

(Hebrews) 5-Abel and Enoch

by Leonard Ravenhill

Faith is the key to a life of obedience and worship, and it can grow and mature over time.

Duration: 1:09:38

Scripture: John 8:11, Romans 8:16, Hebrews 2:1-11, 2 Peter 1:4

Topics: "Enoch"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a man who committed adultery and ended up in prison. The man confesses his crime and expresses remorse for his actions. The preacher emphasizes the importance of faith and the unseen, stating that everything visible will perish. He also discusses the power of meditation and the need to have faith, hope, and love in order to overcome any challenges in life.

Transcript

It's nice to see a few new faces, but it will sound as though you have another one you left at home. That's what Abram Lincoln said, wasn't it? Mr. Tozer said, Dr. Tozer said that Abram Lincoln was so ugly that he was beautiful. And once when he was addressing a crowd, he said, I'm not two-faced.

If I was, I would have left this one at home. Okay, we're in Hebrews 11, friends, thank you. Hebrews 11, let me say this for those who weren't here before, that the key word obviously in the chapter is faith.

Come over, we'll have to put more chairs up now. Somebody's short of faith, they put a few chairs up. Good to see you.

Come in, don't be nervous that you're late. The key word in Hebrews 11 is faith. It's mentioned more than 30 times.

It's mentioned over 300 times in the New Testament, and only twice in the Old Testament. And the first time it's mentioned in the Old Testament, it's mentioned negatively, that men do not have faith. It says in Hebrew, don't look at it right now, but it says in Hebrews 10, 22, that we can come to the full assurance of faith.

Faith can grow. In fact, the burden of Paul to the Thessalonian church in 1 Thessalonians 3 was that their faith was stunted. And he says, I'm praying night and day.

Can you imagine a man like Paul praying with anxiety night and day, that I may see your face, I'm perfect, that which is lacking in your faith. Now when he starts the second epistle, in the first chapter, verse 3, he says, I rejoice that your faith groweth exceedingly. I used to say to young people, my muscles are hard to find, because I never chopped down trees, I've never done, you know, pumping iron, I did enough work without making extra work.

So, but because I haven't developed my muscles, well obviously they're small. Now faith that is going to be trusted, is going to be tested. And it's the test of faith that's a problem.

If you go to a church, usually, if you want to join it, they say, well, these are articles of faith. Of course, it may be stagnant, but anyhow, you learn them and you sign the dotted line. Now there's a faith once delivered to the saints, which means that we believe in the fundamental things of the word of God, like again, the virgin birth, and the physical resurrection of Jesus, and so forth and so on.

Those are the articles of faith in the word of God that we believe. But faith can come to maturity. Come to a full assurance of faith.

Now everybody in Hebrews 11 had faith in different degrees, for different reasons. Last week we talked about Abel, and I made a big blunder there. My dear wife's so sharp, and she said, Len, dear, you made a mistake.

Well, I didn't make a mistake when I married her, I know that. It's the best thing I ever did. But I did make a mistake.

I know you're sharp, but I did. Because I said that Cain and Abel may be walked up and down in the Garden of Eden, and they weren't born till after the Garden of Eden. So that was difficult.

But I was reading one of the great masters, I don't know if you have the Bible characters by Dr. Alexander White, the greatest book he ever wrote, one that you should get. He has the most incisive understanding of characters of anyone that ever lived, I think. But I'm going to talk a little bit later about Enoch.

And he said Enoch walked up and down in the Garden of Eden. He certainly didn't. He certainly did not.

So it's true that great men make mistakes. Thinking, of course, of him, not me. OK.

Chapter 11 of Hebrews and verse 4. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Now notice what it says. It doesn't say by his sacrifice.

It doesn't say by obedience. So that, I guess, are implied. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice.

Isn't it in the epistle of James, where James says, show me your faith. Isn't that exactly what Abel did? He showed us his faith by building an altar. Nobody had built an altar before that.

In fact, there's a lot of mystery, of course, when you come to the Adam and Eve story, because, again, we know so little about them. I said that Cain and Abel maybe walked up and down in the Garden, heard the voice of the serpent, heard the voice of their parents, heard the voice of God, which they did not do, because they were not there. But I cannot believe for one moment that after all the awesome experiences that Adam and Eve had of walking in the Garden, that they never told their children about it.

Don't you think they talked about the shock, the day when we were pushed out of the Garden, we want to go back. They were cherubim with flaming swords, won't let us go back. That's why I don't think Enoch walked there.

Because the angels were there, or the cherubim. Seraphims are only mentioned once in the Bible, as far as I remember. And that's in the 6th chapter of Isaiah.

