

Our Walk With God

Components of Unleavened Living

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When we were coming in, I was thinking about the subject of my sermon today. We were in our car, obviously; and I was thinking how nice it would be to take a walk. But here in America (where we value our cars) and here in the South (where we value our trucks more than our cars), walking—as a form of transportation—is not very popular.

I looked at the U.S. Census Survey in 1990 and found out that only 4% of us Americans walk to work any more. And only 5% of Americans walk on trips of all kinds. So that means only 1% of walking, as far as taking a trip somewhere (not a long trip, but going from here to there—going to the grocery store or whatever), is done on foot. Mostly we use our cars to go here and there—wherever we happen to go.

Of that 5% of trips, nearly half is to conduct personal business, like to go shopping. Let us say, down to the local grocery store. Thirty-four percent of that is social or recreational—where one would go for a walk with a friend, or go out for a walk for exercise. And only 14% of that 5% of trips is to go to places like church, school, or civic organizations—like Veterans of Foreign Wars, or something like that, where one would go to a meeting or to serve somehow.

There is a lady up the street here on Barberville Road. When I come in, in the morning, sometimes she is going out for whatever. And I have seen her, a couple times, drive her car down to the mailbox, and put something in, and then drive back up. I wonder how many people drive down to their mailbox?

We hop in the car to go to the local store for milk, when it is only a half a mile away. Our way of life, in many respects, is geared to auto travel. For instance, work. Most of us work 11 miles away from our homes. That is the national average. I heard that Gary Montgomery just recently got a job, but it is across the island. It is 140 miles away, I hear. So his commute is 2 plus

hours every day. That just tells you what the job market is like in Hawaii, by the way.

But things like our malls, our shopping centers, are usually several miles away. I have two or three within close proximity of me; but they are 2, 3, 4, 5 miles away. Entertainment facilities, friends and family members' homes, and other venues where we would normally go are far enough away that walking is at the least inconvenient. It would take you half an hour to get somewhere; and then, by that time, you would have to turn around and go home.

In a way, it is a shame that we are not more familiar with walking because the Bible refers to it quite extensively in its pages. We will find out later that it's mentioned over 1,500 times just in the Old Testament. Our life is *a walk*. Our relationship with God is *a walk*. Our experiences with evil and with death are *walks*. When Israel came out of Egypt (and that is what we are memorializing today), they walked.

So today I want to look at walking and its relationship to us, and our lives, and these Days of Unleavened Bread—because that is one part of the symbolism of this time that we are commemorating. We will begin in Exodus 12. This takes place, in the context here, last night—meaning the evening of the first Day of Unleavened Bread that we commemorated. We will not go all the way to verse 42; but verse 42 mentions the Night of Solemn Observance, which we kept last night.

Exodus 12:37-41 Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. A mixed multitude went out with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of livestock. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves. Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass that all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

Now let us drop down to chapter 13, where Moses is telling the people about the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 13:3-10 And Moses said to the people: "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten. On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast of the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the LORD did for me, when I came up from Egypt.' It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year."

Obviously, I wanted to go over that because this is the first Day of Unleavened Bread; and it is good to go over the command to keep it. But another part of the focus—not just eating unleavened bread—is on coming out. This means of 'coming out' originally was by *walking*. It specifically says (in Exodus 12:37) that these were "six hundred thousand men on foot." It was *auto-locomotion*. They did not have many wagons. Probably the wagons that they had were used not to carry people but to carry possessions. They did not have many animals to ride. They mostly walked! Almost every one of them had to use *foot power* to come out of Egypt.

And all of the verbs that are translated here as "went up" or "went out" could also be more specifically translated as walked. The verb that we will get to a little later on is very general. And, for some reason, the translators of the

King James and the New King James just decided to use the more general term "went" rather than "walked." But it is very obvious that is what they did. They walked.

