

## The life that pleases God

I fear that for all of our talk about Jesus...we don't really know Him as we should.

Karl Marx the famous atheist and 'father of communism' certainly knew about Jesus.

Yet, outside of Adolf Hitler and Emperor Hirohito I don't know of anyone in the 20<sup>th</sup> century who caused more pain, misery, sorrow and death....

... yet listen to what a young Karl Marx wrote.

*Thus, the history of peoples teaches us the necessity of union with Christ ... Our hearts, reason, history and the word of Christ, tell us loudly and convincingly that union with Him is absolutely essential and that without Him we cannot fulfil our goal and we would be rejected by God— only He can redeem us.*

It is possible to know a great deal about Jesus even admire Him and yet still not know Him in a personal intimate way.

... this is why the story of Enoch is so important.

***(Heb 11:5,6) <sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.***

... the relationship that God had with Enoch is the relationship that God wants with every one of us.

Three weeks ago, we learned that the Righteous (Rom. 1:17) by faith (Gal. 3:11) live (Hebrews 10:38). [Hab. 2:4]

We are righteous not because we've earned it, but **because God has declared** it to be so.

Faith is not "good vibes" or positive thinking ... faith is the "title deed" of things hoped for.

- Faith is not something we do ... it is a possession given to us by God.
- Faith is not seeing something you want and then bringing it into existence.
- Faith is confidence in the promises of God.

That is the truth the writer of Hebrews teaches last part of chapter 10 ...

... and that is the truth illustrated here in Hebrew 11 with this list of Old Testament saints.

AGAIN: It is grace that saves us, but it is faith that enables us to live an enduring life that pleases God.

*[Paul said the life that I live now I live by faith in the Son of God.]*

That is exactly what we are seeing in the life of Enoch.

Enoch's faith prompted him to walk with God ... and that pleased God **or as Hebrews 11:2** says, it "gained God's approval."

And we are supposed to learn that faith is the key to "**being taken up,**" that's why verse 6 says that God is a "rewarder of those who seek Him."

## **1. Those who walk with God know God best**

If you look back to Genesis 5 ... this chapter reads like an obituary column.

One by one they are born, they live, have children, and then they die ....

... and this morbid parade seems to go on and on.

And then suddenly God interrupts that monotonous funeral procession to say something quite shocking.

*<sup>21</sup> Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. <sup>22</sup> Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup> So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. <sup>24</sup> Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him. (Gen. 5:21-24)*

Enoch lived 65 years and there is no indication that in those 65 years he ever walked with God but then ....

... after Methuselah was born Enoch “walked with God” for 300 years.

Something happened ....

A life of faith ... a life of walking with God doesn't just happen by accident ...

... there is always a turning point.

- Moses at the Burning Bush
- Jesus called Peter, James and John to leave their nets and they did and started following Jesus
- One day Jesus met a Samaritan woman at a water well and she turned from the brokenness of her misguided life and started following Jesus
- Paul was on the Road to Damascus to capture and kill Christians but He met Jesus and his life was changed forever.
- 39 years ago today, God called me unto Himself and I came to Him and over these last 39 years Jesus has been better to me than my heart ever had a right to expect.

If you hope to have a life that counts for more than money, possessions, bills, and stuff piled around you when you die ...then you need that turning point in your life.

If you want to have a life that pleases God, there must be a turning point.

Enoch did and after that turning point Enoch walked with God.

The word “halak” or “to walk” is a verb, this is only the 2<sup>nd</sup> time it is mentioned in the bible the first time was in Genesis 3:8 where it says “*God walked in the garden of Eden in the cool of the day.*”

The use of this word is important ...

... We are supposed to realize that Enoch is walking with God as God is walking with Enoch.

This is what we are created for.

God's highest purpose for creating us was not so that we could "do stuff" for God ...

... God created us to walk with Him.

Enoch walked with God and it pleased God!

The church is spending so much time and energy trying to get people on the church roll...

... God's not trying to get us on the church roll ... God is trying to get us on the altar.

And notice that Enoch named his son Methuselah ...

... The name Methuselah means, "*When he is gone it will be sent.*"

Why did Enoch name his son ...?

Let me show you 2 verses...

***<sup>7</sup> Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets. (Amos 3:7)***

Amos is saying that before He acts, God reveals Himself in unique and personal ways to those who walk close to Him.

***(Jude 1:14-15)<sup>14</sup> It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, <sup>15</sup> to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."***

Enoch is a prophet and, according to Amos, before God acts, he reveals what He is going to do to His prophets.