Cherubim are always defending the glory and majesty of God. If Enoch had rushed into that Garden, I think the first thing you would have done, it would have grabbed at the fruit of the tree and lived forever and ever. Which he didn't do, of course, he never died.

So the scripture says it was appointed unto men once to die. Well, who didn't die? Enoch and who? But they're going to die in the book of the Revelation. They're not going to escape him.

Eventually they're going to pay the price. But Abel again, show me your faith, Abel built an altar. And he obtained, and built an altar unto God.

And he gave a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Cain gave of the fruit of the earth, but the earth had already been cursed. You can't give to God what's cursed.

I remember a man came to my home one night when I was assistant to Dr. Tozer, I was going to say. Dr. Fawcett, the most eloquent preacher ever heard. And it was a depression period in England, 1930, let me get it correct, 32.

We needed a new organ and some new equipment for the church. And so we had an anniversary celebration. And we wanted 1,000, what was it? 1,200 pounds, which was about 36, what was he? \$3,600.

We fell short by about a third of it. There was a knock at the door. I went, here's a man, a typical Englishman with his suit on, his bowler hat.

How are you? I said, I'm Mr. So-and-so, you haven't met me before. No. My wife comes to your church every meeting, deserts me every Sunday morning and night, and during the week, and the prayer meetings, and the street meeting, she never comes.

Well, I hear you didn't get your money last night. No, we did not, sir. Well, he said, I believe you're about \$1,500 short.

I said, that's right. Well, he said, here you are, I brought you the money. So I looked at him, he said, I'll tell you what I got.

He said, my friends and I in a tavern, we just won the Irish sweepstakes, and this is my share. I want to give you it for the church. I said, no, thank you.

Well, he couldn't believe that. I said, well, I just feel we can't take it because it's contaminated. It's a leak of money.

We can't render to God, the Psalmist says, shall I render to God that which costs me nothing. There was no cost in pulling some vegetables out of the ground and giving them to God. But the herds, what they had must have been terribly small, and Abel takes one of these creatures.

It says, he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous. There can be no righteousness without repentance. There can be no repentance without faith.

So that's why it says here, by faith, Abel offered unto, he had no pattern to go by. I don't think he'd ever heard any preaching in his life. The only example was the example that God took when he killed an animal and he covered Adam and Eve with the coats.

I don't know, it seems to me that's typology. I don't know where Adam and Eve got saved. I think they accepted the sacrifice that God made and took the clothing without any arguments.

One day we'll have to see all that worked out. Anyhow, he had this testimony that he pleased God. Oh, wait a minute, I got into the next verse.

He offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous. Witness. The most popular sermon John Wesley had, he preached, was it 300,000? And the sermon he preached most and found most helpful to people was from the Romans chapter 8, which I want to look on someday.

The witness of the spirit. The spirit bears witness with our spirit. So often we want to live by feelings.

Oh, I got such a lift in that meeting, but when you got up next morning the lift broke and you fell down. There's nothing more tricky than emotions and feelings that we want to live on. We can't do that.

He obtained the witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh. Now the first verse says that faith is the substance of things hoped for. Or as I say, it's the conviction of the reality of the unseen.

The conviction and confidence of the unseen. How did he know God would accept his sacrifice? By faith. He was doing what he had an intuition, I would say, that this was what God wanted and so he did it.

Now there's a problem here, to me anyhow. His brother saw the sacrifice accepted, isn't that right? And he was wrath, he was angry. Not only that, he had murder in his heart.

And what does John say in his epistle? He that hateth his brother is a murderer. Before ever he committed the act, he was a murderer. And he was wrath, he had anger.

Now since he saw the sacrifice of his brother accepted, why in the world didn't he grab the first little lamb he could see and do the same thing? It would have been easy as far as I can see. But he doesn't do it. Was his heart hardened? Wouldn't pride let him do it? That's the most devilish thing.

It was an old, what do you say, Lutheran preacher years ago who said the last thing to leave the human heart is pride, and it's the first thing to return. What did Satan get kicked out of heaven for? Beating up an angel? Digging the gold off the streets? The evangelists will do that when they get there, but anyhow. Did he dig gold off the streets? No.

Did he beat an angel up? Did he get drunk? No. What did he do? He got proud. I want to be as God.

He couldn't believe it, all the cherubim and seraphim and holy beings all bow down and continually said, incessantly, holy, holy, holy. He coveted the homage. If you didn't think that worship is the greatest thing in

the world, why did the devil offer the world for it? He said to Jesus, you just kneel down.

All you have to do is let your knees touch the ground and worship me and I'll give you the kingdoms. And Jesus didn't say go back to hell, they're not yours to give. He's the ruler of the darkness of this world.

He wanted homage, he wanted worship. You know, it took me years since I've labored mercy for 60 years preaching about prayer and trying to practice it. It hit me last year, you know, suddenly like a bomb.

