

(Genesis #7) Enoch Walked With God

by J. Glyn Owen

Enoch's life illustrates that when a person really walks with God, their every problem assumes a different hue, and the God who walks with them is the answer to their every problem.

Duration: 48:42

Scripture: Genesis 3:19, Genesis 4:17-22, Genesis 5:24, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 11:5

Topics: "Enoch"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the transformative power of walking with God. He uses the example of Zacchaeus, who was changed after spending just an hour with Jesus. The preacher emphasizes that even a short time in the presence of God can have a profound impact on a person's life. The sermon also explores the concept of a companionship between God and man, highlighting the principles implied in such a relationship.

Transcript

Normally, on the occasion of a guest service, we take something that is outwith the usual theme that we may be following on Sunday evenings. But, for this evening, I have found myself constrained to pursue the theme that we have been taking over the last number of Sunday evenings in the early chapters in the book of Genesis. And I trust that as we come to chapter 5 tonight and take a look at one man who is described there, we shall find that it has something to say to us, whatever our particular experience may be.

I want to read to you now from Genesis chapter 5, a passage that begins with verse 21. And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah. And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. Particularly that last verse, and Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. Or, if you prefer the other rendering in the example to the Hebrew chapter 11, where the reference is there to this incident, it says, Enoch walked with God, and he was not found.

No one could find him. The man was missed. It's a great thing to be missed at the end of your life, at the terminus of your life in this world.

He was missed. And apparently people looked for him, but they couldn't find him. And the reason they could not find him was this, that God had taken him.

God had taken him. It reminds me of what is written on a tombstone in the south of England, in the county of Surrey, in a little country churchyard. Slab of stone on a grave, and just a word of stirrup, and this, gone to be with my friend.

Gone to be with my friend. And he was not, for God had taken him. Life comprises a strange mixture, doesn't it? Last Sunday evening we were thinking of two brothers, Cain and Abel.

You have the record in chapter 4. Now this man Cain, his one desire, indeed his determination, was to live his own life apart from God. Or he was prepared to come and bring an offering to God, provided he could bring it in his own way. This is the point.

He didn't mind saluting the Almighty. He didn't mind being religious in some sense, provided he could do the whole thing in his own way. But really, he must be God.

He must be master. And unless that's possible, he wants to be away from God altogether. And so you remember those who were here last Sunday evening, that at the end of it, God seems to have exactly what he wants.

And he has vanished for her, from the presence of God, whose Godhead he cannot tolerate. He had, he wanted. Now over into chapter 5, right at the heart of chapter 5, we have one man who desires nothing else but God.

He walked with God. And this is the big thing about him. We're not told anything else.

We're not told what he did or what he didn't do. We're not told what he possessed or did possess. But this is the initial feature of his life.

This is what scripture wants us to remember about him. He walked with God. Now, Enoch's life illustrates, I believe, that when a person really walks with God, his every problem assumes a different hue, a different nature.

This man, living a time such as this, which we'll see in a moment, must have been a lonely man. And we don't read anything here about loneliness. I'm not sure that he mustn't have been a man with some fears.

Or, let's put it like this. Certainly there are features in the environment and in the context here which might have made the man afraid. But we don't read about his fears.

Looking at it naturally, we might have expected this man to have had some problem as to the meaning of life, and as to his own identity. Where's he come from? Where's he going? Somehow there doesn't seem to have been a problem. Enoch walked with God.

And if you and I learn to walk with God, we shall find that the God who walks with us is the answer to our every problem. Now, that's an oversimplification, you say. To which I don't really think it is.

The problems of this man are resolved because the problem resolver is with him. He walked with God. We shall be concluding our service tonight.

Don't turn to your hymn books yet. It's a little early yet. With a hymn, in heavenly love abiding, no change my heart shall fear.

And safe in such confiding, for nothing changes here. The storm may roar without me, my heart may low belayed, but God is round about me, and can I be dismayed? Green pastures are before me which yet I have not seen, bright skies will soon be o'er me, and so forth. What's the experience? It's the experience of a man who is walking with God.