Notice also that about half the time it says that Israel went out of Egypt. The other half of the time it says that God brought them out of Egypt. So it hints at *shared responsibility*. God, of course, had the greater responsibility and gets the greater share of the credit. However the fact remains that God did His part of the work, and then the Israelites responded by doing their part. And their part was, basically, walking. They had to move! They had to get themselves out of Egypt. God was not going to send a fire behind them and force them out of Egypt. He basically said, "Here's Moses. Follow him." And so they had to *walk*.

This, of course, sets up a great deal of symbolism. Like Israel, we walk out of our Egypt—the world. God does not force us out. He may make a few circumstances come about that turn our minds to doing that. But, in the end, it is we ourselves who have to walk out. We have to put it behind us.

Like Israel, we walk through a wilderness to get to the Promised Land. That is our entire converted life—where we go from one set of trials to another, from one watering hole to another—until we get to the Promised Land. And on the way, like Israel, we stumble. We grumble. We rebel. And we repent.

Like Israel, during our Christian lives in our trek across the wilderness, we see a great many times when God has to miraculously deliver us from things. We would think that by our own strength we could not do it. And, normally, we cannot. We see His mercy time and time again. We see His leadership in the events of our lives. We see His forbearance when we do things and we think, "Boy, I got away with that." You really did not get away with anything. God is just letting things go to see how you are going to react. He is forbearing in the sense that He does not send that dreaded lightning strike from heaven and just make us into grease spots. He is the one who forbears the most in all of the universe, because He has every right under His justice to just kill us after every little sin. But He does not. He has mercy, and He forbears.

We see examples of His might. And you could just go on and on. Just like Israel, we see God at work. And seeing God at work should make us act differently—walk differently. That is, walk better. Like Israel, we see the Promised Land ahead of us—the Kingdom of God. It is far ahead of us, we think—the end of a long road. I am sure the wilderness, to the Israelites, did not look like just a simple three or four day journey with that many people.

For us, the road to the Kingdom of God is a lifetime. We find, though, that lifetime goes fast. And of course, as Paul says, our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. We are told all through the Bible that it is soon. It is coming. It is imminent. But because of our having to go every step of the way, it seems long. And, like the Israelites, we will probably have to die before we get there. In fact, we all will die. In a way, the first resurrection (if we are still alive) is a death—a change. And all of this and more takes place during our walk. It is all part of our walk.

I would quickly like to give you the biblical words translated "walk" which are used in the Bible. There is one primary word that is used in the Old Testament. It is *halak*. This simply means to go, or to walk. Of course, its figurative meaning is to behave. Notice, in that very simple definition, there is no direction implied. It does not mean that you go well or poorly. It does not mean that you walk straight or crooked. It does not mean that you behave properly or improperly, good or evil. There is no sense of direction. This word is very general. It just means to go, to move.

One can walk uprightly after the true God, or one can walk after false gods and do evil. This is the word that is found 1,550 times. And that shows you how general it is. It is likely that anytime that you read and come across a verb that implies movement, it is probably this word *halak*—unless it specifically mentions what the movement is. This word basically just means to go.

In the New Testament, there are three words. There are actually more than that, which are used for walking, but I picked out the three that are the most used—that have the most significance. The first one is *peripateo*. This is also

the basic Greek word for "to walk." It basically means, literally, *peri-* means around (like perimeter) and it means to use foot power to go around. So it just means to walk. It's also used either physically or figuratively.

In terms of behavior, it means the whole of the activities of an individual life. And the word *whole* is very important here. It means the sum of how you behave. So it is one's entire demeanor—one's entire personality and character. That is your walk.

The second word in the Greek is *stoicheo*. This word literally means "a row"—like you are sitting in a row, or you place something in rows, or a series. What it signifies is to walk in a line. It means to behave, then, in an orderly manner. It means to set things out and walk that path—so that there is some sort of order, or straightness, to your walk. This word focuses on our walk as it affects others.

The other word (*peripateo*) is talking about one's personal walk and how it affects the individual person who is walking. *Stoicheo* has to do with how your walk appears to somebody else. That is, whether that person can say that you walk orderly or whether you walk disorderly. It is more of an external way of looking at things.