I've no evidence there'll be any prayer in heaven, won't that be disappointing? I do know that under the altar, you do not pray a prayer whether you pray it in joy or sorrow, in gladness or with tears. There's not a prayer you ever utter that isn't recorded immediately in eternity. What are these under the altar? The prayers of the saints.

Now we can give God our request, we can't give him advice. I mean, I've given him lots, but he never takes any notice. He doesn't take any notice of us, he'll listen to our request, he'll listen to our stammering prayers.

In fact, he doesn't read just the language of our lips, he reads the language of our hearts. All right, without faith it is impossible. This is a key to the book and this is the key to life.

When you get home, look at that outline I gave you and see how many times it mentions, he that cometh to God must believe that he is. He is what? He is everything he says he is. I said to Brother Dave on the phone, yes, Dave, 95 percent of the sermons preached last Sunday in America or anywhere about a man who lived 2,000 years ago.

The other 5 percent, 4 percent is about somebody who's coming next year or sooner the better, you know, rescue us from all our debts. He's coming soon. I doubt if one percent talked on the privilege we have now of being heirs of God and joined.

When we get ahead, we're going to be embarrassed at all the resources that are in the Godhead that we've never touched. As I say, we stay in our little theological playpens. Always stay as, what is it, the 36th chapter, 36 of Ezekiel says, water to the ankles or the knees or the loins, waters to swimming.

Now I've been saved over 60 years and you know I still honestly still feel I'm only at ankle depth in the revelation of God. I feel sometimes I'm trying to gather the wind in my arms. You ever try that? Try it tomorrow.

It's a difficult job. It's trying to lift water up in a sieve. It's like going to the ocean and saying there it is so vast, how deep I don't know, nobody knows.

So are the resources of God. As I say again, I want to get maybe a bit gritty on your teeth, my dear brother. Look at all the things these men and women did in this marvellous, unparalleled exhibition of faith.

They subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions. Women received their dead race to life again. They had power over kingdoms, over lands, over death, over everything.

What rubs my nose in the dust? Dust this, that not one of them ever had a Bible. You see, I've got a book here. Let me remind you, friend, this is not a book, it's a library.

It's not a book, it's 66 books. I've just got a new batch of books I'm really enjoying. I look at all those books on my shelves and then I say to myself, here is a man with a head as big as this, or faith as big as this, or revelation as big as this, and you only have the same Bible I have.

Why have I stumbled around so long? Huh? Do you ever read a scripture and suddenly it explodes when you read it? Or you feel you're walking past an ambush, you know, suddenly jumps out and grabs you by the throat and says, come on, wake up, this thing's been here since you were a toddler, and you've never grasped it. These people who through brilliance know, education knows, scientific achievement know what? Faith. Having a conviction that the unseen is as real and more real even than the visible, because everything visible will perish.

I think it was A. B. Simpson, the hymn that talked about everything that perishes with the using. I remember it says something about perishing things of clay, born but for one brief day. You haven't given two thoughts about Hitler today, have you? Anybody raise your hand.

Did you think about Genghis Khan today? Anybody think of Philip of Macedon? No? Surprise, Sister Hyde says no. You didn't think of Philip of Macedon today? Or Alexander the Great? Who conquered the world at 27 and sat down because there were no more worlds to conquer, then he went to see Diogenes, the greatest man on earth, and Diogenes says, who are you, young man? He said, I conquered the world. He said, well, get out of my shadow and conquer yourself.

Wasn't that good advice for nothing? Okay, better get to this next character. This clock goes so fast. Now let's come to verse 5. Hebrews 11, 5. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death and he was not found.

Now the implication there is not that he just blew away or that he was disintegrated, but it was not impossible to find him. That's the Hebrew implication. You'd have to go back now to the fourth chapter, isn't it? The fourth chapter, yes, in Genesis.

It's not the fourth chapter, it's the sixth chapter. Wait a minute. Fifth chapter, chapter 5, verse 22.

And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah 300 years and begat sons and daughters. Now Enoch walked with God. Just step back a minute to the bottom of chapter 4 and read 17, chapter 17.

Cain knew his wife and she conceived and bare Enoch. And he built a city. But that's not the same Enoch.

When you get down into the wonderful little book of Jude, nobody seems to bother to read too much. Jude is really an epitome of the whole Bible. And we'll come to it a bit later.

But it says Enoch the seventh from Adam. So we won't get him confused with this Enoch that's here. Enoch the seventh from Adam.

Enoch walked with God. So what? So did Adam. Said in the previous chapter that God walked with Adam in the garden in the cool of the evening.