Now, I want to say right at the outset, it may well be that God has arranged this service tonight because He wants you to walk with Him. And He wants to come and join you. And I want you to think of everything I'm going to try to say now in terms of that possibility.

That God has arranged your sitting in the seat here in Knox tonight, and has arranged for me to be standing here talking about this subject with His good help, because He wants you to walk with Him. He wants you to know something of the sufficiency, something of the glory, something of the wonder which this man Enoch knew hundreds of years ago. Well now, there's a world of difference, superficially speaking, between Enoch's age and our age.

But I want you to notice at any rate some of the circumstances prevailing in Enoch's day. Now, if you have your Bible with you, you might find it useful, because I'm only going to refer very briefly to one or two things. I want you to see at any rate that they're in the Scriptures.

I'm not inventing them. We're going to look, first of all, at the circumstances prevailing in Enoch's day. And the first thing I want to mention is the cultural setting.

In chapter 4, verses 17 to 22, we have a composite picture of the civilization that was then emerging. Everything was new, everything was fresh. There was a civilization blossoming into being.

We have here the building of the first city, in verse 17. Then we have the emergence of tent-dwelling, cattle-breeding, tool-making, and a community emerging in each case. We have the beginnings of architecture, of music, and the manufacture of certain commodities.

You have it all there. You have a civilization just blossoming into existence. But mark this, it is fundamentally a civilization and a culture apart from God.

Now, I am summarizing this, and I hope I'm doing justice to it by saying that the cultural setting in which Enoch lived is a setting in which civilization flourished without any positive reference to God. It's not so different, is it, from ours? We still have our music, and our architecture, and our tool-making, and our cattle-breeding, and our tent-dwelling even, and cottage-dwelling, and what have we. Life is a little more sophisticated, maybe, but in principle what we have tonight is exactly the same as this man had right back here in the book of Genesis.

We have a culture and we have a civilization in which God is really unwanted unless he comes in at our own terms. Such is the cultural setting of Enoch's day. Now, I want now to take one step further and to see the moral declension that has already taken place in the life of mankind.

The kind of creaturely rebellion that began with disobedience in the Garden of Eden has gone a long way ahead. Man has leapt into the abyss of sin. It's almost unbelievable what has happened in the space of a comparatively short time.

That was, or at least to many people, it did not appear to be all that serious to take the fruit of the forbidden tree. But as we saw last time, taking the fruit has now led to the taking of a life, and even the taking of a life of a brother, and even the taking of a life of a brother who was a worshipper, and even the taking of a life of a brother who worshipped God and was acceptable in sight of God by another fellow worshipper. Everything's become topsy-turvy.

But by the time we get to the end of chapter five, things are even worse. You have a character that's on to the scene here called Lamech Lick, as some people call him. I don't care which pronunciation you use.

In verses twenty-three to twenty-four you have a remarkable character here, who's full of real, unbelievable arrogance and pride. That man takes all the rules and he just throws them on one side. Sin has completely mastered this man, Lamech, and he's stifled of the upward reaches of the tide of sin.

He married two wives to start off with, which was contrary to creation ordinance. But not only that, I want you to listen to his voice. I'm quoting the Revised Standard Version.

He's talking to his two wives. He's come into the home or into the tent, whatever the case may have been, and he's full of excitement and he says to them, Hey, don't you hear my voice? You wives of Lamech, hearken to what I say. Can you hear the arrogance? It's there already, isn't it? Listen to me, he says.

I have slain a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain is avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold. Did you get that? Listen to me, he says.

Somebody struck me. And the word for striking is not a serious one. A slap on the face.

I've slain him, he says. Now what's more, he says, I'm determined with the power of my own fist and my own bovine solidity, my own powers of muscle and flesh. I'm prepared to look after myself.

God says he'll look after Cain so that no one will kill him. If he is slain, he'll be revenged seven times over. He says, I can look after myself far better than God can look after me.

