

Faith And The Christian Fight (Part 3)

Walking with God

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We will begin this sermon by turning to Hebrews 11.

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaks.

It has been a month since I last spoke to you, but my entire last sermon in this continuing series of sermons on "Faith and the Christian Fight" expounded on what is contained within the statement "God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaks."

God's gift to Abel received the bulk of my attention during that sermon, and I did this because I want us to be fully aware that all of us have God-given gifts, the same kind that Abel received. Those gifts were contained within a package that Paul labeled as "grace," meaning God's freely-given, undeserved, unearned kindness to each son that He calls.

For example, it is God who revealed Himself to us, giving us truth about Himself and an awareness of His reality and holiness as compared to our spiritual need. It is He who gave us the urge to begin and continue seeking Him. It is He who leads us to repentance, grants us forgiveness, and gives us His Spirit along with other specific enabling gifts. It is this collection of gifts that opens the way for us to be ushered into His presence, to have the hope of the glory of God, to be enabled to cooperate with Him in His new creation, and to be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

These elements, and more, are contained within the statement "God testifying of his gifts." It was what God *did* that enabled Abel to make his witness. The witness is the "it" that appears in the last phrase of verse 4 that testifies to us to this day almost six thousand years later. And thus it is that every one of the noble men and women mentioned in Hebrews 11 went through the same process that we are experiencing in our time.

What Abel experienced and speaks to us of is his use of faith, and the major part of the foundation of God's creation of us in the image of Jesus Christ. These gifts are essential

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to all that follows in our lives. It is equally essential that we thoroughly understand and be humbled by what is taking place in us.

Now why is this essential? Because unless we are humbled by the combination of these truths—these gifts that God testifies of—our self-centered drives are so strong and so deceptive that we will not submit in cooperation with Him, as God's record of His experiences with ancient Israel recorded in the Old Testament shows.

Abel offered by faith, and since faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17), it means that Abel believed what God said and followed through in obedience to what God said. The belief motivated and produced a work in agreement with what God ordained for all those created in Christ Jesus should walk in. That is what Ephesians 2:8-10 tells us.

From whom did Abel hear God's word? It could have been God Himself, but my personal opinion is that I think it was more likely Adam and Eve. Regardless of whom it was, Abel's act of faith must also follow the same pattern as everybody else in order for it to be a practical witness to all who follow him. What good is a witness if nobody else experiences the same thing? Abel, too, is saved by grace through faith, and thus it was God, working out His purpose, who enabled Abel to do what he did.

By this act God is testifying to us that the process—the creation of salvation in each and every one of us—begins and is carried forward in the same manner as Abel. God is consistent in things pertaining to salvation and everybody is dealt with in an even-handed fair manner. This leads to a question: Why is it done this way? By that I mean, why has God made Himself solely responsible for the existence of the faith that enables one to be justified and to proceed on from there?

In my previous sermon we have already seen one reason. That is because God is going to give everybody a fair chance because no one, of himself, could muster the works sufficient to pay for the wages of sin. We would all be dead men unless it was done God's way.

There is a second very important reason given in I Corinthians 1.

I Corinthians 1:19-21 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer [or the debater] of this world? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by

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the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

I Corinthians 1:26-31 For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord.

God has purposely chosen this way to put proud and stiff-necked man totally in debt to Him for the most important thing in all of life. It is these gifts that provide everybody called the opportunity to live everlastingly, accomplishing in peace and well-being.

Mentally look around you because men have accomplished, and will continue to accomplish, many things that give them the opportunity to be proud if they so choose. Look at what men have built in terms of building, in terms of blasting off and exploring portions of the universe. Look at the areas of medicine, of biology, of geometry, and of anthropology. You can go to any area and men have discovered amazing things that God has created, and have manipulated those things—we will call them gifts—to the rest of mankind. So there might be a great deal that man can brag about that he has done; however, verses 19 through 21 expose why the wise of this world will not submit to God.

In verse 21 the reason becomes clear once one understands the statement "the foolishness of preaching." It should read "the foolishness of the thing preached." There is quite a difference between the way the *King James* translates it and arranges the word between that and the way the Greek actually says. It should read, "The foolishness of the thing preached." Paul is not saying the wise of this world reject the act of preaching, but rather the *content* of the message preached is foolishness to them. In other words, the wise will not believe the Gospel, and most specifically in this context, that God in the flesh has died for the sins of the world. Paul had previously mentioned about preaching the "cross of Christ." That is the context.

The true spiritual humility toward God, chosen and expressed by acts of faith in God, is so important to the total spiritual purpose of God for each person that it cannot be

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overstated. It is humility that cannot be overstated to God's purpose.

