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Genesis 5:21-24 "Enoch: A Man Who Walked with God"*

Proposition: According to the Bible in Genesis 5:21-24, there were two distinctions that set Enoch apart from the crowd.

I. Rather than just live, Enoch walked with God (21-22).

A. What was true of walking with God for Enoch?

1. He didn't always do it.
2. He started when he became a father.
3. He did it a long time.
4. His walk with God showed up in real life.

B. What is true of walking with God for us?

1. It's what God created us to do.
2. It's what Adam forfeited (Gen. 3:8).
3. It's what God still requires (Micah 6:8).
4. It's what Christ alone makes possible (1 John 1:1-4).

II. Rather than die, Enoch went to be with God (23-24).

A. His life was cut short.

1. The goal isn't a long life.
2. The goal is to live a life that honors God.

B. He experienced a glorious transition.

1. Something similar happened to Elijah.
2. Something similar will happen when Christ returns.

Two Guarantees: If you walk with God...

1. You will stand out in life.
2. You will not need to fear death.

He was a man who stood out in the crowd. You might describe him as *odd* since he didn't go with the flow. If you had met him you would have noticed something unusual about him. Oh, he was an ordinary man in one sense, but in another he was extraordinary.

His name was Enoch.

We need heroes today, people whose example we can follow. I recommend Enoch.

We meet Enoch in Genesis 5. Genesis 5 presents a genealogy of the post-curse, pre-Flood world. It lists the names of ten men from Adam to Noah.

Last time we looked at the whole genealogy and learned a couple of important lessons from it. One, we are mortal. And two, we are depraved. The most repeated phrase of the chapter is, "And then he died." Adam

lived, and then he died. Seth lived, and then he died. Enosh lived, and then he died. So did Kenan, Mahalalel, and Jared. So did every man listed in Genesis 5--*except* for one man.

Enoch. Enoch was a special man. He was a man of God who left a mark on his world for God. We can learn from Enoch. We need men and women like Enoch in our day.

Ironically, the Old Testament devotes only four verses to this man's life, unlike Abraham, or Moses, or David who received dozens of chapters of ink. Yet Enoch made "God's Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11.

What was so special about Enoch? To put it simply, Enoch was different. He didn't go with the flow--we'll never impact our world for Christ if we do. He was special. In what way? According to the Bible in Genesis 5:21-24, there were two distinctions that set Enoch apart from the crowd.

I. Distinction #1: Rather than just live, Enoch walked with God (21-22).

In what way was Enoch different? Did he look different? No. The difference had to do with the company he kept. Enoch was a man who *walked with God*.

Most people live, but some people walk with God. There's a difference, isn't there? What's the difference between just "living" and "walking with God?" What does it mean to "walk with God?" I want to address that question from two perspectives, the first pertains to Enoch.

A. What was true of walking with God for Enoch? Listen to verses 21-22, "When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters."

Though the text is brief, it offers us four insights on Enoch's walk with God. Here's the first...

1. He didn't always do it. That's right. Enoch didn't always walk with God. No one does. He was just like us. He was born a sinner, cut off from God--and unregenerate sinners don't walk with God.

I've asked many people the following question, "How long have you been a Christian?" More than once I've received this reply, "Oh, I don't know. I guess I've always been a Christian."

But that's impossible, isn't it? Why? Because the Bible says we are born depraved. What does that mean? Genesis 6:5 explains, "The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was *only* evil *all* the time." Every inclination, only evil, all the time. That's what depravity means. No man seeks God for from birth every inclination of his heart is to go away from God. In Genesis 8:21 God Himself makes this assessment of mankind, "*Every* inclination of his heart is evil *from childhood*."

Sin infects us from conception and birth. Listen to David's confession in Psalm 51:5, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." And in Psalm 58:3, "Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies."

No, Enoch didn't always walk with God. He was born in sin and in Adam just like we are. He inherited a sin nature just like we do. And then came a day when his life changed, and Enoch started walking with God. When did it happen? Apparently...

2. He started when he became a father. Verse 21 indicates that Enoch was sixty-five years old when God gave him a son, a boy he named Methuselah. And notice the wording of verse 22, "And *after* he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God."

When did Enoch begin to walk with God? The Hebrew text is fluid, so I wouldn't die for this point, but it seems to indicate that Enoch began to walk with God *after* he became a father. The implication being, prior to this he did *not*. For sixty-five years Enoch walked *without* God.

