

*First Things – Genesis*

**Genesis 5:21-24**

**“Enoch: The Man Who Walked Home”**

1. ENCOCH STOOD OUT IN HIS WORLD
  - A. The distinction of his life
  - B. The direction of his life
2. ENOCH SPOKE OUT TO HIS WORLD
  - A. What his lips proclaimed
  - B. What his life proclaimed
3. ENOCH STEPPED OUT OF HIS WORLD
  - A. The explanation we are given for Enoch’s exit
  - B. The example we are given from Enoch’s exit

1. In 1861, American author and naturalist, Henry David Thoreau delivered an essay that was published after his death entitled, simply, “Walking”.

2. The essay has become a favorite of the environmental movement, because in it Thoreau advocates the preservation of nature, and the appreciation of it that he believed could only be gained by long walks through it; hence the name of the essay, “Walking”.

3. Though Thoreau was not a Christian, he made an interesting statement early in the essay. He said, “It requires a direct dispensation from heaven to become a walker. You must be born into the family of the Walkers.”<sup>i</sup>

4. Thoreau said more than he realized. In Genesis 5, in the middle of genealogical list, we meet one of the fathers of the Walkers; a man named Enoch.

5. Genesis 5:22 says, *“And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years...”*

6. Just in case we missed it, the same phrase is repeated in verse 24, along with an interesting detail. Verse 24 says, *“And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.”*

7. Enoch walked with God until one day God just took him on into heaven. You could say that Enoch just walked on home.

8. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are supposed to be part of the Walkers too. Like Enoch, we have the privilege of walking with our Lord every day.

9. Though Enoch lived in an ancient world, and we a modern one, our worlds are actually not that far apart, and our Lord is exactly the same.

10. Therefore, there is much we can learn from this man Enoch, both here in Genesis chapter five, and in other passages where his name is mentioned.

11. Notice with me some truths we see about Enoch, the man who walked home. First of all, notice that:

### **I. ENOCH STOOD OUT IN HIS WORLD**

1. One writer says of our text, "This astonishing paragraph shines like a single brilliant star above the earthly record of this chapter."<sup>ii</sup>

2. Not only is that true of Enoch and his mention in this text, but it is also true of Enoch as a man in his time. He stood out among the men of his day.

3. Looking at the difference of Enoch from his contemporaries, I am reminded that in Jesus, we are a "chosen generation" and "a peculiar people". (1 Peter 2:9)

4. Like Enoch, we as the people of God should seek to stand out among the people of this world.

5. Consider the exceptional life of Enoch. Consider first of all:

#### **A. The distinction of his life**

1. To really see how Enoch stood out in his day we need to understand the conditions of his day.

2. Enoch was the great-grandfather of Noah, and we know something of the days of Noah from Genesis 6. There in verse 5 it says, "*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*"

3. Even if Enoch's days were somewhat better than that of his great-grandson, we know that they were not particularly righteous and moral days.

4. Enoch is number seven in the lineage of Seth. His contemporary in the lineage of Cain is the man named Lamech. The same Lamech who in chapter 4 sings a little ditty to his pair of wives about a murder he had committed.

5. Lamech was violent and arrogant, and showed no fear of God whatsoever. He was Enoch's cousin and contemporary, but Enoch was a drastically different kind of man.

6. While men were waxing worse and worse, heading toward the judgment of God, Enoch was walking closer and closer, heading toward the city of God.

7. Enoch's distinction from the men around him speaks to us as followers of Christ in this wicked day, and reminds us that we are to be light in the midst a dark world.
8. We are in this world, but we are not of this world. Even while we share these days with modern Cain's and Lamech's, we are to be separate and distinct in how we live our lives.
9. Too many professed Christians in our day are wearing the camouflage of this sinful culture, and therefore, they are virtually indistinguishable from the lost people around them.
10. It was not so with Enoch. Consider not only the distinction of his life, but notice also that he stood out in his world because of:

#### **B. The direction of his life**

1. While most in the world during the days of Enoch were going the way of Cain, and doing their own thing, we are told that Enoch stood out, because rather than going in the same direction as those around him, Enoch walked with God.
2. Consider with me this idea of walking with God. Think about *the motivation for this walk*. Look carefully at verse 22. It says, "*And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah...*"
3. Verse 21 says that Enoch lived 65 years before Methuselah was born, and then after the birth of that son, Enoch began to walk with God. Why do you suppose that is?
4. I think it has to do with a revelation from God. You see; Methuselah's name means "when he is dead, it shall come".
5. If you work out the years, it turns out that the year Methuselah died, the great flood came. In other words, God warned Enoch of the judgment that was to come, and it motivated him to walk with God.
6. If for no other reason, men should come to Christ, seeking Him, and walking with Him, because God has revealed that a day of judgment is coming, and Jesus is the only hope of escape!
7. As we think about the idea of walking with God, think also about *the meaning of this walk*. Enoch is one of only two men that the Bible says walked with God.