The third word (of these three) is the most interesting, but it is also the rarest. It is found only one time—in Galatians 2:14. If you know anything about roots of Greek, you will probably be able to figure out what this one means. It is *orthopodeo*. *Ortho-* means straight (like bones are straight). *Podeo* means foot. So it literally means "straight foot," or "straight feet." It signifies to walk in a straight path. It is very similar to *stoicheo*, which means to walk in a row, or a series. But this one means to walk in a straight path. It is a course of conduct by which one leaves a straight track or trail for others to follow. So your "straight feet" stamp out a straight path for others.

Now, that one example where this is used (in Galatians 2:14), it is translated negatively—meaning that the example being set was not straight. That is, that it was not straightforward. And believe it or not, this word is used in this context in describing two apostles—Peter and Barnabas. This is where Paul accused them of not walking in a straightforward manner towards the Gentiles, because they had gone back and would only associate and eat with

the Jews. So Paul used this word to basically tell Peter and Barnabas off about this—that they were not setting a straight path for everyone else in the church to follow. (That should give you some idea of how important this walk, or our walk, is.

We are going to start in the Old Testament. We will drop down to Exodus 13:18, which is another description of their leaving Egypt as they go towards the Red Sea.

Exodus 13:18 So God led the people around by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

Exodus 13:20-22 So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

We did not see the word "walk" in this whole section, but it is there. The word *halak* is the word *went* in verse 21. "And the LORD went. . ." He *halak*-ed. What this implies is that the people *halak*-ed behind Him—behind the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. God was in the pillar, and He led them forward to where they needed to go. Now, of course, this necessitates that the Israelites followed or walked behind (or *halak*-ed behind, if you like that even better). They went after God. They walked behind God. And this, of course, continued for forty years. He never took the pillar of fire or the pillar of cloud away, except to change them night and day—one to the other.

This is the basic biblical illustration of how God's children are to follow God. He is the pillar of cloud or the pillar of fire, and we walk behind Him—because He is always out in front of us, leading the way. And, of course, we rehearse this every year during this time when we think about Israel leaving Egypt. And we watch the Ten Commandments [movie]. We see what Cecil B. DeMille did with the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire; and we remember this bit of symbolism, because it is pertinent to us in our Christian lives.

Let us turn forward now to Deuteronomy 13. If you know anything about the chapters in the Bible, Deuteronomy 13 is the Apostates Chapter. That is, the chapter of leading people astray.

Deuteronomy 13:1-4 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go [*halak*] after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk [*halak*] after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him."

Here we have the comparison of ways to walk. We can either listen to an apostate, a false prophet, a dreamer of dreams and we can have him convince us to *walk after other gods* (gods that we have not known); or we can listen to God and do what He says, which is to *walk after Him*.

This is kind of interesting. I read in a commentary that it was—and still is, in some religions—a custom at certain times of the year to have a procession in which someone carried the statue of a god, and the people would follow that statue. They would literally walk after that statue, that idol, from one place; and it normally ended up in the temple where this god was worshipped. Then they would set up that image, that idol, in the place of his home. It was symbolic of one's walk with that god, coming to worship him.

And so we have the pagan idea of *walking after a god* and God's idea, on the other hand, of *walking after Him*. They are very different! Right off the bat, someone has to carry the false god—where, in the true sense, God goes Himself before us. He does not lead us to His temple. He leads us to the Kingdom of God. He leads us to His own home. And, of course, there is a great deal more promised to us than is promised to any pagan worshipper who would just go to the temple and end up doing whatever pagans do to worship their gods. That is all it was.

God has promised us much greater things. But He does have *requirements*, and we find them here. God describes, in a very simple way, what walking after or following God is. He says in verse 4 (right after He says "walk after the LORD your God")—He mentions fearing Him, keeping His commandments, obeying His voice, and serving Him, and also holding fast to Him. All of these are part of walking after God. They are all part of the way in which we walk. All of these are elements of godly, proper walking.