I've seen this myself. When a person becomes a parent, all of a sudden they begin to think seriously about God, perhaps for the first time in their life. Why? Because as they look into the cradle they become overwhelmed with a sense of their responsibility. And their *inadequacy*!

"Woa! I'm responsible to raise this baby in this world?! I can't do it! I need help!"

And help is available, divine help. Aren't you glad? And those who walk with God avail themselves of God's help, just like Enoch did. A third insight about Enoch's walk with God...

3. *He did it a long time.* How long? Verse 22--"Enoch walked with God 300 years." Wow! Enoch walked with God 300 out of his 365 years! That's a long time.

Chew on that piece of information for a moment. It's important. Walking with God is not a 100 meter dash. It's a marathon. Just because we walked with God last week or last year is no guarantee that we're walking with God *today*.

The Bible says that Enoch walked with God for the last 300 years of his life. That speaks of consistency and perseverance.

When I was a child we used to play with something called "sparklers" at the 4th of July. You'd light a match and set the sparkler on fire. It made quite a show...for about thirty seconds. And then all you had left was a lifeless, burned out wire.

I don't want that to happen in my walk with God. Nor in yours.

May I speak bluntly? An *inactive church member* is a contradiction in terms. It's like a burned out sparkler. Listen. There is no prize for those who start well, only for those who finish well. That's what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:24, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize."

So you walked with God yesterday, great. The question is this. Are you walking with God *today*? A fourth insight about Enoch...

4. *His walk with God showed up in real life.* Verse 22 concludes, "Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters." There's an old adage that says, "He's so heavenly minded that he's no earthly good." The fact is, that will *not* be true of a person who truly walks with God. A person who is walking with God will live a God-honoring life. Where? *On earth*.

Enoch did. What did he do while he was walking with God? He "had other sons and daughters." That's significant. Enoch didn't sell his house and retreat to a monastery on a mountain. That's not what walking with God means. Walking with God isn't a mystical experience. Enoch's walk with God showed up in *real life*, in his family life for starters.

Is that true of you? You can sing praises to God on Sunday, and that's great. But do you honor Him when your family eats supper on Monday, and when you go to the Little League ballgame on Tuesday, and have that coffee break at work on Wednesday? If you are walking with God it will affect your life.

It did Enoch's. How? Ray Stedman remarks, "First, it means he went in the same direction God went. He was moving the way God was going. God is forever moving in human history. He is moving right now to

accomplish certain things in human life, and he has been doing so for centuries. The man who walks with God is the man who knows which way God is going and goes the same way."

Perhaps you're thinking, "Okay, so Enoch walked with God. But what does it mean to walk with God? How do we do it?" Good questions!

B. What is true of walking with God for us? Ponder four truths about walking with God.

1. *It's what God created us to do.* When God created Adam, where did He put him? In a perfect garden, right? And what did Adam enjoy with God while in the garden? Perfect, unhindered fellowship. Adam enjoyed intimacy with His Maker. He walked with God. Walking with God is what God created us to do. Secondly...

2. *It's what Adam forfeited (Gen. 3:8).* In Genesis 3 Adam disobeyed God. Did his disobedience of God affect his walk with God? Did it ever!

Notice Genesis 3:8, "Then [after the forbidden bite was taken] the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was *walking* in the garden in the cool of the day." Stop there. What's God doing? *Walking* in the garden. Who's He coming to see? Adam and Eve. Why? So they can *walk together* as they had done before.

But there would be no walk that day. Why not? Verse 8 tells us, "And they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden."

After Adam sinned, he didn't want to walk with God any longer. He wanted to *hide* from God. That's what sin does to us, too. *hiiid1*Sin alienates us from God.

Don't miss this. As human beings, we were created to walk with God. But as sinful human beings, we don't want to. We want to walk our own way, not God's way. And even if we wanted to, we couldn't because our sin separates us from God. Walking with God is what Adam forfeited.

3. *It's what God still requires (Micah 6:8).* The prophet Micah said it clearly, "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to *walk humbly* with your God (Micah 6:8)."

There is the essence of what God requires of us--to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him. God expects us to walk with God. In fact, God *wants* us to walk with Him. But as sinners, we don't want to walk with Him. There's the dilemma.

Is there hope? Yes. Because of a fourth truth about walking with God.

