

The walk of the believer

Part 1

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[00:00:01] Romans, chapter 6, verse 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Henceforth we should not serve sin. Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 1 Ephesians 5, verse 1 [00:01:01] Be therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and has given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. And then in John's first epistle, chapter 1 John's first epistle, chapter 1 Just really to put the particular phrase I have in mind in context, we begin at verse 5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. [00:02:02] But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin. I just wanted to say, God helping us, a little on walking. I was quite encouraged and struck by the stress that the blessed spirit led us to bring out. It was brought out in our readings this afternoon, the great importance of walking. And in fact really, it is such a central point for the believer.

It really describes effectively the whole way that a believer should conduct himself.

So much so that the modern translators, nearly all agree in one thing, is to paraphrase it in their translations into saying the way we conduct our life.

[00:03:10] You see, they assess it. And I think of course that those who have taught us in the past, they have said similar things.

It is a very important matter to walk. And of course we have had very blessedly just brought before us one of the great features of the walk of our beloved Lord and Saviour through this sea. In particular as Luke brings him before us, one thing that marked him was his dependence on prayer. And then his confidence in God and his absolute total way that he could just turn and give thanks to God in absolute total confidence. And so of course clearly our blessed Lord is the great example that we must have our eyes upon in this way. [00:04:07] Another brother reminded us this afternoon about John Baptist looking on Jesus as he walked. What a blessed occupation for our hearts and lives. It is a very good thing. I suppose most of you Bible students like to read through the Scriptures. And I am

always very happy to get back into the Gospels to see the steps of that blessed man. We always think, don't we, of the figures of Christ in the Pentateuch. And we think of the foretelling of Christ in the Prophets and the feelings of Christ in the Psalms.

Don't let us neglect these, dearly beloved, the feelings of Christ in the Psalms. How wonderful to focus on the facts of Christ in the Gospels.

And then of course to enact, you know, to refresh our hearts with the foretelling of Christ. [00:05:07] The foretelling of Christ. And in the Epistles to see the features of Christ as they should come out in our hearts and lives. And I'm sure that's one of the burdens of our dear brethren here as we consider the Galatian Epistle. That the features of Christ might come out in us here. And then of course the final one of the sevens is the future with Christ in the Revelation.

It's just a little bit by the by, but to have our focus on the facts of Christ. Never let us get far away from having our eyes upon that blessed man. And John in his Epistle says, didn't he? It's a total obligation. [00:06:01] There's no opt-outs, you know, in this one. No excuses, no opt-outs.

We ought to walk even as he walked.

I, Sir Edward Hart, I challenge you.

Do we walk as he walked?

Right from the very beginning, you know, it was a great feature that God could commend. Walking, wasn't it? Walking right back with Enoch. Enoch, he walked with God.

He walked with God.

Great feature that God commended.

It says he walked with God after his son was born. Now, young men who've just recently been married and those about to be married, God leaves us here.

You know, you don't just walk with God after your children are born. You've already got to be walking with God and you get walking with God when you're married. [00:07:02] And you're walking with God before your children are born. Because if you're not walking with God morally before your children are born, you won't do it afterwards. No, you've got to have that life committed to God, given up for God.

To walk with God.

Anyway, that's what Mark Enoch, he walked with God. So, I just thought, there's many, many scriptures, of course, about walking. But it was the thought of the environment that we walk in. Now, I hesitate to refer to the Blessed Spirit as an environment because he is a person of the Godhead. He's a person of the Godhead.

So, he is really not an environment. The Reverend would say, he is the one in whom we walk. The Blessed Spirit of God is the one in whom we walk. And, of course, the other feature is that we keep walking in step with him. Still, the Spirit is revealing heights of glory that are given. [00:08:01] And our

eyes, by faith, are seeing Christ at thy right hand in heaven. It's a vision of that man in the glory. There's a man in the glory I know very well. Yes. One day, in his mercy, he knocked at my door. I see him in mission not many times over. I heartily, thankfully welcomed him in. Oh, what a wonderful man in the glory. And, you know, dear friend, we've got to get our eye on that blessed man. No good looking at roundabout, looking at our boots, looking at philosophies, ideas, comparing ourselves with saints. No, we've got to have our eyes upon that blessed man. Now in the glory. But he walked here for the pleasure of God. And he will be the one that will guide us through. So, here, we walk in the Spirit.

We walk in the Spirit.