And as Mr. Armstrong always said—we heard this time and time again—what this does is show that God is leading us. He is training us. He's molding and shaping us into copies of His very character! He is trying to make us into the image of Jesus Christ—into His own image. And we can only do that properly if we follow these directions—if we walk after Him.

I do not know if you are aware of this. Back in probably the early '60s, they took a picture of Prince Philip (the present Queen's consort) and Prince Charles. I believe it was up at Balmoral. They were in Scotland, I know. And they both had on the same kind of Scottish gear, with the kilts and everything. This photographer was in a place where he was behind the Prince and the not-yet Prince of Wales. He took this snapshot. I believe it was eventually shown in Life magazine. (I am not sure about that.) But it showed Prince Charles with the same demeanor, the same gait, and the same placement of his hands as Prince Philip. They were both walking the same way.

Now, why did Prince Charles walk like Prince Philip? It is very clear that he *copied his father*. He did everything that his father did—in mannerisms and everything. And it came all the way down to how he held his hands behind his back, the gait, and everything. And it is a simple illustration, but it is the same type of thing that we are supposed to do in walking behind our Father. We learn to *follow* Him. We learn to *copy* Him. We learn to *be like* Him by imitating Him.

That brings to mind I Corinthians 11:1, where Paul said, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ." It has a little bit different usage there, but Paul was imitating Christ. That is the image in which he was growing. He only did that by

copying, by aping (if you like that word better), by mimicking what Christ did and showed in His life. And that is the same process that we go through in walking after God.

The obverse is just as true. If we follow another god, we are going to end up copying its mannerisms, its way, and its walk. And the obvious conclusion, then, is that we are going to end up in a far different place—because only if we copy God's way will we end up where God is. If we do not copy His way, then we are going to end up where some other god is; and that is just wrong.

Let us go back to Genesis 17, to see another example of this. This is obviously right in the middle of Abraham's life. He is ninety-nine years old at this time.

Genesis 17:1-2 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."

Here we have another equation of what walking, in this case, before God is. He says here that walking before God is *being blameless*. These are parallelisms, in a way. In the King James, it is the word "perfect." What it is saying is—the word that is used here has the connotation of wholeness or completeness, entirety. It means sound, or wholesome. It means without impairment, or unimpaired. It can also mean innocent, or having integrity. But the overall idea behind this particular word is *wholeness*. That is, something being entire. And what God is asking Abraham to do is to put on His entire, His whole perfect character *all the time*.

That is the basic—all the time! He knows that there are limitations to what humans can put on of God's character in the flesh. We are just limited by our flesh. We have so many bad habits engrained. Of course, that is the goal that we are going to—being like God wholly and perfectly; but walking with God here takes on the added meaning of *being entirely committed* to God's way of life. It is not something we do just on the Sabbath. It is not something that we do just when certain circumstances arise—but always, every day.

We could go to Deuteronomy 6, where it says "when you wake up, when you go to bed; when you walk by the way; when you do this, when you do that. . . to your children. . . this that and the other thing." That is the idea that is being pushed here. We could put it this way: "I am Almighty God. Walk before Me, and do it all the time."

Do not ever let yourself slip—which has its connections here to the Days of Unleavened Bread. We are supposed to be unleavened all the time, in all of our life—not just during this week. I am speaking spiritually, of course, because we probably would not want to go through our entire life just eating Matzos. But we are to be without sin all the time—blameless, without impairment. Certainly, sin impairs us. Another one of the words was innocent. We are to be always innocent, always living an unleavened life. If we want to pull anything out of here, it is that our walk with God is full time—24/7, 365. We never stop walking with God; and, if we do, we are in trouble.

Let us move forward a little bit, to Joshua 22. We are going to be picking up various attributes that are part of walking with God. And here Joshua adds a few more components to what walking with God entails. This is the occasion when the Reubenites, half the tribe of Manasseh, and the Gadites were going off to their part across Jordan. They had already helped the Israelites in the Western part of Israel to secure their land, and now they were going back. They had fulfilled their duty.