The command to Abraham was, walk before me and be thou perfect. So don't you try and dodge away from perfection. He told him that before the law, before the blood was shed, before the Holy Ghost was given.

And it says of Job that he was perfect in his day. When I was a baby I was perfect. You'd hardly believe that I was.

My mother said so. Nobody else thought so when I yelled at two o'clock in the morning. But anyhow, you talk about a perfect child.

It's perfect as a child. You don't expect it to be a youth with energy and strength. You don't expect your baby to jump out of the cradle and go play football tomorrow.

You don't expect a teenager when he gets in a jet and say, well pilot if you don't mind, I'd just like to run this thing a little while. But a degree of perfection. Very obvious.

But Enoch walked with God after he picked up a Doesn't that mean he didn't walk with God before? The first character in Hebrews 11? Well, why is he there? Because he worshipped. A man cannot walk with God unless he worships God. So Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah for 300 years.

Altogether he lived 365. That's to remember by the days in the year. But, do you think he had a kind of sudden consciousness after this first child he had was born and he bore it in his arms? He looked at it and thought, well, my I've got something.

I'm a parent. I better walk pretty straight. I've got increased obligations now.

He lived in the light of that responsibility all his life and he walked before God. And it says he was not, for God took him. There's a lovely little verse, I've thought of it so often, in Amos 3. Can you tell me what it is? Amos 3, 3, connected with this very thing.

Come on, let me give you a clue. If two, can two of you walk together except you'll be agreed? You know, to me, the startling thing is not that Enoch walked with God. The startling thing to me is that God walked with Enoch.

I mean, what could God learn from Enoch? Nothing. What could Enoch learn from God? Everything. I'm not facetious when I say I'd love to walk behind them when they were having a talk one day, wouldn't you? What do you think they talked about? Not trivia for sure.

Did they talk about church history? I mean, they could have done. Do you think God said, you will never know this side of eternity, the grief I had when I put a man in the most ideal environment, he was a perfect man in the perfect environment, and all I asked was that he would walk with me and he fed me like that. Did God say, I can't tell you the shock I had when I saw human blood spilled on the ground for the first time.

And yet, the man who did it didn't revolt against it. You know, as a beast of a man by the name of Hitler, he got to the place where he ordered the skin to be taken off the bodies of Jews and lampshades made out of the skin. He took all the fillings out of their teeth, especially if they were gold.

The most devilish thing almost, but human depravity just goes down. The more educated we get, the more devilish we get. Atom bombs were not invented in church prayer meetings.

You will think in this hour when the world's trembling on the edge of the greatest disaster ever, the bloodiest war, a war in which now we can annihilate a city in less than five minutes, maybe in two minutes. We can wipe out 2,000 years of civilization. I used to ache when the Germans came over England, and

when the English went over Germany, they would say a certain art gallery was demolished.

Art pieces that can never be restored, there are no copies of them. Priceless multi-million dollar pictures or sculptures, all vanished like that. But what's more devastating than destroying human personality? Every time Mr. Mondale said, I want to reconsider the man of compassion, and you vote for me because you want to safeguard your future, I thought, no, you're ordering a million babies killed every year.

Come on, do you think we're dumb? What have we been doing since 1973? We've killed 15 million babies in this nation, maybe some of the greatest artists ever, the greatest scientists, the greatest preachers, the greatest writers, they perish like that. There seems to be no depth to human depravity, you cannot fathom the human heart. But then there are no heights that grace cannot reach.

On the other end of the scale, a grain, the greatest miracle in the world is not taking shapeless clay that has no character, putting it on a wheel and spinning it round, and then putting it in an oven and baking it until it's worth \$10,000 and it wasn't worth 10 cents before, that's wonderful. But what about God taking base depraved human personality and cleansing and making saints out of sinners? As I said the other night, Shakespeare said you can't make a person out of a sow's ear, but God can do that better than that, he can take a sinner and make a saint out of it. Make a, take a murderer and make a messenger out of him.

It's a very wonderful poem, if ever you see get it, it's got 73 stanzas, then sit down and memorize it. And check Betty, see if she's memorized it. It's called Saint Paul by F. W. H. Myers, it's fantastic.

And he says this phrase in it, God will forgive thee all but thy despair. Despair is not legal in the Christian faith. When you can have faith and hope and love, these three, like three jewels on a ring, faith, and hope, and love in the center.

With faith and hope and love, there's nothing unconquerable this side of eternity that's in the will of God. So this man had a marvelous time, he, he not walk with God. And I think it's pretty obvious that if he walked with him, he talked with him.

Remember it was the most corrupt period in human history. All you have to do is just leap over to the next chapter there, chapter six of Genesis, and verse five. God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of his, and of his thoughts, of his hearts, was evil, only evil continually.