If anyone hurts me, he says, seventy-seven times I'll require that. Can you see the arrogance of it? Now, I can't tell them it, but let me put it in its context, reminding you that the Lord Jesus in New Testament times said this. One of the disciples asked him, how many times must I forgive? It was Peter.

Seven times? Dear old Peter thought he was going a long way, suggesting seven times. Says Jesus to him, no, no, he says, not seven times, but seventy times seven. This wretched cater here says, I will have my revenge, not forgive.

Seventy times seven. This is not an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth. People quibble sometimes, saying, my, that's a very harsh judgment that must be brought in, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Wait a moment, my. There are men like Lamech around. Seventy times seven, he says, I'll get my own back.

A moral defendant at the fast setting. Was the thing of the bidden fruits a minor thing after all? Not if you take these words seriously. But now, wonder of words.

We read in the beginning of the book of Genesis in chapter three that the seed of the woman would strike at the seed of the serpent. You know the battle is not all on one side. God is in the midst of it and God is

active.

Now listen, it's almost unbelievable. In verse twenty-six we read this. Verse twenty-six of that fourth chapter.

At that time, men began to call upon the name of the Lord. Isn't that unbelievable? In a day when civilization is emerging that has no positive reference to God, in a day when the moral declension is such that you have men like Lamech around ruling the roost, bullying their way through society, right at that time, in that very circumstance and situation, there are some men about who publicly, apparently, begin to call upon the name of the Lord. The devil's not having it all his own way.

But there's a minority emerging who honor and worship and serve the Lord God, the Creator. Now those are the circumstances prevailing. There are many other features here, but that must suffice.

That's the background. Now come to the companionship between God and this remarkable man that we are looking at tonight, Enoch. In that context, in that setting we read, Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methuselah for three hundred years.

And he was not, because God took him. This statement demands close scrutiny. Now first of all, look at the parties involved in this life companionship.

The Creator and the creature. God and man. The very God who drove out Adam and Eve from the garden because of their sin.

He drove them out because they had transgressed his law and they would not be subject to him. And they could not live together in harmony. But that same God, here in chapter five, is said to be walking or having fellowship with or in a companionship with one of the children of Adam.

God and man in fellowship. Now the principles implied in the formation of such a relationship are numerous, but I want to mention two or three. How is it possible for God and man to enter into a relationship like this? What are the issues? What has to be done? How does a man get into such a relationship with God? How does God come into such a relationship with man? Now the first thing I want to mention is this.

Before any two people can work together in this way, whether they're God and man or two humans, man and wife, or two partners in business or whatever you have, first of all there must be the acceptance by each of the person of the other. Now I'm not saying anything that is very profound, but it is something that's very important. You can't walk with another person until you accept that person for who and what he is.

One of the prophets, Amos, asked a long, long time ago, do two men work together except they've made an appointment and agreed? The answer is no, of course. Two people just don't walk together very far unless they've agreed upon the way they're going and upon certain things. There must be an agreement.

Now as far as God and man is concerned, there must have been an agreement here. God always respects the person of his creature. He knows our frailty and he also knows what gifts he has given us.

God always respects his creatures. It's on the other hand that there must needs be a decision that we should accept the Godhood of God. And you see, it is impossible for us to enter into a right relationship

with God until we let God be God.

Put it crudely, put it simply. Half our trouble in coming to know God is this, we want him to become somehow on a level with us. A God who is just our equal, with whom we can argue, whom we can change a little bit and say, now look, look, not so much of that, you try this for a change.

You listen to me for a while. And we want a dialogue, we want to argue, we want to have God in our little circle and say to him, well I don't believe that and I don't like that. You see, you can't have that.

You can't have that. You can have your own religion, but that's not Christianity and that's not having a relationship with God that is saving and satisfying. If you're going to walk with God, you've got to accept his person.

You've got to accept him for who and what he is. And he is God. He is God.