Joshua 22:1-5 Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and said to them: "You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as He promised them; now therefore, return and go to your tents and to the land of your possessions, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan. [The next verse, verse 5, is the important one.] But take careful heed to do the commandments and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, [Now, look

at this list.] to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul."

Some of these were in the Deuteronomy 13:4 scripture that we went to a little earlier, but he adds things like love here. Does that not sound awfully New Testament to you? Well, it is not. Love has always been a component of walking with God. How in the world are you going to follow somebody all of your life if you do not love Him? Service is also mentioned here. Being loyal and steadfast, wholehearted (which we just looked at in the last verse, in Genesis 17). All of these so-called New Testament virtues are simply the eternal character of God, and they just pass right through into the New Testament.

Walking with God has never changed. And so Joshua here tells them what *walking with God* entails, in as complete a form as he could. It is commandment keeping. It is law keeping. It is loving God. It is, of course, walking in His ways—keeping His commandments, holding fast to Him. There is an element of loyalty also in walking with God. And, of course, service. And as we go through the sermon, we will see that these same things are brought up in the New Testament. Nothing has changed in walking with God—because God has not changed. God's character has not changed. It says it right there at the end of the book of Malachi: "I change not. Therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed." God is always this way. And if we are going to walk with God, we have to do these things.

Let us move forward to Amos 3 and bring up another point that should be self-evident. We are just going to look at it. Mr. Armstrong very frequently came to this verse as well.

Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

This only makes sense. You are not going to walk very long with someone that you butt heads with. You are not going to want to be near that person if you are constantly disagreeing with him. That is why so many people end up leaving the various churches of God—because they can't walk together. There is too much disagreement.

So if in any way we desire to walk with God, we must *agree with Him* in as many aspects as possible—and be adding to those areas of agreement all the time. Because this is a spiritual relationship, our agreement must be in spiritual matters: doctrine, behavior, character, and having the proper goal of the Kingdom of God. None of these things can we disagree with Him in, otherwise we are not going to be walking with Him.

This brings up an interesting point about Israel. Israel walked *behind* God to the Promised Land, but they never really walked *with* God. They followed Him, it says in Exodus 19, when He offered them the covenant (up through chapter 23 or 24). They readily accepted the covenant because of all the blessings that were there. And they agreed to do all the things that He said that they should do, but they never did. All they wanted were the blessings.

So they were very happy to walk behind God—to get the blessings. But their entire history is one of backsliding, and then a kind of repentance, and then they would backslide again. They never really walked with God. They were a carnal people. They just followed God for the goodies that He would drop behind to them every once in a while.

So, finally, the God of the Old Testament—Jesus Christ—had to put Israel away, because she was not walking in agreement with Him. Can two be married and disagree all the time? Are they really married? Is there any good coming out of a marriage where there is constant bickering, and fighting, and who knows what goes on? That is not the kind of marriage that is going to produce any righteousness. As we see in James 3:18, you need an atmosphere of peace to produce the fruit of righteousness.

And so the relationship between Israel and God was always one of "Give me, give me, give me—but I don't care what You believe. I don't care what You teach." And so they ended up having to be put away. God put them aside to work with a new people, under a new covenant. That is, a people that would actually listen, and follow, and imitate. That is us—the church of God.

Now we are going to dive into the New Testament. Please go to Romans 6. This relationship begins basically with baptism. That is, our walk with God. And this is what Paul describes here.

Romans 6:1-2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not!

You see that is the problem that Israel always had. They were not trying to sin so that God's mercy and grace could be shown (like what was happening here). But what he is meaning here is that Israel never got rid of their sins.

Romans 6:2-4 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Many of us are of Israel. But we have been, in a way, called out of that Israel and given the opportunity—through baptism, and forgiveness, and our accepting of Jesus Christ—to have an entirely new life. So we go through this ritual of baptism. And that ritual of baptism is like a death. We go into a watery grave. And just like Jesus came out of His grave because the Father raised Him up, so too when we come up out of the water we have a new life also. What has happened is that we have died to sin. We have committed to putting behind us those habits and ways of life that were not *walking after God*.