First, each person must, as fully as possible, know, and know that he knows, that Christ died for him *personally*. We must understand that our own works do not provide forgiveness. Second, we have not created ourselves "in Christ Jesus." Another way of putting that is nobody evolves into a Godly person on the strength of his own will.

No matter how high-minded the thoughts of men are regarding conduct and character, they are nowhere near as high as God and could never be accomplished to the extent that God wants on the strength of man's own will. He can build beautiful buildings, but he cannot build beautiful character on the level, or even approaching the level, of Jesus Christ. Another way of putting it is that nobody evolves into a Godly person on the strength of his own will.

Paul, later on, used a statement to help reinforce that concept in Philippians 2:13.

Philippians 2:13 For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Not *our* good pleasure, but *God's* good pleasure.

No creation creates itself. What we are looking at here is "spiritual evolution." God is saying that is impossible. God does this as He is doing to counteract the "we did it our way" concept, because that way leads to pride. That is the fruit it will always produce. So God, by and large, calls the undignified, the base, the weak, and the foolish of this world, which the unbelieving "wise" consider as being insignificant and of no account. God does this to the end that no human will glory in His presence. That is the way this chapter ends.

One Protestant commentator by the name of Bengel said it this way: "We have permission to glory not *before* God, but *in* God.

The term "in Christ Jesus" which appears in verse 30 of I Corinthians 1—"But of him are you in Christ Jesus"—indicates that we are in an intimate relationship with Him while becoming *one* with Him. Paul then goes on to detail, by means of the term "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," that God, using our believing, humble, submissive cooperation, will ultimately be responsible for all things pertaining to *His* work accomplished in and through us.

Men can build bridges, buildings, highways, and all kinds of things, but in terms of salvation, everything depends on the program that God Himself is personally in, and in charge of. He begins it by assuring that the faith and the gifts to accomplish this are given by Him, and He demands that those to whom He gives those gifts be humble. I will tell you that without that humility, the second part of this process will not work. What do the humble do that is so important to this process? They submit. It is simple, but they submit to God. There is nothing complicated about it.

Most modern commentators believe that because the words "wise" and "wisdom" appear so many times in this first chapter of I Corinthians, that in verse 30 the terms "righteousness," "sanctification," and "redemption" should be in parentheses because they feel Paul intended to define what he meant by true wisdom. In other words, true wisdom *is* righteousness, is sanctification, and is redemption. What these verses tell us is this: God is pleased to save those who first humbly choose to believe, and then humbly choose to submit, by doing a mighty work in them.

So God's gifts, plus Abel's humble, believing submission is what set Abel apart from, as far as we know, every other person living on earth at that time. That verse testified that what he did by faith pictures what every one of us who receives salvation must also do to begin the walk toward the Kingdom of God. Pay attention to the word "begin." Everyone must be called of God and believe enough of His word to know that he is a sinner who needs the blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin. Every one must repent; that is, undergo a change of mind in relation to God, be justified, and be made legally righteous, having the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to him.

There are two factors. (1) God does it this way to give everybody a fair chance. In doing it this way He levels the playing field for everybody. (2) God does it this way to put everybody in debt to Him in order to produce humility. This enables a severed relationship that began all the way back with Adam and Eve to begin to be healed, and for sanctification unto glorification to proceed. This was my preface for going into another section here regarding Hebrews 11. This sets the stage for the instruction in Hebrews 11 regarding Enoch, who by faith walked with God, and that pleased Him.

Hebrews 11:5-6 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. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

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If one is walking with God, he is not going off in his own direction. This is a simple statement, but it is a conclusion that is important, because what this shows is agreement with God.

I think it is good at this point that we begin to look at Enoch's witness to us by being reminded of what Jesus said in John 8:39. This has become, to me, a very important scripture.

John 8:39 And He that sent me is with me. The Father has not left me alone for I *always* do those things that please Him.

That set Jesus apart from everybody who ever lived. He *always* pleased the Father. He never deviated from the same path that God was setting before Him. He was always walking right in God's footsteps, even as we saw with Enoch. Enoch pleased God, but he did not do it to the level that Jesus Christ did, who always did it.

Genesis 5:22-24 And Enoch walked with God after he begot Methuselah three hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

It is interesting that Moses records twice that Enoch walked with God. It gives you the implication there, at least to me anyway, that what he did was downright rare. In fact, we find that none of us walk with God until after He calls us. I want us to look at Isaiah 53.

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

That includes you and me.

Ephesians 2:2-3 Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conduct in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

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A human being walking with God is not normal. It is that simple. All of us have gone our self-pleasing, unconcerned-about-God way, but once reconciled to God, the picture changes—sometimes dramatically.

