

Walking with God

By E. W. Lawrence
(London, England)

Enoch walked with God: and . . . God took him (Gen. 5:24). They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy (Rev. 3:4.)

When God made man, He made him in His own image, and with the intention of coming down to earth and walking with him in intimate communion. As a consequence of his sin, man on his part hindered the divine plan and lived regardless of his Creator by making for himself a name, and by godless self-interest and proud and deceitful ambition. Throughout the ages this warfare between right and wrong, or righteousness and sin, has continued. In the Apocalypse, we see it as a contest between two cities, Zion and Babylon.

Because of sin, the golden chain that bound the Creator with His created has been snapped, thence rendering impossible a "walking with God" in close fellowship. "Where sin abounded," however, grace superabounded, for that is the force of the Greek original, and spiritual fellowship can be restored by God's provision of redemption; and so salvation is provided for unworthy man by God's worthy Con.

It is the Substitute who bears the sin, the Worthy One who renders the sinner salvable, and thus restoration to this intimate fellowship is a blessed reality: "They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."

From apostolic times, salvation has been known as a highway of life. The early Christians were called followers "of the way." In his immortal allegory, Bunyan likewise conceived the idea of a pilgrimage from earth, the City of Destruction to the gloryland.

It is the way in contrast to the many ways of this sinful age. Think of Enoch; he, the seventh from Adam, lived in a day when sin was rampant. It issued in the judgment of the deluge. To all intents and purpose, it appeared as though truth was on the scaffold, and wrong on the throne. But amid it all, Enoch lived far above the world's sin. He was a pioneer on the way of holiness; and holiness, be it remembered, is none other than spiritual wholeness or restored inter-communion with God. Then Enoch had the testimony that his way of life "pleased God." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, writing to those who because of persecution were in danger of apostasy and "going back," bade his readers consider the testimony of this man, and to follow Christ in their day as Enoch followed Jehovah in his generation.

Walking with God was the Old Testament conception of the way of holiness, and implied intimate, joyful fellowship, and unbroken and unclouded communion until, at last, as in the case of Enoch, we "are not," for the Lord takes us home.

Walking with God implies companionship. Abraham in his day was called "the friend of God," and we are Christ's fellow laborers or co-workers. "Ye are my friends," said Christ, "if ye do whatsoever I command you."

But this companionship is accomplished through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is not manifest in a bodily form; that was reserved for those who knew Him in the days of His flesh. God is Spirit, and all who worship Him must do so in Spirit and in truth. God walked or dwelt with the Old Testament saints. He dwells within us by His

Spirit. This is the mystery of the ages, and which is revealed to us under the New Covenant—Christ in you!

Walking with God implies fellowship or spiritual intercourse. Being a way of holiness, it is a path of separation from sinful attachments, cleansing from inward and outward defilement, and dedication to the highest. It is life, abundant life, in short, Life with a capital L—or love at white heat. Remember ye not the disciples of the Emmaus road whose hearts burned within them as He spoke with them by the way and opened up to them the Scriptures? And He, the risen Lord, is still with (in) us today.

It is a union of hearts and spirits, and mutual confidences are thereby exchanged. It is better than the very best of earthly fellowship, wonderful though even that may be. It has been well said: "If you walk with God you must talk with God, or you will cease to walk with Him." So it is not a one-sided fellowship. There is, or should be, both listening and speaking, and is not the "listening" aspect the more important!

Walking with God implies progress in the spiritual life. Stagnation is unknown in the Spirit-filled life. It does not exist, for failure

PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

Dear God, as I begin another year
Help me to know its span will be
A wasted, worthless thing, unless in prayer
I consecrate myself to Thee.

Help me to feel Thy Presence close and real,
Sustaining me along the way
Of self-forgetting—Grant me, Lord, the will
To live for Thee through every day!

Use me through all the days ahead to ease
Thy suffering ones in pain's black night—
That in their labyrinth of grief they find
Thee there, the Everlasting Light!

Unless I pay in part the debt I owe
For all the blessings that are mine,
I am not worthy of these gifts, dear Lord,
That pour forth from Thy hand Divine!

—Berniece Hall.

to go forward implies a corresponding going back. It should be a uniform advance, however; "changed from glory into glory till in heaven we take our place," is how Charles Wesley expressed it. It is a daily growing in grace and a knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Only then will the "beauty of Jesus" be seen in us, and Christlikeness be radiated to others.

The following verse does **not** express the ideal life:

Once I thought I walked with Jesus,
Yet such changeful feelings had;
Sometimes trusting, sometimes doubting,
Sometimes joyful, sometimes sad.

Walking with God, the life of holiness, the most intimate of spiritual fellowship, whereby we are given His confidence and see His unchanging Self in all the changing circumstances of our modern world, is ours; it is provided in His full redemption.

In white, in white,
Walking in white:
He makes me worthy through His blood
To walk with Him in white.

A New Year Meditation

Claude A. Ries

Someone put a great truth in these words: "No service in itself is small, none great though earth it fill, But that is small which seeks its own, that great which seeks God's will."

I would plead for obedience to God in the little things of life as a touchstone for success in the new year before us. Yes, "the greatest things are poor if the little things are not done—those minor courtesies which do so much to oil the wheels, to soiten the jars, and to heal the heartaches of the world."

Let us not forget that it is the cups of cold water that we give in the name and spirit of Jesus to weary men and women that make life sublime and worth the living! "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you," said Jesus, "he shall in no wise lose his reward."

What can be a more trivial service than to give a cup of cold water to a passing traveler? And who cannot give a cup of cold water?

"You forgot to mention where heaven is," said the good woman to her pastor after he had preached a sermon on the subject. "On yon hill-top stands a cottage, Madam," replied the minister, "a widow lives there in want; she has no bread, no fuel, no medicine and her child is at the point of death. If you will carry to her this afternoon some little cup of cold water in the name of Him who went about doing good, you will find the answer to your inquiry" (M. J. McLeod). Well did Wordsworth pen the words:

"That best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love."

Dost thou seek guidance for the new year? Pray then for an awareness of the opportunities for little services and for the grace to perform them with delight.

Professor John LaDue as a young man was seeking divine guidance for his life. As he lingered in prayer there came to him the strong conviction that he should go and cut some kindling for his mother. He obeyed that simple conviction and step by step in obedience to the little tasks of life the Lord led him into a life of rich usefulness.

Jesus found it to be a part of God's guidance to evangelize one woman at the well and to teach one man on the housetop. He considered it to be the Father's good pleasure for Him to bless the little children, though His disciples thought it was beneath His dignity.

It was the Master who said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."

So, give abundantly and frequently your cup of cold water—

"So others shall
Take patience, labor, to their heart and hand
From thy hand and thy heart and thy brave
cheer,
And God's grace fructify through thee to all.
The least flower, with a brimming cup, may
stand,
And share its dewdrops with another near."

—Wesleyan Methodist.