Of course, those things that we had done beforehand—before our baptism—are forgiven; and so we can start with a fresh slate. But from that time forward, what we have done is eternally committed ourselves to following God and walking behind him (or, more properly, with Him) throughout the rest of our lives. And so, for those of us who have been baptized, our lives did not begin at birth. Our lives began at baptism, according to the reckoning that is now. In the Book of Life, our lives begin when we are baptized—not that past history that God has forgotten as far as the east is from the west.

So we are being judged upon our walk now—this new walk, this entirely new way of life; and, just like it says here, one that is without sin (just as God Himself is without sin). And that is the walk that we must walk. So, from a New Testament point of view, what does this *walk in newness of life* consist? I already gave you a hint, but we are going to go through it.

Romans 8:1-5 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus [we just went over that], who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us [those two little words are very important—"in us"] who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Here is the major, number one, first, on top component of *walking with God in this new life*. We walk *according to the Spirit*. In chapter 5, we went over the fact of what he is talking about here in the first few verses—that sin should no longer have a hold on us. That has been 'done way' (if you like to use that term) by Christ's sacrifice. He paid the penalty for our sins, so that the law of sin and death (as it says here) no longer has a hold on us. Now there is a law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that controls us. That is what we live under. We live according to the Spirit of God and Christ in us.

That is the major difference between "the walk" in the Old Testament and "the walk" in the New Testament. God has not made a physical covenant with His people, but *a spiritual covenant*. Remember that it says several places in the Old Testament—in Jeremiah and Ezekiel—that God said He would make a new covenant where He would put His Spirit in the people. And that is what we are living by, and under, now.

It says in verse 5 that one of the outgrowths of this (that God has put His Spirit in us) is that we *set our mind on godly things*. What this means is that we force our minds—we use our will—to think about things that are godly and righteous. Philippians 4:8—what does that say? "Think on these things." And he names all of those "whatsoever is this, whatsoever is that." Those are the things that our minds are supposed to be set on.

Colossians 3 says that our minds are set on heavenly things. We are no longer grubbing about on the ground, in the gutters, on fleshly things—on things like what we shall wear, or what we shall eat, or what we shall drink. You know what I am referring to now—in the Sermon on the Mount. God will provide all these things. He says there, in Matthew 6:33, that what we are supposed to set our minds on is the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and if we do all these things, all these other things will be added to us.

That is what we set our minds on. So a car, a house, our job, whatever it is of a physical nature takes a second seat compared to what is most important—and that is what we set our mind, or will, to do. That is what we follow after. If there is a choice of whether to do something physical or to do something spiritual, our first impulse is always to do the spiritual—because we have set our minds to do that. We have set our minds to follow Jesus Christ, and that is what He would do. It is His Spirit that is living in us and should be motivating us (if we are receptive) to those things.

I think verse 4 is very interesting in this regard because it says that because of this—because sin has been condemned in the flesh and because we are living by the Spirit—the righteous requirement of the law can be fulfilled in us. I do not know what the Protestants think that is. I believe they think that Jesus fulfilled it for us, and so we don't have to keep the law. But do you know what I think it means? I think it means that, because we have God's Spirit in us, we can ourselves keep the law. The righteous requirement of the law *can* be kept in us, because we now have God's Spirit.

But it is *the flesh* that we so frequently battle—that holds us back from doing that. But the Spirit is stronger if we allow it to be. I am not saying that we should be Pharisaical in keeping the law. That is not what I was getting at there. But the law is righteous, and it is just. It is holy and good. And we *can* do that, now that we have Christ's Spirit living in us. Now we *can* walk according to the Spirit. We *can* follow the dictates of the Spirit and God's law.

II Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Here is another component of the New Testament walk with God. We walk by faith. The things that we see around us are not real. I do not know if you have ever listened to my sermon "Let's Get Real," but that was the entire subject of that sermon: What is *real*, is what is *true*; and what is true is *what God has revealed*. So we walk by what God has revealed to us. And by doing so, we exhibit faith. And we have the faith of Jesus Christ to depend on, and His example.