8. What does it mean to “walk with God”? At the least, it means that Enoch and God were going in the same direction. They shared a common will and therefore they walked in the same way.
9. I wonder; are you going the same direction as your Lord? Is your will submitted to His so that you are headed the same way He is, pursuing the things He pursues, taking the steps He takes?
10. So often we want God to join us in our endeavors, and to walk with us in the way that we want to go. However, we do not read that God walked with Enoch. No, Enoch walked with God! He went God’s way! That was the direction of his life.
11. Contrary to those silly bumper stickers, God is *never* a co-pilot. To walk with Him is to go *His* way, and to go His way is to stand out in a world full of people going the other way.
12. Consider a second truth we learn about Enoch. We see not only that *Enoch stood out in his world*, but we see also further that:

## II. ENOCH SPOKE OUT TO HIS WORLD

1. Now I recognize that we are not told in Genesis chapter five of anything that Enoch said during his life.
2. However, we know for a fact that he did have something to say to the world in which he lived.
3. We know this because the New Testament tells us as much about Enoch as the Old, and it sheds some further light on the life of this man recorded for us in Genesis.
4. When we shine the testimony of the New Testament upon our text in Genesis, we are mindful of how Enoch spoke out to his world. First of all, consider with me:

### A. What his lips proclaimed

1. If you move from the very first book of the Bible all the way to the next to the last book of the Bible, we find again the name of Enoch.
2. The little New Testament book of Jude, with only 25 verses, records for us an important detail about Enoch’s life.
3. Verses 14 and 15 tell us that, "*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly*

*deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."*

4. In other words, Jude tells us that old Enoch was a preacher. He preached to the men of his day about the coming day when the Lord Jesus would return and render judgment upon all those who rebelled against him.

5. Eddie Ellison, a preacher friend of mine in Siler City, NC, says of Enoch, "What a preacher! He wouldn't have been popular today. He didn't put flowers on anybody's quilt; [instead] he pulled the quilt off and exposed their sinfulness."

6. Enoch reminds us that whether this sinful world wants to hear it or not, we as the Church of the Lord Jesus have been left here to preach His gospel, and to warn men that the judgment is soon to come.

7. Increasingly the secular world wants us as Christians to quiet down, and to keep all our preaching and praying to ourselves inside the walls of our church buildings.

8. However, we must remember that God's people have always spoken out to their world, and we must not be silent today. We say with Peter and John in Acts 4:20, "...we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

9. Enoch spoke out to his world, and proclaimed the truth of the Lord's coming and judgment. That is what his lips proclaimed, but consider also with me:

### **B. What his life proclaimed**

1. When we look again in the New Testament, in the book of Hebrews, we find that Enoch joined his martyred uncle, Abel, in Faith's Hall of Fame in Hebrews chapter 11.

2. Hebrews 11:5 says, *"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."*

3. Note the last part of that verse. It says before Enoch left this world, he had a testimony among men that he pleased God.

4. The world in which Enoch lived not only heard the sermon he preached, but they also saw the kind of life he lived.

5. He pointed them to the Lord, not only in his fiery prophecy, but also through his faithful practice. They knew that Enoch pleased God.

6. We are challenged to ask ourselves the question, what is our testimony? If you were to leave this world today, what will they say about you tomorrow?
7. The men of Enoch's day said of him, "Say what you will about old Enoch, God surely must have loved him. He pleased the Lord."
8. In 1978, at the funeral of former vice president Hubert Horatio Humphrey, then president, Jimmy Carter delivered a eulogy. Toward the close of the speech, Carter said momentarily, "One of our nation's greatest leaders was Hubert Horatio Hornblower."<sup>iii</sup>
9. Whatever else men may say about us when we die, our desire should be that, like Enoch, they will say that we pleased the Lord.
10. Looking at the life of this man Enoch, we see not only that *Enoch stood out in his world*, and *Enoch spoke out to his world*, but notice also thirdly, the Word of God tells us that:

### III. ENOCH STEPPED OUT OF HIS WORLD

1. Looking back at Genesis 5, there is another important detail given to us about Enoch's life.
2. Verse 23 says, "*And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years.*" Though that sounds like a lot to us, in reality it was less than half of the typical life-span of his day.
3. Verse 24 explains why Enoch's days on earth were shorter than his contemporaries. It says, "*And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*"
4. Old Matthew Henry says, "As he did not live like the rest, so he did not die like the rest." In fact, he did not die at all.
5. There is a sense in which Enoch is the oldest man in this chapter, because rather than leaving this world by way of the grave, we are told simply that, "God took him."
6. Consider with me the way in which Enoch stepped out his world. Consider first of all:

#### A. The explanation we are given for Enoch's exit

1. Again, verse 24 explains Enoch's exit simply by saying, "*...and he was not, for God took him.*" One translation renders it, "...he was not *there*, because God took him."<sup>iv</sup>