4. *It's what Christ alone makes possible (1 John 1:1-4).* What did Jesus Christ do when He came to earth? He lived a perfect life, didn't He? He *walked with God* for 33 years, right? And then what did He do? He died on a cross. Why? To pay the penalty of sin for those who didn't walk with God. And then He rose again.

I'm concerned about something. A lot of people think that the reason you "get saved" is so you can go to heaven and not hell when you die. Answer this. Did Jesus' life, death, and resurrection have anything to do with our walking with God? It sure did! Jesus didn't die merely to give us fire insurance. He died and rose again so we could walk with God in this life and for eternity.

If you have no desire to walk with God, you have every reason to question whether you've ever been saved! How do I know?

Listen to the words of 1 John 1:1-4, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched--this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

What did John say is the effect of knowing Jesus Christ? We have *fellowship*. With whom? With God's people, yes, but who else? With the Father and with His Son.

This is amazing. If you know Christ, you can walk with God. If you don't, you can't. Walking with God is what Christ alone makes possible.

Do you want to walk with God in life? If you do, it's an evidence of His Spirit working in your heart. And if you're going to walk with Him, you must know Christ personally.

Did anyone in the Bible besides Enoch walk with God? Noah did (Gen 6:9). Malachi 2:6 says the priests were expected to walk with God. In Genesis 17:1 God told Abraham, "I am God Almighty; *walk before me* and be blameless." In Genesis 24:40 Abraham refers to God as "The LORD, before whom I have walked." In Genesis 48:15 Jacob spoke of God as "the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac *walked*, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day."

Beloved, how we walk is important to God. 1 John 1:7 says we are to walk in the light, not in darkness. 2 John 6 exhorts us to walk in love. 3 John 4 speaks of walking in truth. And Enoch beckons us to walk with God.

Many of you know that I jog for exercise. And that I have a jogging companion--it's our dog, Blackie. She loves to take a trek with her master. It only takes a simple question to make her hyper, and it's this, "Blackie, do you want to *run*?" A close second is, "Blackie, do you want to go for a *walk*?" Once the question is spoken, it's all over. Pure hysterics! She'll even run and get the leash for me to put on her.

One time she had a hurt leg so I took off without her, not wanting her to injure her leg further. As I left the house, I glanced back and saw her gloomy eyes and drooping ears. She was heartbroken. And why? Because she loves to journey with her master.

As sinners we're independent. We love to go *our own way* through life (as Isaiah 53:6 puts it). But not the man of God. The man of God loves to enjoy the company of the Master. His passion is God. He loves to *walk with God*.

Is that your passion? Walking with God speaks of intimacy with God. It implies a constant awareness of--and a hunger for--His presence.

Here's the first distinction that set Enoch apart from the crowd. Rather than just live, Enoch walked with God.

II. Distinction #2: Rather than die, Enoch went to be with God (23-24).

"Altogether Enoch lived 365 years. Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away." Because Enoch walked with God he experienced two results...

A. His life was cut short. It happened when he was 365. One day he was walking with God in this life, and the next day "he was not" (as the KJV puts it). His life was cut short.

It's noteworthy that when you trace Adam's descendants through Cain, at the seventh generation you find a

man named Lamech. Lamech was the epitome of ungodliness (Gen 4:23-24). Conversely, Enoch was the seventh generation of Adam through Seth. Godliness culminated with Enoch.

Enoch walked with God, and because he did, guess what happened? His life was cut short.

We might think, "Well, he did live 365 years. That's a long time." Compared to what? Not compared to his contemporaries. Enoch's father lived to be 962, and his son lived to be 969. Enoch left this world before he reached *half* the ordinary age of his day.

Enoch walked with God, and then he was no more. Think of the implications. Methuselah lost his dad. Mrs. Enoch lost her mate. Jared lost his son. Mahalalel lost his grandson. Do you think they felt the loss? Do you think they wrestled with the question, "Why did God take him in the prime of his life?"

Sometimes I think we have a perspective problem. We get locked into a mode of thinking that says, "I've got a right to live so many years," or "I've got a right to have my family members so many years." That's not a biblical perspective. What is? Allow me to put it this way...

1. *The goal isn't a long life.* What is the goal?