Every thought, that's every thought without interruption, was only evil, so it was evil without mixture, continually without interruption. In this short period of time since the transgression of Adam, and the murder of the first being, the human heart has degenerated, and you have a man. I'm going to suggest to you that one thing that God did, nobody else says this, but then I don't have to tell you what other people say.

I believe as I prayed, the Lord said this to me, what I did, I walked with him in the garden, I congratulated him for walking in holiness in the most corrupt society the world never seen. I congratulated him that after the beast became cursed, and the lion he could no longer stroke it, and the other devilish things were there, he never once showed fear. Why? Because perfect left cast without fear.

He walked with God. Do you think an angel came up and said, hey watch your step, watch your step a minute, God's coming up behind there, he's only about a mile behind, you better watch your step. I don't

believe that, I believe he walked with God in a sensitive attitude, that every moment of his life he was walking with God, whether it was night or day, whether there was danger there, or hostility there, or corruption there, he would not deviate.

He set his eyes on that eternal goal to please God. So again I say I believe that God congratulated him on his walk of holiness. After all that's one of the works of the Spirit to be the comforter.

The comforter has never changed from the beginning of creation to the end. I think you not only talk with him about that, he became one of the most astounding men in history. Here he is, he hasn't a bible, he's never seen a prophet, he's never heard a sermon, I doubt if he'd ever seen an angel.

He has seen nothing which belongs to the whole orbit of God's revelation and God's holiness. You say well why did he become such an amazing character? Let me tell you, I'll tell you why. I know you don't believe me so I better prove it somewhere.

This little book, the epitome of the bible, Jude chapter 4 verse 14, Enoch also the seventh from Adam, so you don't get him mixed up with the other Enoch that was born of Cain, Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied. Hey come on, what's he going to prophesy about? He's never met a prophet, he's never seen a bible. Do you remember or isn't it, I think it is, check it after.

Isn't it in the 25th Psalm where God says the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Do you know why we don't get more from God? Because we don't live within whispering distance. God doesn't holler, he whispers.

Whispers his secret into your ear in the stillness while you meditate. I remember years ago in England, I was going down to London and I passed a huge dairy farm and the old girls were there all you know with their little calves around them and it was nearly milking time. They suddenly sat down, as though they got a signal, you know, somebody said all sit, so all the cows sat down and what they do is go, go, go, they're chewing away.

The longer they chew the richer the milk becomes. If you drove them off as soon as they sit down the milk would be almost like water. They regurgitate, they have two tummies you know, they regurgitate what they have and the longer they regurgitate, the longer they chew the richer the milk becomes and the cream.

I think it's a perfect analogy of meditation on God. I will meditate upon my precepts, we swallow the lumps. It takes me hours, takes me about three days to prepare an hour's sermon.

Then people sit there and go, oh thank you, that's very nice. I sometimes think a housewife is a discouraging job, you know, she gets up at six or seven and makes a meal and does this and does that and puts the dishes here and something else and she gets about 10 different things all going and everybody comes to her husband and says, hey I had a great day, the other says, blah, blah, blah. And it's all disappeared.

All those hours of work. Only one thing more discouraging, that's breeding. But of course the housewife doesn't get the reward breeders get either.

What does he do? Enoch also the son from Adam prophesied of these saying, behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints. Come on, he'd never read a thing about that. Are you going to tell me that God suddenly lifted the veil and showed him Jesus coming into an experience that by the grace of God

you and I will have? When he comes sweeping down the heaven with ten thousand of his in blinding glory? Do you think God started there? Don't you think he told him about a baby that was going to be born? Don't you think he explained to him what he said in the third chapter about the serpent has come and he's very cruel but you shall bruise his head and he'll bruise your feet? Don't you think he explained the whole mystery of sin? Don't you think he told him about a babe that will be born as it says there what in the ninth chapter of Isaiah? Don't you think he went on to tell him about the miracle life of Jesus? The stupendous fact that this terrible curse of thing called death, that billions of people are going to experience, it's all going to be stopped one day.

That just as one man opened the gate and he let all the iniquity, all that's in our filthy, filthy jails tonight. I think here in this god-blessed country alone there are 400 men and women on death row tonight. Our jails are packed to capacity, our divorce courts are packed to capacity.

This horrible thing they're discussing on tv each night now about child molestation. Did you see where two churches are being charged with that tonight? Isn't it horrible? One was a holiness church too, the other was a baptist church that should be holiness too, but they're being charged with molesting children sexually in christian schools. The curse that's got hold of millions of people, there are 10 million alcoholics they said tonight in america alone.

About 12 million with vd, another 12 million with herpes, another 10 or 12 million with aids that cannot be cured, they die within five years with this new disease. It said men have spent 40, 50, 60,000 dollars trying to find a cure for it. Maybe they'll wake up and realize that whatsoever a man soweth he reaps.