2. Literally, one moment Enoch was in this world, and the next he was not, for God took him. The writer of Hebrews says that Enoch was "translated", which simply means to be carried to another place.
3. Putting Genesis and Hebrews together, we can deduce that one day Enoch and God were walking together, and God just picked Enoch up and moved him from this world into the next one.
4. I don't know how it looked, how long it took, or what it was like for Enoch to take that trip, but that is nonetheless the explanation we are given for his exit from this world.
5. G. Campbell Morgan told about a little girl who came home from Sunday school and tried to explain the translation of Enoch to her mother.
6. She said, "One day Enoch and God took an extra long walk, and they walked on and on, until God said to Enoch, 'You are closer to my house than you are yours. Why don't you just come stay at my house?' And he went."
7. No one saw what happened, because men looked for Enoch, and Hebrews 11 says "he was not found". Nevertheless, the Spirit records for us that God took him home.
8. I guess we can assume, along with that little girl, that they just walked together all the way into that paradise where God dwells.
9. That is the explanation we are given for Enoch's exit, but in considering how he stepped out of his world, I want you to think with me also about:

#### **B. The example we are given from Enoch's exit**

1. The Bible tells us that Enoch did not see death. He was translated out of this world before he passed through the chilly waters of death.
2. In the Old Testament, the only thing we find even close to this kind of thing is the story in II Kings 2, where we are told that Elijah went up to heaven riding a fiery chariot on a whirlwind.
3. Enoch and Elijah, as far as we can tell, are the only men who ever stepped out of this world without first going through the grave.
4. However, when we turn over to the New Testament, we realize that Enoch may be a foreshadowing of how some of us will leave this world one day.

5. In II Thessalonians 4:16-17, the Apostle Paul says, *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*

6. Did you catch that part about being "caught up"? That sounds a lot like what happened to Enoch.

7. The truth is, on the day when King Jesus returns, the bodies of those believers who are resting in the earth are going to be raised to new life.

8. Following them, the bodies of those believers who are still alive on this earth are going to be – can I say it – translated, and taken up to meet the Lord in the air.

9. If you know the Lord Jesus, and you are alive when He comes back, though you may have never taken an air plane ride, you *will* take a plain air ride!

*Some glad morning, when this life is o're,  
I'll fly away,  
To a home on God's celestial shore,  
I'll fly away,*

*I'll fly away, O glory, I'll fly away  
When I die (or maybe even before that),  
Hallelujah, by and by,  
I'll fly away!*

1. The late Dr. Adrian Rogers, in a message on this text, points out the fact that for most of Enoch's life on this earth, Adam, the first man, was still alive. In fact, Adam died only 57 years before Enoch was translated.

2. Dr. Rogers imagines Enoch having a conversation with Adam. Enoch says, "Adam, there's something I've been wanting to ask you. Adam, what was it like in the Garden of Eden?"

3. Adam says, "Oh, my boy, it was glorious. There was the fruit, the river crystal clear, the flowers, the balmy breezes, the animals...But wait a minute; I don't want to mislead you. That wasn't the most wonderful thing about Paradise."

4. Adam goes on and says, "The most wonderful thing was this: that God would come down every day to the Garden of Eden and I'd walk with God. My God and I, we walked the fields together...He'd take me by the hand to a sun lit mountain and we'd see His

grandeur. We'd watch together the glorious glowing sun go down. I would love him and he would love me."

5. Adam's eyes got a little misty, and he said to young Enoch, "Enoch, to walk with God, that was Paradise."<sup>v</sup>

6. I believe Enoch realized after talking with Adam that he didn't need the Garden to enjoy God. He began that day to walk with the Lord every day, until the day he just walked on home.

7. Are you walking with God? You can! You can because Jesus, who is God Himself came down and walked among us.

8. In Enoch we find a man walking with God. In Jesus, we find God walking with man. Jesus died on the cross for the very sins that separated us from God.

9. Jesus rose from the dead, ascended back to heaven, and sent His own Spirit to live in those who believe upon Him.

10. Those who have His Spirit living in them can walk with God even closer than Enoch did until the day when like Enoch they walk into the home Jesus has prepared for them.

11. With that in mind, I say, let's keep walking!

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<sup>i</sup> Thoreau, Henry David, "Walking", *transcendentalists.com*, accessed 11/10/10, <http://www.transcendentalists.com/walking.htm>

<sup>ii</sup> W.R. Bowie, quoted by Hughes, R. Kent, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, (Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 2004), p. 119-120

<sup>iii</sup> Jimmy Carter: Hornblower, *anecdote.com*, accessed 11/11/10, <http://www.anecdote.com/index.php?aid=7466>

<sup>iv</sup> HCSB, emphasis mine

<sup>v</sup> Rogers, Adrian, *The Rapture in the Old Testament*, unpublished sermon transcript