Now this is a real crisis in the life of a man. I wonder whether if we were honest with ourselves, some of us who may even call ourselves Christian, have rarely come to terms with the fact that God is God. And a large percentage of our time is taken over by our trying to change him from who and what he is to become more like to us.

Now I say to you, it is impossible to walk with God until I come to terms with the fact that he is God and I'm just a creature of his hand. He's sovereign, I'm the servant. He's holy, I'm otherwise.

And I've got to come to terms with his person. But then this, not only the acceptance by each of the person of the other, but there's the problem of the human condition, the condition of the human heart, of the human life. How could Enoch walk with God? Enoch was a child of Adam.

Enoch shared in the rebellion of the race in Adam. Enoch became a condemnation in Adam. Enoch was a sinner by nature and by choice.

How could Enoch walk with God? Cain went his way. How can this man expect to come into fellowship with God, let alone actually walk him? Well, now the whole point is this. Of course, something had to take place before Enoch could walk with God.

His heart had to be changed. He had to be cleansed of his sin. He had to be forgiven.

He had to be justified. He had to be reconciled to God so that he and God could get on together. He had to be given a new spirit before he could walk with God.

He had to be born again before he could walk with God. You know, it's very wonderful to me at the end of the day. God is no braggart.

He always does much more than he tells us. Oh, God, much more than we know. I don't read of anything here telling me that God forgave him his sin, that God reconciled him to himself, that God justified him, that God regenerated him.

But it's all there. It couldn't have happened otherwise. You see, God always does more for us than he tells us.

It's the same with you and me. The same now with someone here tonight, to whom this kind of life is a complete stranger. It's completely strange, completely new.

You're a stranger to it. But you want to walk God. Well, now, first of all, you have to take the pattern of God seriously.

Then you've got to take your own needs seriously. And some things have got to happen to you as they had to happen to him, to Enoch. Your sin's got to be forgiven.

Your heart's got to be changed. You've got to receive a new spirit that makes you capable of walking step by step with God and even of hearing him speak to you and knowing his will and discerning his way. And that's a miracle.

But you see, it is a miracle of grace. It does happen. God will do it.

We live in the full glare of the New Testament revelation which tells us this is the gospel of Jesus Christ. He does it. He'll take your sin away.

He'll change your heart. He'll give you a new spirit. And then, of course, arising out of this, the acceptance by each of the person of the other, dealing with the problem of the human heart, then there emerges their united action.

Enoch walked with God. And this means, you see, that they're interested in the same things. You can't have people walking together very far and for very long unless they're interested in the same things and involved.

And the fact that Enoch walked with God for over 300 years means something. It means Enoch was interested in the things of God and became a fellow laborer with God. It's as simple as that.

There is something very simple about this image. But now it's challenging. Because, you see, it's not simply that I need to have my sin dealt with and having had my sin dealt with and my nature changed, I must learn to become interested in the things of God.

Doing the things that he's doing about my father's business. You remember the delightful words of Jesus, the boy of twelve in the temple. Don't you know, he said to his father and mother, that I must be about my father's business.

No man can walk with God who's about his own business unless his own business is the business of God. God determines the business. And we live together and we serve together.

The parties involved, the principles implied, and then the prospects inherent in such a companionship are multitude in us. Can I mention just one or two? Walking with God will always transform human life. No man can be quite the same who's been for a walk with God.

How short, however brief. You know, just an hour in the presence of the living God changes a man. Think of Zacchaeus.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was only in Zacchaeus' house for, shall we say, an hour or so, not much longer. It couldn't have been. But when they came out, Zacchaeus was so changed that he realized that he'd robbed people.

And he says, if I have done that, he says, I give back fourfold. And from that day forward, he was a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. His heart had changed just an hour with the Son of God.

Think of Saul of Tarsus on his mad career of hate and persecution. How long did the vision last on the Damascus Road? Not very long. But the man was never the same again.