I think the implication of Genesis 5 is that "walking with God" was so rare that saying it twice, so closely together, is intended to draw our attention to Enoch's singular feat. The word "with" strongly suggests a relationship was established between them, thus also bringing to mind Amos 3:3, where it says, "Can two walk together unless they be agreed?"

Walking with God is one of the Bible's most vivid and frequent metaphors indicating a virtuous life. It indicates a voluntary, progressive movement through time, all the while interacting with others moving along the same way. Now "walk" and "walking" are the Bible's most frequently-used metaphors for a number of related concepts. Depending upon the translation, they are used almost 300 times to indicate four things.

1. An interaction with another person as part of a way of life. Enoch walked with God.
2. The making of progress toward a destination. The Israelites walked from Egypt to the Promised Land, so they were moving toward a destination as a pilgrim does.
3. The indication of the passage of time one continued in a chosen direction of life. For forty years the Israelites walked to the chosen destination.
4. It can also be used to indicate a person's lifestyle.

I am going to give you a number of examples. The first one is going to come from Deuteronomy 8:6.

Deuteronomy 8:6 Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him.

If you are walking in the commandments of God, you are keeping them, and thus you are walking with God. That defines a model person, or even a model nation, all walking together in God's way.

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Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

That covers the whole thing: walking, standing, and sitting. You do not want to walk in the counsel of the ungodly. This tells us that those who walk in the counsel of the ungodly are out of step with God. They are not walking with Him. They are walking in another direction altogether.

Proverbs 4:14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

Some modern translations will translate that last phrase: "Do not walk in the way of evil men," making it more direct.

Daniel 4:37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his way judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.

Guess who was walking in pride? It was Nebuchadnezzar, and God was able to pull the plug on that guy and make him realize that he was walking in pride, and that he had better humble himself before God or he was a dead man, after spending seven years going around like a wild animal.

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

I am just putting these things in a variety of categories. This metaphor is used all over the Bible. It is important to know that we walk with God.

Psalm 119:1 Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.

This is connecting lifestyle with the commandments of God, and so somebody who is really humble will be in submissive conformity with His law, and therefore His will.

Psalm 119:45 And I will walk at liberty: for I seek your precepts.

Everybody wants to be free, but God is telling us there that if we walk according to His precepts, we will be free. That is where liberty comes from.

There are scores and scores of similar descriptions scattered throughout the Bible, and reading them gives one a composite picture of a wide variety of the facets of the godly and the evil persons of this life. Since Amos 3:3 shows that two cannot walk together unless they agree, a person walking *with* God shows that those two are *in* agreement. It does not indicate the person is perfect, but rather it does show that God has *accepted* the person. That is important.

Hebrews 11:5-6 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. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Since Paul adds that Enoch, by faith, pleased God, I think we are safe in concluding that what pleased God was the way Enoch lived his life; otherwise, he would not have walked with Him. Enoch was accepted in God presence. Enoch and God were in agreement with each other.

It greatly helps our understanding to recall what Paul is emphasizing in God's organized arrangement of the subject matter in Hebrews 11. If you bring anything out of this particular sermon I hope it is this, because it will lead to further understanding of faith and how it is to be applied in life: Hebrews 11 is *not* in chronological order. It is not arranged in an order in which a person's name appears in the book of Genesis. In some cases it looks that way, but it is not.

Now God is a God of order, and He arranges things in the way He desires, and if we do not understand what that arrangement is, or see it or perceive what it is, we are not going to get as much out of the chapter as we should. We will get something from it, but not as much as we should.

The arrangement of Hebrews 11 is an example of an experiential order. By "experiential," it means the faith as it is experienced in practical life. I will give you an

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example. What Abel experienced comes first in a life of faith; that is, that God's gifts and God's acceptance of one through the blood of Jesus Christ jumpstarts the Christian's life. Following that, the Christian must experience what Enoch experienced. He then must go on to walking with God. This absolutely cannot precede Abel's experience.

There are people who say they were looking for God all their lives. No, they were not. They were looking for a god that they held in their own mind. No man can come to the Son unless God draws him. God has to reveal Himself. A very clear illustration of this is Moses in the wilderness. God revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush. Even though Moses undoubtedly had some concepts in his mind that were correct, he really did not know the God of heaven and earth until God chose to reveal Himself. That is the way it is with everybody. Moses could not walk with God anymore than Enoch could walk with God until he had first gone through the experience that Abel experienced. There is a progression.