You thought you got away with it, you had your sin and your lust and your devilry and then the little thing that's somewhere in your body suddenly comes up and it dethrones your body and you get into captivity. I think that I think so again, I think the Lord unveiled the whole mystery of redemption, the redemptive work of God in Christ. He didn't just show him the final chapter when the Lord shall come with 10,000 of his saints.

I believe it unfolded to him the mystery or many mysteries again of the redemptive work of God in Christ. Here he is, quoted again as a prophet. Do you think he went around prophesying in his day? Turn back a minute there to the sixth chapter of Genesis.

Let's read that verse again, verse 5 in chapter 6. God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually and he repented God that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him at his heart. What did Jesus say? As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the day of the son of man. Well the next character that we study is Noah.

So he's living in the environments of seething massive corruption, unlimited degeneracy, vileness, put it as black as hell if you like. And yet there is one man walking uprightly in the midst of every crooked and perverse generation. He's walking in holiness like a ship, a white ship you see on the sea and it's floating on the ocean of oil.

This man has that marvelous character that makes God want to walk with him. Go back to Hebrews 11 a moment there. Well I caught it, I read it from there anyhow didn't I a minute ago? Okay we'll stay here.

He walked in purity, in the midst of impurity. He walked in righteousness in a world full of unrighteousness. He kept step with God when nobody else in the world apparently was doing that.

You know I think one of the great, can I use this, the church, I think one of the great curses in Christianity today is mediocrity. We've given up our lousy sins, we don't spit on the rug anymore, we don't swear, we don't drink, we don't do other things. We're out of Egypt but brother we're not yet in Canaan.

The church has halted somewhere between Calvary and the upper room, between the resurrection and the upper room. I mean the upper room where the Pentecostal power is manifested. The greatest need today I believe is a revival of holy living.

As I say the greatest miracle God can do is for God to take an unholy man out of an unholy world, make that unholy man holy, put him back in an unholy world and keep him holy. And that's exactly what he did with this man but he couldn't flee to his bible every day when he felt depressed. I doubt there's anybody else he could go to and have fellowship and communion with them.

So many of these characters that we have in Hebrews 11 lived, if you like to put it that way, in splendid isolation. I'm going to go back in the outer Hebrews. If any of you are cold come and stand here in these lights, it's a warmer.

Okay, Hebrews 11 5, by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death and was found, not found because God translated him. Because he had this testimony that he pleased God. Is there anything more satisfying on this earth than the spirit bears witness with my spirit I'm pleasing God.

Why did he please God? Because he walked in all the light he had. Because he dared to stand upright in a crooked and perverse generation. Can you imagine him going down the street? You know the failure of this man was because he was a prophet and he preached the truth of God.

We'll come to Noah. I was going to talk about Noah. I won't.

We'll come to him another night. It's a fantastic study in Noah. He had this testimony before his translation or his removal by God that he was as pleasing to God as one old saint said about a hundred years ago.

God said I can't loan you down to the earth anymore. I need you. The earth doesn't want you so I'm going to withdraw you.

He's going to do that with his church one day. The world doesn't want you. It wants to corrupt.

It wants to go on its evil way. You know I sometimes wonder how, how, how can the world get on so well with me? It couldn't get on well with my master. He couldn't get on with the early church.

The early church was a thorn in the side of the world. They didn't preach prosperity. Do you know what they preached? They went to jail and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer.

That doesn't sound like prosperity does it? You mean to say we're filling up the sufferings of Christ? That's what they said. We rejoice we're counted worthy of this thing. You know I've said so often almost facetiously I think that the day the Apostle Paul died the devil gave her all the demons a day off.

We'll never have anybody as mad as that man. Spinoza wasn't it, talked about a God intoxicated man. I think if there ever was one.

One was John Baptist and the other surely was the Apostle Paul. Everything that everybody prayed to be, oh Lord things are getting hard. Would you please remove this obstruction? That's the only way you get

muscles climb mountains.

He says I glory in the fact I've written more epistles than anybody else. My second glory is I've traveled more than anybody else. My third glory is I've stood before more kings than anybody else.

My fourth glory is I'm looking for a bigger reward than anybody else. He didn't say a thing about that. He says I glory in tribulation, in necessities, in reproaches.

Oh mercy, mercy. That's like my mother expect me to say oh mummy was gorgeous when she shoved castor oil down my throat. I was sick when I smelled it.

Never mind when I take it. It will make you better. I never knew what it did.

I went to bed sick and holding my tummy and got up in the night and did various things with it anyhow. Can I glory in necessities, in reproaches, in adversity, in calamity? Now pray for me. I've got to preach in the other room now on Friday night and then Sunday morning.

