter book, just before Revelation also mentions Enoch. Jude explains the reason for his letter, "I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord." ...

Then Jude points to Enoch, "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men." Then Jude quotes Enoch. Enoch said "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones 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." (Jude 14)

Enoch is the first prophet mentioned in Scripture. I thought it was Abraham. But, here it is clear, Enoch was a prophet. Prophets spoke the word of the Lord. They said, "Thus saith the Lord" and then gave a word from the Lord. They were forth-telling in denouncing the sin of the people and they were foretelling in announcing the coming judgment. They called the people to repentance or foretold the judgment to come.

Enoch not only walked with God but he was a prophet to the people calling them to repentance and warning them of God's judgment. And the judgment came in the next chapter when God destroyed every living creature through the flood.

To walk with God means to know God and go where he goes. It means having a close relationship with God. It means to like what he likes; reject what he

rejects. Genesis 6:9 says of Noah, “Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.”

“Walk” is sometimes translated using other words and that’s too bad for our study here. But walking means side-by-side. It means having the same values and desires. Cameron was not walking with us in Wal-Mart because his desire was for those brightly colored cans and boxes.

God’s commands flow from his being: his holiness; his unchangeableness; his might and power; his love; his righteousness; his judgment. So when we obey his commands, we’re walking with him. When we disobey, we’re not walking with God.

Lev. 26:40 is a good example. The NIV has, “If they will confess their sins and the sins of their fathers—their treachery against me and their hostility toward me, which made me hostile toward them so that I sent them into the land of their enemies—then when their uncircumcised hearts are humbled and they pay for their sin, I will remember my covenant with Jacob and my covenant with Isaac.... “

The KJV has a more accurate translation because the word “walk” appears twice in that passage. Listen to the KJV. “If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity, then I will remember my covenant with Jacob...”

When Israel sinned, she walked contrary to God. That’s what sin is. He’s going left and we go right. He stops and we go. That meant necessarily that God was walking contrary to them. They were separated.

When King David was about to die he gave a charge to Solomon saying, “be strong show yourself a man and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in his ways and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements...” 1 Kings 2:2)

Walking with God means we go where he goes; love what he loves; rejoice in what he rejoices in. Sin is when we are going contrary to God. And there can be no blessing apart from God.

When we realize that we are walking contrary to God, God calls us to repent. Repentance means we stop walking in the direction we're going in and turn around and stop going contrary to God but start to walk with him again.

To repent we have to acknowledge that we're walking in the wrong direction. We have to acknowledge that God is contrary to us; we are contrary to God.

God calls us to walk with him. Walking with God means we are in delightful, amazing, fellowship with the Creator of the Universe. What do we fear when we're walking next to God? What do we question when we're next to God? What sorrow can engulf us? What need can overwhelm us? We are walking next to God.

God doesn't walk in circles. He has a purpose which is to reach out to those that don't yet know him and make them a part of his kingdom. He is making his glory known and changing lives. The Scripture talks about the Gospel turning the world upside down. We're a part of that when we're walking with God. Our lives aren't aimless or without purpose. We are walking with God in fulfilling his purposes.

We will receive communion this morning and communion is about walking with God. We come to the table sorry for our sins...we are sorry we've been walking contrary to God. We grieve that we cared more about chasing the bright colored temptations of this world than walking with God. We trust that in Christ we have been washed clean. Our sins have been paid for. We don't have to hid from God as Adam and Eve did because of their shame and guilt.

But, we have to accept that we have a problem. We've been walking in the wrong direction. Then God offers us the very Body of Christ to nourish us so that we have the strength and desire and will and love to want to walk with God again and to resist those temptations.

Enoch didn't die. Genesis says, "Enoch walked with God; and then he was no more, because God took him away." The author of Hebrews says the same thing, "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."

Took him away. Took him where? God took Enoch to be with him so that they could keep on walking together. Enoch went to dwell with God. That's what happens to those who walk with God...they keep on walking into eternity.

Remember Psalm 23, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." God is right there walking beside you right through the doorway of death into eternity.

The walk we begin now in our Christian life extends to eternity. The closer we walk with God, the nearer we draw to him, in communion, in conversation, in joy, in fellowship, is consummated when we dwell with him forever as Enoch is. Let us begin now walking with God and meditate on all that that means in the coming weeks.

Amen.