After Enoch, in Hebrews 11, comes Noah. Noah's relationship with God was as a servant carrying out the will of God in a much more advanced way than Enoch did. Abel did God's will, but it was a very primitive, elementary level. Enoch's experience raised the bar a little bit, and he walked with God and thus had more face-to-face experience with God. When Noah came along, it really ratcheted up the experience with God to direct service in God's behalf. You begin to get the idea.

Everything in the chapter is arranged according to that arrangement. If you want further proof, here is what I can give to you. I will give you a scripture in I Timothy, and you will see why it has to be this way. Paul is talking about the ordination of a person, and he says:

I Timothy 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Paul is saying to not ordain a new convert. God is showing in Hebrews 11 that a general pattern of growth is required before one moves from one stage to another, and as growth occurs, requirements and responsibility also grow.

I mentioned earlier that sometimes the abrupt change in a person's life is really dramatic. We are going to look at one of them. You probably know whose it was. It was the apostle Paul in the book of Acts. This was after the incident on the road to Damascus. He then went into the city, and coming out of the city this occurred:

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Acts 9:20-22 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

Paul's conversion must have been one of the most dramatic of all times, but what I am going to show you now is that Paul too had to grow before he could really be used extensively beyond the very elementary activities at the beginning of his conversion. That is what occurred here in Acts 9:20-22. His preaching was restricted to biblically proving Jesus as the Messiah.

Do you know how long it was before Paul began writing what is now scripture? It was somewhere around twenty years.

Galatians 1:15-18 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him amongst the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

The implication of this is that since he did not bother to confer with men, he went off into the Arabian desert where he was taught by Christ for three years. It does not mean that Christ was there the whole time, but he did spend three years, I am sure, pouring over the scriptures, thinking, meditating, praying and, who knows, from time to time Christ was there. I do not know. What I think occurred is that Paul learned from his experiences in Damascus immediately after he was converted and baptized, and that he needed more understanding than was available to him at the time. He needed more growth in order to really serve.

Paul is an example. There is a progression of things that God takes us through that are shown first by these three men.

Hebrews 11:9 By faith [Abraham] sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with

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him of the same promise.

What is it telling us here? It is telling us that Isaac and Jacob are named before attention is directed to Sara.

Hebrews 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

Jericho's walls are falling down and mentioned before attention is given to the faith of Rahab.

In verse 32 Gideon is mentioned before Barak, Samson before Jephthae, and David before Samuel. All of you know that those people are not mentioned in that order in the Bible. Chronologically, all of these are out of order, and so it becomes clear that the chronological order of chapter 11 is not the issue; rather, God deems the progression of the lessons of these peoples' lives more important to our understanding.

God is not a God of disorder. They are arranged the way they are *purposely*, and that arrangement is important to a life lived in real time; thus, Enoch's example takes us to the next logical step in the order of a faithful one's movement toward glorification.

Abel's example of faith is in regard to justification. It concisely shows us where the life of faith begins.

Enoch's example is in regard to sanctification, and his example gives us a general overview of what the life of faith consists for everybody. During sanctification it is absolutely essential that we walk with God so that we can experience life with God. It is from that experience that character is produced, that the laws of God are written on our heart. Everybody has to go in that direction. Nobody is excused.

Let us clarify the statements regarding Enoch being translated, because the world largely interprets this to mean that Enoch was taken to heaven. But that is simply untrue, because if it is true, it produces contradiction with other scriptures in the Bible.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto [all] men once to die, but after this the judgment.

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I inserted the word "all." It really does not appear there. When it says "appointed unto men once to die," it includes all. There are no exceptions.

Paul is showing Christ's commonality with man, because once the sins of man were put on Him, what happened? He died. Even the sinless died as soon as sin was put on Him. Everybody dies. The wages of sin is death, and so even as it is appointed for man to die once because of sin, so the perfect Christ died once as a sacrifice in mankind's behalf to pay for sin. Now, if what the world says is true about Enoch's translation, Enoch did not die; and thus a contradiction is created within scripture. But John 10:35 says "The scripture cannot be broken."

John 3:13 [Jesus said] And no man [no one] has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven.

This context is showing Jesus speaking with authority regarding heavenly things on the basis of the fact that He came from there, and He flatly states that no man—including Enoch—had ascended into heaven. Even David is declared by Peter in Acts 2:29 to not have risen to heaven.

Acts 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

Not too long ago, I used John 3:13 in this regard to a woman who believes one goes to heaven immediately following death. I of course said, "How can this be since Jesus said that no one had done that, and He had been there?" She wrote back saying, "Once Jesus was resurrected, everything changed, and because He went to heaven, believers in Him also go to heaven." Now, is not that convenient?