We trust in God's promises. We trust in the truth, and not what we seem to think are realities of our daily life. And we do this because God is faithful. We trust in what God is. And because we can trust in Him—because He always comes through—we can walk. If we walk in the valley of the shadow of death, we can really fear no evil. We do not need to fear any evil, because God is really with us—even though we cannot see Him with our eyes.

If we were waiting for God to show up and manifest Himself to us so that we see Him before we trusted in Him to keep us from harm, that would be *walking by sight*. But we have plenty of examples in the Old and New Testament of men who did not see God physically, but they certainly saw God spiritually. And they went ahead and did their jobs, no matter what it looked like on the outside.

Jarod likes to watch the little Bible story movies; and he has been watching Noah's Ark, Daniel in the Lion's Den, and the Joshua and the Battle of Jericho one. All three of those show men acting by faith. Now, they do not say that in the Bible story movies that he watches. But Noah is building the ark, and the way they show it, the day for the floods to come was a bright sun shiny day without a cloud in the sky. One of the sons expresses some doubt. "Dad, look. It's not going to rain today." I guess they say that Noah was old, and he could not see; and he asks his son, "Isn't the horizon filled with clouds?" And the son replied, "It's clear today, Dad. Are you sure today's the day?" Noah just calmly says to him, "I am certain that it is going to come today." So he showed faith—even though everything around him looked like it was going to be like any other day.

The same thing happened with Joshua and the battle of Jericho. They show the difference between Joshua's faith—in sending Israel around Jericho (one

time each day for six days, and then on the seventh day seven times). And some of his commanders—one especially—were saying, "All we did was parade around the city. When are we going to fight?" And Joshua says, "God is going to take care of that. You just do what God said." And there is this difference between Joshua and this commander. The seventh day comes, and they march around it seven times; and Joshua is vindicated because the walls came tumbling down.

It is the same thing with Daniel and the lions' den. He could see the lions, and that they had not been fed. And, in this part of the story, he tells the little kids "You know, don't worry about me. I'll pray to God." He said, "I'm proud of my God." That is the way he put it. And he said, "This is how I've been accustomed to pray, and this is how I will continue to pray—in honor of my God." They come and take him away, and he is very calm. He gets thrown in there, and he begins to pray; and suddenly the lions are tamed.

I find that those little things are good to see, even as adults. That is, to see them reenacted in little cartoon form. They show the kind of faith that is necessary—no matter what is going on around. That was death staring Daniel right in the face. But he saw something far greater, and he lived to write about it and give it to us in the pages of the Bible.

The same things happen to us. Not in such a big way, and not the kind that will be written down in the book of Acts (in the continuing story of Acts). But have you been out of a job? *If you see God, then* you know that He is going to provide. If you have been in a car accident and get hurt, He will heal; and He probably kept you from something that was far worse. We can go on with different illustrations. But we walk knowing that God is walking *with* us. And so we can walk in faith. We can walk in trust and confidence that God is there.

Ephesians 2:8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before hand that we should walk in them.

Yes, we have been saved by grace through faith. These things are gifts of God. Works do not save us. But verse 10 says that God is creating us Himself for something more than just salvation. There is more to this way of life than just being saved. He is creating us with His own hands—to do good works. And He is even gone to the extra step of preparing these works for us to do in our walk.

It is these *works* that we do—these *exercises* that we go through—that prepare us for what is coming later. So our walk must express itself in action, in doing, in application, in outgoing concern and service towards others. We can almost ask, "*Are we really walking with God if our understanding of His way is not expressing itself in action?*" I think the answer to that is "No." If we just have head knowledge of this way and are not actively doing it, then we only have part of the picture. Those things will not become ingrained in our character unless we are actually *performing* them.

This is the problem that Protestants have. They have rejected *works*. They have rejected behavior modification. They have rejected doing good (except in ways that they think they will get benefits from). That is, in certain charities and such that they might do. But good works are a vital part of our walk with God. As I said before, *our walk with God is fundamentally practical*. God does not give these things for us to be in our ivory towers, shut away from the world, and just learning.