Enoch walked with God, walked with God. You can't walk far with God and be the same as you were at the beginning. Let me go further.

Walking with God will always mean a transformation of a man into God's own likeness. This can never be a partnership among equals in which God becomes like us as well as we become like him. No, no, no, no.

He's God, I'm man. I'm a creature. And it's always the transformation of the creature after the image of God.

God is the supreme factor here and the supreme partner. Everything good in us we have from him, whilst it is the prerogative of the Creator and the Redeemer to determine the change that must be made in those that walk with him. And then this.

Walking with God will always mean that the human partner becomes increasingly involved in implementing God's will, in doing God's will, in serving God. That's not brought out here in the book of Genesis, but it is in other parts of the New Testament. Jude, for example, in verses 14 and 15, refers to this man in almost identical terms to the New Testament reference to Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness according to Peter.

But this man Enoch prophesied to his people, to his generation, of the day of judgment. Isn't this remarkable? You read the passage. It's verses 14 and 15 in that one chapter in the book of Jude.

He prophesied. He told the people around him that God was going to judge. God must have revealed it to him, you see.

He was a man who was walking with God and talking with God. And as he does so, God says to him, Look, I'm coming to judge the world. You see the way these people are living all around you.

You see Lamech over there and these other characters. You know, he says, I'm going to judge them one day in righteousness. And Enoch goes out from the presence of God and he prophesies and he says, This is coming.

They didn't believe him, of course. But God will fulfill his purpose. And he did there.

The circumstances of Enoch's day, the companionship with God which Enoch enjoyed. Now, just a few considerations. As we try to think of what really is involved again in our beginning to walk with God and in going on with him, there are certain considerations that we must take seriously.

Some choices involved in the commencement of a walk with God are these. We've referred to this already, but now I want to make it very explicit. The first choice is this.

I must choose to allow God to be God. And I myself take the place of the creature. Have you made that decision? Have you come to that place of crisis? Where you've looked, as it were, into the face of God and you know his greatness and his glory and you've said, Right.

By your grace, I want to take the place of a creature. And I acknowledge that you are different and sovereign and Lord and creator and judge. Now, if you've never done that, if you've never come there, I would suggest seriously that tonight your first prayer to God ought to be a prayer along these lines.

Whatever the idol be upon the throne of your soul, be it self or be it Satan or be it sin, be it the world, be it the flesh, be it the devil, I suggest to you that you seriously do what our hymn spoke about, tear that thing from its throne and say, I'll worship only thee. I'll let God be God. Let God be God.

That's the first thing. May I say, Reverend, I believe this makes all the difference. Even to the way a man talks, the way a man thinks about himself and about everything else.

If God is God to me, then self has to recede and humility emerges. We never knew before. We'll not fight much with one another if God is our God.

And then, of course, not only that choice, but this. There must be the choice between satisfaction with a civilization that is built largely without reference to God and, on the other hand, becoming involved with God in the establishment of his kingdom. That's what Enoch was about, you see.

This was the choice. As Enoch looked out upon his world, he saw this emerging civilization, very interesting, you know, tent making, tool making, all the rest of it. The beginnings of civilization back then, it was most challenging.

And I'm sure he had many gifts. And I'm sure there was a pull and a call to get involved in this emerging civilization which was godless. It was the choice of either becoming absorbed and involved with that or of walking with God and receiving from God something that would be like salt in an evil situation, like light in a dark place, and a word that will transform the whole situation so that the kingdom of God, the rule of God, is brought to bear upon that society.

Now, this is the choice. Did you know we are all right here? We come to the Lord's house on the Lord's day. Wonderful.

Good to see you good people. Now, listen to me. You and I will go back into that pagan world tomorrow morning and we'll do one of two things.

We'll either get absolutely absorbed in the growing civilization which is alienated from God and do nothing about it, save when we come to church and talk about it and pray about it. Or, oh may God make us all like this, we shall go into the situation with God, walking with God, living with God. God coming with us.