And I just wanted to bring out three features, three ways in which we are encouraged to walk. Well, the first one really, yes, it is an exhortation in Romans 6 and verse 4.

[00:09:05] It's walking not so much in life, but in newness of life.

But, of course, the life we have, the life from God, is a new life. New life, completely new, of a new kind.

New kind of life. It's not a rehashed, fresh version of something that was there before. No, it's life of a completely new character and kind. It's that way, a newness of life.

And so, the apostle here says that we are buried with him. Buried with him by baptism unto or into death. I know there are subtleties between intus and untus.

That we're baptized into his death. Jesus died and we died with him.

Buried in the grave he lay. Now, of course, when the gospel is preached, and you come and accept the Lord Jesus Christ, [00:10:01] in all your sin and shame and degradation, you don't know anything about that. The glorious gospel is preached, but when you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ, the old man was finished.

We had some helpful matter on this just a fortnight ago at the Plum Lane Conference, as the matter came out about the preaching of the cross. The cross which secured everything for the glory of God the Father.

God was glorified in his beloved Son at Calvary's cross, but it also brought home that God was finished with the world. Finished.

There was nothing there.

Nothing in man.

All hoped to reach the shore. Man is a total wreck, the hymn says in the Evangelist's hymnal. Man is a total wreck, can never reach the shore. That's the message that we bring out in the glorious gospel. [00:11:01] And so, there's liberty and rescue in coming to the Lord Jesus Christ. And baptism into death, that like us Christ was raised up from among the dead by the glory of the Father. Even so, we should walk in newness of life.

Here upon earth, of course, we're not taken up. We're not on the other side of death, particularly. But we've come up from death, and we're to walk in newness of life.

We've just got over the other side of Jordan. I know many think about it as the Red Sea, but we've gotten across the Jordan, but that's it. We're just on the bank. We're walking, and now we've got to walk in newness of life. That's what should characterize us, because the work of Christ on Calvary's cross, His blood-shedding has given an answer to God for our sins. And now as a result of trusting in Him and believing in the Lord in our hearts, we are brought into a new sphere of things. We've got a new life beyond death forever, [00:12:04] and we can walk in newness of life. What a blessed place, environment, what a situation to be walking in, walking in newness of life. We have been planted, identified together in the likeness of His death.

We're identified with Him in it, and then in that same way, we have to be in the likeness of His resurrection, in that newness of life, because He lives, we live also.

It's not that the Lord Jesus had a resurrection life.

No, no, it's the same life with Him. But for us, it's a new life, because we are in Him. So we must grasp and understand that. I know that sometimes it's often referred to that the Lord had a resurrection life. No, there's only ever one life.

But He went into death. He didn't have to die, but He willingly went into death, [00:13:04] became obedient unto death, the death of the cross, and He's gone through it, raised from the other side of death. But you and I, dear believer, are taken up on the other side of death, but into the glorious fact and reality of resurrection life in Christ. And so as a result of that, we have to walk in newness of life, life, you'll see that there are three L's there, life, love, and light. The three themes, the three highways that are said of John's ministry, and John's gospel, remember? Chapter 3 to 7, life.

Chapter 8 to 12, light.

And chapter 13 to 17, love.

The three highways of John's ministry.

So we have a conjoining here of Paul's ministry and John's ministry.

Of course, we have read one of John's, a verse from John. [00:14:03] And so now here is the thing that we do, knowing this, if we know this, as a result of this, knowing this, an old man, scripture speaks of ten men, there's ten men in scripture, and one of them is the old man.

Now it's you and I, but we are born naturally. And then if any man be in Christ, new creation, new creation, a new man, which is in Christ, in Christ.

And so that old man and all that attaches to him is crucified with him, put to death with Christ.

And why?

That the body of sin might be destroyed. That henceforth we should not serve sin. We're no longer to

be slaves of sin. We're serving the Lord Jesus Christ. The old man is dead.

We've got to hold him in the place of death. [00:15:02] J.T. Mawson has a very good article in the Scripture Truth back in the 1930s about starving the old man, starving the old man, and feeding the new man. The old man must be starved. He won't die, mind you. He won't die. He's there till we draw our last breath. Yes, he's there till we draw our last breath. Remember when Joseph said to his brothers, Doth your father yet live?

The old man of whom you speak, the old man, he's there, dear saint of God, and I need this message as much as you do.