I'm thinking of preaching on what can you lose without losing your faith in God. I'm not saying I will. I may do that.

I'm thinking about it. Again I try to think every day of my opposite number in Russia or China. Maybe hasn't had a bath for months, hasn't had a decent meal.

He's ordered around like a beast. He's overloaded with work. For what? Why did these people in Hebrews 11 of whom the world was not there, there's irony for you.

The world says let's get rid of this bunch. They shouldn't live around here. And God says you got the boot on the wrong foot.

The world isn't worthy of them. Wait till the things reverse. Why did they go through it? And they sang in the storm and rejoiced in adversity, in calamity, in disaster.

Why? Because they knew they'd obtain a greater resurrection. What a day that's going to be, eh? That helps me to realize why some of the last shall be first and the first should be last. There's a story of a rich lady in England, they used to tell us from being children.

And she had a very godly coachman and she had a carriage, you know, and a pair of horses and everybody in town saluted when she went past. And she lived in the most distinctive mansion in that part of the world. And she had a dream one night, she went to heaven.

Of course, St. Peter met her at the gate, as you know. And he escorted her down the street and he saw this gorgeous, outstanding mansion. And the angel said, will you come this way? So she went, walked down the corridors and ood and aard and I never thought it would be like this.

Of course, well, I don't need to ask this, but I will ask you, angel, whose is this mansion? Oh, this is your coachman's mansion. My coachman, John? Yeah. Oh, he will enjoy.

He's lived in a little cottage down at my gate lodge there. Went down and the story says the property got more deteriorated so he couldn't have been in heaven, but anyhow, the property wasn't as good further down the road. When they got there, the angel took her into a house that was pretty dilapidated and she

looked around.

Well, who's going to spend eternity here? You are. Me? Oh, I thought with the mansion that my servant had, my mansion will be greater than ever. How is it he got such a mansion? The angel said, well, we can only build mansions up here with the material you send from down there.

That's all the materials you send up. Inferior living, inferior praying, inferior sacrifice, inferior witnessing. She just was a casual kind of Christian.

Oh, we're all going to heaven. When we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing. I don't have any records.

Don't get worried. I'm not selling my records. What a day of rejoicing that will be.

Will it? Never had. When all our values are reversed and we see everything in the light of eternity. Huh? Oh, we're going to heaven and there'll be no sorrow, no crying as I've said so often.

Why does it say that? In Revelation. What? Good, there'll be no more tears. Well, did you happen to read another verse in Revelation? God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Where are the tears? I believe at the judgment seat of Christ. I believe people will be dumbfounded. Some of our great TV personalities won't have a shirt to cover them when they get to it.

They've been naked and wretched and blind and poor and miserable. That's again, jumping a little here. When you come to the 12th chapter, let me remind you, those who weren't here before, there's not a word to the unsaved in all this epistle.

I know preachers preach on it. How shall we escape? Well, the we are the people mentioned in chapter 3, holy people. How shall we escape if we neglect so great? Neglect is not to deny, it's just to postpone, to put it off.

We're neglecting the great salvation. Read what it says in the same chapter there about that great salvation in Hebrews. Turn back a minute here.

Chapter 2 of Hebrews, we, we, we are the people mentioned in chapter 3. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession. Are sinners partakers of the heavenly calling? Certainly not. Chapter 2, verse 1, therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed.

Verse 3, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. Now here's God's unchangeable standard for his church. God also, verse 4, God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders and divers, miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Now that's never been abrogated, I don't care whether you're a fundamental Presbyterian or Baptist or what in the world you are. That's God's standard perpetually for his church, signs and wonders. Not to, not for showmanship, but because it's God's standard of majesty and holiness.

His sovereignty, his power over death, over disease and everything else, which is all handed over to us, the children of God. Let me go back again now to the what I said here about Enoch. He was translated,

verse 5, that he should not see death and was not found because God translated him.

Because before this translation he had this testament that he pleased God. Pleased God what? In his walk. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed.

Maybe God corrected him, I don't know. But God certainly again lifted the curtain and showed him into eternity. I believe the closer you and I live to God, according again to Psalm 25, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.

The reason some people have greater stature in the Christian life is because they have a greater revelation of God's holiness. And they walk in the fear of grieving him, not in terror because he's so majestic and powerful. Well it wouldn't be right for us to leave poor old Enoch there, would it? I say again, I believe that God gave him great revelation.

Maybe God shared his grief with him over the sin of Adam and others. God ever share any burdens with you? Oh no, we cast all your burdens on the Lord. He's, that's what he's there for.

Put them all on him. Doesn't matter what they are, put them on him. Financial, physical, mental, spiritual, put them all on him.