And we interpret the sovereignty and the kingship and the Godhood of God in relation to the issues of the office or of the work, whatever the case may be. The principle is the same right here today, right here tonight as it was with Enoch. Let me go a little further.

Not only about the choice of beginning but about the claims made upon us if we want to continue to walk with God. Many of us here tonight have started out. That's wonderful.

How long have we been with the Lord? I don't know. But you know, if we are going to continue to walk with God, there are constant challenges along the way. To begin a journey is one thing, to continue it is quite another.

Continuance is as costly sometimes as it is to start. Walking with God demands our engagement with his person. Walking with God means I must become engaged with his person, attuned to his voice, obedient to his will, responsive to his word.

You see, all these have to do with the person of God. If you want me to use the language of a very well-known classic, religious classic, it means practicing the presence of God. Frankly, how many of us know his voice from day to day, know his will from day to day, and launch out into the day and live through it by his grace in the awareness that we walk with God.

Even for those of us who are professing Christian, it's always much easier to become absorbed with the things of God than with the God of the things. We can become absorbed with the Bible as an end in itself. We can become absorbed with the church as an end in itself, or a denomination, or some extra church organization.

We can be involved in something that is good as an end in itself, and that's all we talk about. It's this club, or this group, or this Christian union so-called, or whatever it is. But you see, we've got to get beyond that if we mean to walk with God.

We've got to get attuned to God, his person, God himself. Walking with God demands our engagement with his person. Walking with God demands our increasing enjoyment of his presence.

You won't walk very far with a person if you're not enjoying his presence. You'll want to leave, won't you? Of course you will. It's as simple as that.

Two people, two people just separate if they don't like one another. There must be a binding of two people together, a mutual respect and a mutual affection that is shared if they're going to walk on and on and on together. You know, it's as simple as that.

To walk with God means that I must learn to enjoy his presence. You know, the characters of the Old Testament and of the New have got so much to teach us here. I listen, for example, to the words of Moses saying to God, face to face, talking about going up into Canaan, leading the children of Israel into the Promised Land.

Moses says to them, Lord, he says, if your presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. Now, we've lived for this, says Moses. We've waited for this day.

This is the one thing that we've lived for, getting into the Promised Land. But, but, but, but, if you're not coming with us, keep us out of it. God is more precious than the Promised Land.

You got that? Enjoying the presence of God, God himself. So that if God is not in the Promised Land, it's not worth possessing. Can I put the obvious? If God is present, then it doesn't matter who's absent, nor what we lack, for God is all.

You remember the words of the psalmist? Oh, how much they have to teach us. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is nothing else that I desire on earth besides thee. You see the point? God is everything.

God is my delight. He's got everything to me. If I've God, will I lack nothing? Do you know, this is the discovery of a man who walks with God.

And you've got to walk with God to discover this. You don't discover this in a day. You can only discover this when you pass through many a winter with God, many a summer with God, many a night with God, many a day with God, many a struggle with God, many a sorrow with God, but walking with God.

And lastly, can I come to this? A consummation with which we may expect our pilgrimage and companionship with God to conclude. I just want to say one thing about it. There's much more here, of course.

This is a wonderful theme. In principle, if not in precise detail, Enoch's experience gives us an indication of what to expect. Enoch became an exception to the rule.

And that's the principle I want to leave with you. If you walk with God, I want to tell you that at every turn of the road you'll be an exception to the rule, to certain rules. The majority of people who are on the broad road that leads to destruction have a certain kind of experience in life and beyond life, and in the great eternity to come.

The man who walks with God is a man whose experience will be different. Now, I didn't like to read Genesis 5 here tonight. Mr. O asked me, what shall I read? I said, read from Hebrews chapter 11, verses 1 to 10.

I didn't know what you'd think of Genesis chapter 5. Because you know, if you know the chapter, you know how it goes. It tells us, so and so lived so many years, and he begat so many sons and daughters, and eight times over we have the refrain, and he died, and he died, and he died. And you know, this is the fulfillment.