He's there till we draw our last breath, the old man. But let us hold him in the place of death and starve him to death and feed the new man. Feed on Christ. Feed on this precious book. Get it built up in our souls and feed on him. We are meat and drink and everything, whole life revolving around him, feeding the new man, [00:16:04] the new man which is Christ. So there are just a few words in walking in newness of life and just a refresher for the sake of the young believers. You've probably all read this before. There's three things in this chapter 6. There's the knowing in verse 6. In verse 11, there's the reckoning yourselves. Reckoning.

Yes, reckoning.

There's at least one brother in here I know is a chartered accountant. But dear saint of God, this is the kind of chartered accountancy that you've got to do. This is what you need your finals in. This kind of accountancy.

Reckoning.

Reckoning.

Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So that's the accountancy qualification you need, dear saint of God. You see?

Reckon.

Take account of yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, [00:17:02] alive unto God in Christ Jesus. And then as a result of that, there is this blessed positive way in verse 13. Yield your members as instruments of righteousness. Be yielding it. Be in this continual way of a life yielded to Christ.

Your members yielded to him as instruments of righteousness.

As they're alive from the dead, your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. So that's just a little touch on what it is to walk in newness of life. Now I'll go right over to John's epistle.

Just to say something on what it is there to walk in the light.

It's not really only walking in light.

It's walking in the light.

The light of God. God's only light. Wonderful that we have this blessed way. [00:18:02] Enlightenment.

The whole mind of God.

Divine mind.

And we, dear saint of God, by his wonderful grace, are enlightened into it. We are brought into this wonderful sphere of light. Enlightenment as the divine persons as to the mind and will of God, of his holy, wonderful, blessed nature of love in his holiness. And we're brought into that blessed place. Light.

Light.

Brought into light.

And so the apostle says, this is his message after his introduction. Wonderful, blessed introduction of the eternal life, which was with the father. And this is his message.

God is light. In him, no darkness at all.

Because you see, there were people at that time that were doing very dark things. And claiming to have wonderful light. Wonderful light. And sadly, of course, we've seen even in our day and generation, [00:19:03] many that claim to have great light. There was one time that this lady, a very fine Christian lady, she got a lodger.

And he was one of these people.

And some of her friends, her Christian friends, were asking her about this lodger.

And she said, he's a bit like the Salvation Army.

But they are all heat and no light.

He is all light and no heat.

So dear saints of God, let us be warm for the Savior.

But we also need the light, the light of God.

And so here the apostle says, the if, coming back to just the thing that was touched this afternoon, this is the if, the if of argument. Since, it might be better translated, [00:20:04] for the sake of the young. Since we say that we have fellowship with him. Blessed it is to have fellowship. Oh, fellowship with him. And walk in darkness we lie. And do not practice the truth.

See if these believers at that time, Gnostic so-called, they were walking in darkness. And they claim to have fellowship with God. And it was just a lie. But the apostle Paul says, that if we walk in the light, since we walk in the light, but also there is a moral responsibility to answer to that position that we are in. We should really walk as in the light. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have

fellowship with one another. Oh, how blessed that is. Reality, we will bind together in fellowship, on the ground of the light, what the light has brought. The light of the truth, of the word of God. That's it.

There's no, [00:21:01] there can be no real fellowship, on any other basis, than what the light of God has shown, in his word. No other basis for that.

A dear brother didn't he, who had a, wrote a tract, God's principle of unity, separation from evil.

Yes, separation from evil. He wrote a tract on that. A pamphlet.

And so you see, that's the only way that we can really have fellowship, one with the other. Real, genuine fellowship, is this walking in the light, in the light of God, in the light that he has revealed to us, in his blessed word, on the ground and truth of the scripture. And that's the only basis, dear saint of God, to walk in the light.

Fellowship one with the other. And, well as we were reminded this afternoon, the Christian's position is not to be, continually in a sinful way, that the works of the flesh are controlling him. No. He's seeking to be going on, yielded to the blessed spirit, [00:22:01] walking in the spirit. But sadly of course, we're not sinless perfect, and there will be things that, can come in on us. We let down our guard, Satan's barbs might get through, on some occasion, and our guard is dropped.

But we've not to be, cast down by it.

I know that when we do sin, sometimes we feel, oh well, what's the good, let me give up. But here is the word, the word that's preached often in the gospel, the blood of Jesus Christ, his son cleanses us from all sin. But it's an everlasting thing. Something that's available all the time. It answers to it. The answer is there, in the blood of the Lord Jesus. Jesus Christ, his son, God's son, cleanses from all sin.