Can you see that once a belief like that lady used begins to be applied, *nothing* said in the past that is prior to Christ's life, death, and resurrection, can be held to be faithful to this day unless the Bible specifically says that this applies forever? Let us go back to Hebrews 11 again.

Hebrews 11:32-39 And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jahthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms,

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wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yes, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.

They are not there. All of these, including Enoch and many more unnamed, are awaiting the resurrection of the dead and their glorification in God's Kingdom. The word "translated" simply means "transferred." Enoch was transferred to another place on earth to escape the violence aimed against him, and it is there that he died like all men.

Colossians 1:13 Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

This is the same sense as what happened with Enoch. We have been transferred into the kingdom of His dear Son. This reveals two things. We are justified, and therefore reconciled to God through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, and our true citizenship—our spiritual citizenship—is now spiritually in the Kingdom of God, and we have not moved one inch. So this translation brings us two things. The first one is back in the book of John.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears My word and believes on Him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

This is the first thing that comes to us as a result of our translation. We have the seed of eternal life within us. Let us go to Philippians 3. Paul, writing later, says this:

Philippians 3:13-16 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching

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forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything you be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, wherein we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

The second is that we also have the same obligation that Enoch had, and that is to live and walk representing the Kingdom of God's way of life. We, too, have been translated that we should not see death, but the death in our case is the second death. What Enoch's "walk by faith" tells us about him is that he set aside his own carnal preferences and will and bowed in obedience before God's will, submitting his life to God's desires for him. Enoch did so by faith, and that is why he pleased God.

We are going to continue on with Enoch because there is more about him in the Book. Let us go to Jude.

Jude 14-16 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord comes 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. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaks great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Abel was a keeper of sheep, and he suffered a violent death apparently shortly after that episode. But Enoch was a preacher. There is no doubt that Enoch walked to the beat of a different drummer from those around him, and he made others feel ill at ease with him, and it appears this is what put him in danger of a violent death, thus precipitating his translation.

This brief report of Enoch's significant life reveals, for our spiritual instruction and well-being, that it is not sufficient to have judicially passed from death to life simply because one's sins are forgiven. Abel's example shows faith operating in regard to justification, and that is good, but he was apparently murdered shortly following the offering. There is much more to God's calling and Christian living than appears in what occurred to Abel.

I am going to read two whole chapters to you. The first chapter tells you what happened

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to Abel, even though he is never mentioned. It has also happened to you and me. The second chapter is going to show you what the first chapter obligates us to. Both of these chapters were written by Paul.

The first one is in Ephesians 3. Ephesians 3 is actually a prayer that Paul made for them, and for us. It basically extols the awesome fact of the mystery of God Himself—the mystery of what He is doing and the mystery of how it is accomplished, and has been given to us despite who and what we are.

Ephesians 3:1-21 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that you faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

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Colossians 3:1-17 If you then be risen with Christ, [here is the obligation] seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience: In which you also walked sometimes, when you lived in them. But now you also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you. And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you are called in one body; and be you thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

I will go no further, because he just gets more specific as he goes along.

Abel's life shows one being justified. Enoch's life shows him walking with God doing the things that we just read in Colossians 3. That is what we are to do. That describes how we are to walk with God. Are you doing it? Can you fill the full list? That is just one chapter, but it is what our life is to be devoted to once we go through and pass the stage that Abel showed us, and get into the area that Enoch showed. Enoch must have been quite a man and not given near the praise he deserved for how he gave his life to God to such an extent that people were out to murder him, and if God had not, in His mercy, intervened, Enoch surely would have been murdered because he was good.

Do you realize what God is laying out before us here in Hebrews 11? He is smashing the concept that a Christian is not required to do works. It is the strongest chapter in the

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entire Bible that works are absolutely required of one who is being sanctified by God, because that is the only way the laws of God and the image of God can be written in us. It must be done by and through experience—doing it. Knowing it is not enough. You must do it. It is that simple. There is nothing complicated about it at all.

Do you see how deviously successful Satan has been in convincing people that they do not need works? God says, "No works will save you." That is right, but that does not mean that works are not required. Mr. Armstrong used to say that nobody is going to be saved by works, but everybody who is going to be saved works. It is that simple, because it is living like God that enables God to create Himself in us. It requires our cooperation. As Paul said in II Corinthians 6:1, "We are fellow-laborers with Him." We *walk* with God, and we *work* with God, doing the things that makes God God. It is His holy character that makes God God. That is what we want to have.

The next time I speak I will take you a little bit further in the book of Hebrews 11.

I want to repeat something to you that I might have said to you before, but it is a good thing to remember. As I Corinthians 13 is to love, Hebrews 11 is to faith.