Jude tells us exactly what it was that God had revealed to Enoch and how Enoch reacted to what he heard.

Because he lived a life of faith walking with God Enoch **spoke out against what was ungodly** (uses that word 4 times) ... Enoch was the John the Baptist of his day.

People who walk with God look different than people (even religious people) who do not walk with God.

... And Enoch didn't bite his tongue ... he told the truth. **The Lord is coming back to execute judgment upon all...**

Enoch knew judgment was coming that is why he named his son Methuselah which means, "*When he is gone it will be sent.*"

This scripture tells us that God had warned Enoch of the coming destruction.

In other words, ...God told Enoch that when his son Methuselah died then judgment would come.

(Genesis 5:27—Methuselah was 969 years old when he died—the oldest man that ever lived.)

- Genesis 5:25, 28 Methuselah lived 187 years and Lamech was born and then Lamech lived 182 years when he had a son named Noah ...
- ... that would mean that Methuselah 369 years old when Noah was born.
- In Genesis 7:11 we see that Noah is 600 years old when the flood came.
- (369 + 600=969)—which was how old Methuselah (whose name means, "*When he is gone it will be sent.*") was when he died.

God's judgment of the world through a flood (based upon God's promises) was supposed to happen once Methuselah died.

Methuselah was the oldest man that ever lived (969) do you know why?

... Because God was being merciful--- that is our God!

People say, "Oh, I don't know why Jesus hasn't come back yet."

I'll tell you why: God prefers mercy and forgiveness to judgement.

God is not willing that any should perish.

God patiently waits...

Enoch had faith in God's promises ...

That's why He walked with God...

... That's why God revealed His will to Enoch

... That's why Enoch named his son Methuselah.

## **2. Those who seek God know God deeply**

*... for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*

There are three very powerful things in this verse about Enoch's faith:

He believed **God was God** and He believed that **God was good**.

Do you want to know why the American church is languishing?

... because we don't believe that God is God.

- This is why the preacher's bookshelf is full of church growth books.

- This is why the deacons and the First Deadwater Baptist church fired the last preacher when attendance didn't improve to their satisfaction.
- This is why the church preaches against judgmentalism but refuses to say a word about sin and heresy.

We have lost our sense of **the** majesty, wonder, and glory of God.

We have lost our spirit of worship and our ability to withdraw and meet God in adoring silence.

Modern Christianity is simply not producing the kind of Christian who knows the sacredness of private worship ...

... Christians who know how to dwell in patience and with thirst under the brooding of God's Holy Spirit.

... we are more impressed with man's success than we are with God's holiness.

**Enoch knew that God was God and he knew that God was good.**

Enoch, by faith, knew that God is a rewarder.

... that doesn't mean that Enoch was trying to get "stuff" from God.

That meant that Enoch believed that God would give everything He promised.

... and what is the greatest reward God could ever give us—HIMSELF!

- God told Abraham: **'I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.'** (Genesis 15:1).
- The Psalmist wrote, **'God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.'** (Psalm 73:26).

There is no reward that is better than God Himself!

Nothing can compare with the glory of having the Everlasting God as your everlasting reward and

your portion.

- The Psalmist wrote, **“In His presence is fullness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures forevermore.”** (Psalm 16:11).

Enoch knew that God was God and he knew that God was good **and so he sought after God.**

That is the obvious response to the goodness of God.

King David wrote in Psalm 63, O God, **“You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water.”**

The prophet Jeremiah wrote in chapter 29, **“You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord.**”

Truth: God will reward us with Himself to the degree that we seek after Him.

Walking with God was just a “fad” for Enoch, he walked with God for 300 years.

He **desired** God, He **sought** God, He **loved** God ... and God was pleased.

**I don’t think we even realize how much God desires us.**

Modern Christianity has such a low view of God that we have come to think of God as if He were a beggar standing stranded on a corner begging for the scraps of our time and affection.

We give Jesus our leftovers and think, “well that is still better than most people do.”

**Shame on us.**

*If every person on the earth went blind over night it would not diminish the glory of the sun, moon, and stars—*

*... in the same way, if every person on the earth became an atheist it would not diminish the glory of God at all*

.... *God doesn't need us at all*

... *and Yet, He wants us deeply, desperately and passionately.*

Here's how much God wants you ...

He gave up the life of His son, He put His son on Calvary, He put all of our sins on His son ...

... so that He might redeem us and make us His forever—That's how much God wants you.