You read it through. There are no exceptions, apart from Enoch. So and so lived, he had so many children, and he died.

And it's a most monotonous refrain. The consequences of sin, you see, are universal. God said, you shall die if you sin, if you take of the forbidden fruit.

And death reigns. But into the midst of this ravaging impact of death, comes this remarkable man who was walking with God. And when he has lived with God for 365 years, he was a comparative young man, by the way, according to the years they lived in those days.

But for 365, we read, God took him. There was no dissolution of the body, no one buried him, there's no tombstone. In vain do you look for the tombstone of Enoch.

He just wasn't buried, because he just didn't die. God took him. You know, God has so many surprises for his saints who walk with him.

I can't tell you what your surprise may be. It could very well be that the Lord Jesus will come again, and you will not die, and we will not die. Because if he comes again, then so shall we be forever with the Lord.

Chained in the twinkling of an eye, and we shall receive our new bodies, even as our eyes behold him in the blue of heaven. Maybe. But it may be some other experience of being out of the usual, above the normal.

God has always something new for his people. Always something out of the ordinary. You know, this has been a very thrilling day to me.

I haven't shared it with anybody yet. But some people that I've spoken to today have given me a tremendous encouragement. And one thing that has encouraged me has been this.

The way the Lord deals with people so differently. Even when one word of God goes forth from the pulpit, one person is shattered and the other is lifted up to the heavens. Because you know, this is all the doings of God, not of man.

The one word slays sin, and the other brings the grace of God to fruition. That's the grace of God. And there are so many surprises he has to those who walk with him.

You know the old story, don't you? I conclude with this. Not sure whether it wasn't a Welshman who started this. They start a lot of stories.

There's nothing biblical about it, but anyway, you know how it goes. Enoch and God had walked so far together. And over so many years, through the seasons, the summer and the winter.

And the Lord is said to have turned to Enoch and said, Well, Enoch, we've gone so far, now it's a long way back. Just come in, and we'll go home together. I don't know whether that's true.

Sometimes I think the Lord speaks just like that. Are you walking with God? Have you started that walk? Now, it may be that tonight God is inviting you to take the first step. Now, the first step is quite different from the last one.

But there must be a first step. When you let God be God and take your place under His word, under His sovereignty, under His care, under the power of His Spirit, and just launch out, just go after Him. Now, if you've never done that before, I ask you, as we conclude in prayer tonight, tell the Lord that you want to do it.

And ask Him for grace. Ask Him to take you by the hand. Ask Him to lead you.

But, my good people, it may be that some of us have floundered on the way. And some of us have begun to walk with Him, but actually we're not walking with Him anymore. We've gone up a cul-de-sac.

And we've got absorbed with something which is certainly short of God, His person and His will and His purposes. Let's get back. Come down.

Come back. Turn around. Start again.

For all the joys and all the blessings and all the surprises of the way and beyond are for those who walk humbly with their God. Now, let us pray. Heavenly Father, we are grateful for the privilege of having this holy word of Thine in our mother tongue because we are not wise to understand these things or even to discuss them, talk about them apart from the knowledge that comes from Thy word.

We thank Thee, our Father, tonight for helping us to be turning our thoughts toward this particular epoch in history and toward this particular man of whom the New Testament writes as well as the Old. We thank Thee, our Father, that by faith, because of His confidence in Thee, He escaped death. Grant us, we pray, the same kind of confidence in Thyself that with a trust and an obedience and an expectation we may launch out irrespective of what men think of us.

Then, having launched out, follow on in the footmarks Thou hast left behind so that walking close at Thy heels in the ways of our Lord we may know something of this sweet and ever more enriching fellowship until at last we too shall come, through death or without going through that narrow gorge, but ultimately to be with Thee. Bless us now as we conclude this evening's service. We need special grace at this time that we do not dissipate the impact of Thy word and spirit upon us but that we may go out to apply it to ourselves.

O hear us and help us, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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