2. *The goal is to live a life that honors God.* The apostle James died before he was 40. The missionary David Brainherd died at the age of 29. Jim Elliot was about the same age when he was martyred. Indeed, our Savior lived but 33 years, and then he gave His life.

A successful life isn't necessarily a long life. It's a life that honors God. And that should be our goal. Because Enoch walked with God, his life was cut short.

Which raises the question, "What happened to him?" Did he cease to exist? No. Did he die? No. If that had been the case, Moses would have used the same word he used with the rest of the characters in Genesis 5.

Here's what happened--verse 24, "Then he was no more, because God took him away." In other words...

B. He experienced a glorious transition. One minute Enoch was here in this sin-cursed world, and the next minute he was in the presence of God. What a reward!

By the way, I don't read that Enoch had any say in the matter. There was no bargaining. But for Enoch being close to God was so important that going to be with God was natural.

Is that true of you? Is being close to God your #1 aim in life? Do your family members have to twist your arm to come to church, or do you look forward to the opportunity?

Fellow Christian, this is our hope, for God to take us home. "But God will redeem my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself (Ps 49:15)." "You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory (Ps 73:24)."

How did the glorious transition happen for Enoch? Genesis 5 doesn't tell us. We do know that...

1. *Something similar happened to Elijah.* You can read about it in 2 Kings 2. Like Enoch, Elijah was a man of God. One day the prophet took a walk with his successor, Elisha. 2 Kings 2:11-12 tells us what happened, "As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out, 'My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!' And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them apart."

Did it happen that way for Enoch? I don't know. But I know this...

2. *Something similar will happen when Christ returns.* Enoch is like a prototype of what's going to happen to God's people who are living when the event known as the "rapture" occurs.

Paul explains in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, "According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."

Enoch didn't die, but God took him. The same will happen to all Christians who are living when Christ returns. Beloved, that event could happen today. And if you know Christ, you will not die, but pass directly from this life into the presence of the Lord. If you do not know Christ, you will be left behind.

So there they are--two distinctions that set Enoch apart from the crowd. One, rather than just live Enoch walked with God. And two, rather than die Enoch went to be with God.

I want to challenge you this morning to walk with God. And if you do, two things will happen--guaranteed.

Two Guarantees: If you walk with God...

1. *You will stand out in life.* Enoch did. Because he walked with God, he was a radical. He didn't go along with the crowd. Jude 14-15 says that Enoch was a prophet of righteousness who warned of the Lord's coming and judgment. Enoch didn't go along with the crowd. He went with God.

There's a price to pay if you go God's way. It's not simply that God walks with you, but that you walk with God. He's the Master. You go where He wants to go. You do what He wants you to do.

Listen to Ray Stedman again, "It [walking with God] means to keep in step. You cannot walk with somebody if you do not keep in step with him. Sooner or later there comes unbalance and you bump into him, or he bumps into you. Therefore there must a keeping in step."

Are you keeping in step with God? If you are, you'll be different--I guarantee it. You'll stand out in this world.

I'm going to level with you about a concern I have. The American church is plagued by a host of "casual Christians." A casual Christian is a person who tacks God onto his or her life. A casual Christian is a cultural Christian, a nominal Christian.

I'll put it bluntly. God is offended by casual Christians.

What's more, there's no way you can walk with God and be a casual Christian. Why not? Because to walk with God implies He goes everywhere you go. Everywhere. When you go to school, you walk with God. When you go to work, you walk with God. When you conduct that business deal, you walk with God. When you play sports, you walk with God.

And if you're walking with God, you will stand out in life. I guarantee it. If people aren't seeing God in your life, then you are not walking with God.

Ask them. Ask the people around you, "Do you see the Lord in my life?"

If walking with God makes you stand out in life, will it be worth it? You better believe it! And here's why.

Guarantee #2--If you walk with God...

2. *You will not need to fear death.* If you're not walking with God you have *every reason* to fear death. But if you are walking with God, there's no need to fear death.

Why not? Because when you die you will go where Enoch went.

I conclude by reading the commentary Hebrews 11:5 gives us of Enoch, "By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God."

Is it worth it to walk with God in a world that ignores God? Yes. Why? Because the person who walks with God is the person who pleases God. And the person who pleases God is the person whose faith is in the Son of God. And the person whose faith is in the Son of God is the person who will enjoy the presence of God forever and ever. Amen.

Choose to walk with God today, beloved. Be like Enoch. You'll never regret it.