So dear saints of God, let us be found walking in the light. There's the blessed privilege and joy, of walking in newness of life. There's the responsibility, of walking in the light. [00:23:02] And God always balances things up, doesn't he?

God always balances things up.

He said, the apostle Paul said to Timothy, it just slipped my mind, 2 Timothy chapter one, God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love, and of wise discretion. You see, there's always, love is the fulcrum, which balances the things up. There we've got power, and a wise discretion.

We see that of course, supremely probably, the classic example of that is in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, power.

There's power there, isn't there? In 1 Corinthians chapter 12. We get into chapter 14, the wise discretion is needed, isn't there? You know, they were conducting their open meetings, a bit in an unwise way, and not with much discretion, but the apostle needed to remind them, let the prophets speak, two or three, and various matters.

[00:24:02] But in between there's chapter 13, the chapter which is not a definition of love, but a description of love. And it is of course, the fulcrum on which chapters 12 and 14 are balanced. Now here of course, we come to Ephesians chapter 5, and here we have that wonderful fulcrum again, of love.

Love. Balancing up the privileges and joy, of walking in units of life, and the responsibility of walking in the light. And we come to walking in love.

Walking in love. Oh, what a blessed place to walk, dear saint of God. Oh well, I don't know about you, but I wish I knew more and more of it. To walk in love. Walking in love. How it's needed, you know.

Back in chapter 3, the apostle speaks about, [00:25:01] sorry, chapter 4.

He speaks in verse 15, translated in the authorized version, speaking the truth in love. But I'm told that the Greek word there, isn't really speaking, it's really a verb, and literally it would be, truthing.

Truthing in love.

And so, there it is.

The whole manner of life is to be in love. And so, here we are told to be followers of God, as dear children. Imitators, followers of God. And the exhortation is to walk in love. Walking love.

And, oh, that is a blessed exhortation, but, what an incentive, what an example we've got, as Christ has loved us. Saints of God.

Can we take it in?

Well, we have a capacity to take it in now, but you know, [00:26:01] it's going to be the occupation of all eternity, isn't it?

Eternity, we often sing, is going to be far too short to tell the glories of thy love.

Immense, unsearchable. Open up, more and more, in all eternity.

In all eternity.

The wonderful love of Christ. The love of Christ. Christ has loved us.

And where was it shown? Well, it was shown at Calvary's Cross. It's where we begin. We come as a sinner to Jesus. There, we see him.

On that cross. Alone, forsaken, no pity in eye found. Now to God's right hand exalted, with his praise, heaven resounding, that he loved us.

Yes, precious Savior, he loved us. In, in chapter, Galatians chapter 2, the Apostle Paul could say, the Son of God who loved me, loved me.

Each one of us can do that, say that.

How precious, how precious, that he loves a company, [00:27:01] loves us, loves us.

And then, of course, further down in this chapter, Christ loved the assembly, the unity of the assembly, and he gave himself for her. Christ had loved us, and hath given himself for us.

Really, it's a strong word here. It's not just given. He gave himself over, unreservedly. Didn't hold himself back. He delivered himself over for us, unreservedly. What a blessed Savior he is. I love my master, my wife, and my children. I will not go free.

Gave himself over for us.

And, it was like an offering. Um, an offering. The, uh, meat offering, or perhaps the peace offering, uh, which was a sweet-smelling savor. And the sacrifice is, the, taken here, often to be, the, uh, sin offering. And then, [00:28:01] of course, immediately everybody said, oh, but that wasn't a sweet-smelling savor. But even in the sin offering, the, um, the, uh, kidneys, were taken, weren't they? And they were put on the altar, a burnt offering. So even in there, even in that sin offering, odious as the matter was, that the Lord was dealing with sins, sins. Even there, there was that, which could accrue to God, and God could have pleasure in, the, uh, the, the kidneys on the altar. So, sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor. So, near beloved, how precious indeed, to be found walking in love. What a blessed environment, what a place to walk.

And with our eyes upon the Lord Jesus Christ. We might just, remind ourselves of that verse, of John's again, in his second chapter. He that believeth in him, ought himself also, so to walk, even as he walked. So let us be found, near the beloved, uh, while we're waiting for him here, be found in such a way, [00:29:02] in a walk that is, pleasing to him, until we see his, blessed face, for his namesake. Amen.