Two nights ago, in the Passover service, we just read it there in John 17—where Jesus Christ said, "I don't ask that you take these people out of the world. I'm leaving them in the world. Help them act—help them live—in the world. Keep them from the evil one (obviously), but guard them by Your truth." Meaning that in our daily lives, the truth of God sets us apart, yes; but it also gives us the marching orders for the way that we act. And by that we are kept guarded, protected.

Our walk with God is not merely head knowledge. It is not merely knowing what God wants us to do. It is doing it! Knowing that the Sabbath is the proper day of worship does the person no good until he actually keeps the Sabbath. It is so simple. You have to do it. You get no practical good out of it, you do not learn the lessons out of it, [until you do it]. So what we see

here is that God has prepared us to do good things—not just enact His commandments, but to go beyond that to acts of sacrifice, acts of service, and other things where we show out-flowing concern towards others.

Remember that the apostle John, in I John, says several times that if you say that you love God and hate your brother then you are a liar. You have to go out and *show* your love also for your brother. You have to do acts of service and good towards those of the household of God.

Let us go on now to Colossians 4:5. I just mentioned doing good towards one's brother in the church. This verse takes it in the other direction.

Colossians 4:5 Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.

This is very similar to Ephesians 2:10 and doing good works, because wisdom is the proper application of knowledge and understanding. But this one is specifically directed towards those who are not in the church. Our walk has to be seen by those outside the church, and it must be seen as on the straight and narrow. You might even say that our behavior is to be especially godly and wise towards those who are outside the church—to be a good example, as well as to bring honor and glory to God and to the church.

Paul mentions (I believe it was in Corinthians) that their actions had brought dishonor upon God, before the Gentiles. But this is a positive command here in Colossians 4:5—that we are to walk in wisdom towards those who are outside. By the "redeeming the time" aspect, Paul may mean here that we are to take every opportunity for doing good so that, by doing so, we might make the best use of our time. If we pass up an opportunity to do good and to show our godly wisdom before the world, we may have just lost a great opportunity in the proper use of our time.

It is kind of interesting that he stuck this there at the end of this particular command. Walk in wisdom towards those who are outside, redeeming the time. So you are supposed to take advantage of those opportunities to do good and to show your godliness. They may not get any other example of a true Christian, ever.

II John 4-6 I rejoice greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father. And now I plead with you, lady [meaning, the church], not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

Here are the last two components of our walk that I will go to. We walk in truth, and we walk according to His commandments. And this is, then, *an expression of godly love*. These two are obviously very similar—walking in truth, and walking according to the commandments. But the first one—truth—is general; and the second one is specific—the commandments. That is, the specific commandments that God gave—particularly the Ten. You could make it even more or less specific by saying the two great commandments—to love God and to love your neighbor. Or, as John does here, he takes it down to that one specific command—that is, to love.

So we are to pattern our lives according to truth—specifically the Ten Commandments. And as God has told us, then, to conduct our lives—so we should, because He is the One we are following.

Unleavened Bread is the time during the year in which we think a great deal about our walk. In a way, it is just another way of talking about our Christian lives. We put out leaven (sin) from our lives during this time. We think about it a lot. And it is that *sin* that causes us to go off the right and godly path. *Sin* puts our walk out of stride. Hebrew 12:1 says that we cannot run with the *sin* that besets us, and running is just walking real fast. *Sin* is what causes us to stumble. How many times, in the Old Testament especially, does it talk about stumbling because of sin? That means that it gets wrapped up in our feet, and we fall head over heels. We stumble.

These days in which we focus on putting sin out and walking in newness of life should remind us that we are to *walk in an unleavened way*—the way God walks—all the time! He is leading us, then, to the Kingdom of God.

I want to end with this scripture in Micah 6, which I think puts a nice little capstone on things.

Micah 6:6-7 With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

That is what we are talking about, in a way, here. Especially we talked, on Passover, about what pays for sin; and we know that it was the blood of Jesus Christ. Verse 8—this is what we do after the transgression has been removed.

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.