But then what do you do with the scripture that says my yoke is easy and my burden is light? I believe the nearer you get to God, the more you will enjoy the joy of God and you'll enjoy the grief that God has over sin, over broken laws, over this six staggering stumbling church so-called that we have today, which is a million miles from New Testament Christianity. There's a lovely book, it was written, I think, I'm not sure, by an American called The Wealth, Walk and Warfare of the Christian. It's based on Ephesians.

The lady that wrote it was Ruth Paxson. P-A-X-S-O-N, Paxson. It's a great book.

I think I have it somewhere. I haven't read it. But I did turn up Ephesians today.

What do you and I expect you to do? We expect you to walk with God. Isn't it easy to sing when we walk with the Lord in the light of his word, we trust and obey, there's no other way. But no, it's when the road gets lonely and difficult and uphill, and your husband doesn't want to go, or your wife, or your church doesn't want to go, and you've got to break rank with a church that's out of step with God.

Why not break, if you break rank with a church that's out of step with God, most likely get into step with God. Believe in the other bunch that are out of step, get into step with those who are stepping with God. Let me just remind you, Ephesians 5 and chapter 2 says, the apostle says we're to walk in love.

The same chapter, verse 8, he says we're the children of the light. Verse 5, chapter 5, pardon me, verse 15, he says we're to walk circumspectly. In Colossians 1 and verse 10, he says we're to walk worthily.

You say, well, you're telling, you say, you're telling us what to do, we're to walk in light, we're to walk in love, we're to walk circumspectly, we're to walk worthily, yes. There's a tremendous word there, I turn over it, chew over this so often, 1 Peter chapter 2. 1 Peter chapter 2. Okay, 1 Peter 2, let's read from verse 17, honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king, servants be subject to your masters with all fear or all obedience, not only to the good and gentle, but to the froward. This is thankworthy for man for conscience toward God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

What glory is it if when you be buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently? But if when you do well and you suffer for it and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were we called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that he should follow in his steps. You ever try to do that? I read that today, it reminded me of my daddy, he's a big fellow and he had big feet, and he would go out in the snow, and when he went out, he'd lift his foot up right out in the snow, and I'd get my little legs up and wore short trousers, you know, get all the snow and in my boots and whatnot, trying to walk in my daddy's steps.

Well, he says we should follow in his steps. Well, then we must be walking. You can't follow in somebody's steps without walking.

Well, if it stopped there, we'd be in trouble, wouldn't we? Everybody would fill in what he imagined the steps were, but follow the scripture. But we should walk or follow in his steps. Number one, who did no sin? You know, that's a thing that trips us up, isn't it? Well, the Creed says we sin every day in thought, word and deed.

Well, the devil couldn't do more than that, could he? If we have to sin every day, why don't we write a list of sins out and put them on the church door and let kids know where they're going? Everybody's so confused. The Christian life doesn't mean we have an inability to sin, it means we have an ability not to sin. He did no sin.

As I've said so often, Jesus said to the bad woman that came, remember she came, that nasty woman came to Jesus and Jesus says, go and sin less. Didn't he say that? No. Oh, I've got something wrong here.

What did he say? Go and sin no more. And that's the other side of Calvary. That's before the blood was shed, that's before the Holy Ghost was given.

You know, you and I are just about stripped already, at least I feel I am before I go to judgment. I've got all these characters I can read and all they went through, all their trials and tribulations and difficulties. I've all the exhortations of the Word of God, I've all the exceeding great and precious promises.

What do you do when you're in trouble? Most often go to Romans 8.28. Or some other little pet verse that we like. Well, these men of God couldn't do that. Obviously, Enoch couldn't do that.

He couldn't carry a library in his pocket. This is what the book is, it's a library, 66 books. Most profound things that have ever been written, that man has ever talked about or understood are here in the Word of God.

Number one, he did no sin. We don't sin because we have to, we sin because we want to. One man loves his liquor and he spends a fortune on liquor.

Another man loves gambling, he won't, he won't get drunk. That man's an idiot. He's been in jail twice because he's been driving while he was drunk.

Men choose their sin, we have turned everyone to his own way. Sinners scorn sinners. These people who spend a stack of money gambling, scorn the man over the road.

He staggers home drunk or the cops bring him home and he's wrecked his house, he beats his wife up, hits his children, wrecks her furniture. He's an idiot, I would never do that. But he's draining his family budget the other way with gambling, or in some other way.

He did no sin. He that is born of God does not commit sin, not habitually, if he does, he slips. What's the difference between the sin of a man who professes the name of Christ and a man who doesn't? Just yesterday, brother, dear brother, fast was over.

A remarkable little man does all that work there in the prison. And he'd met a man in prison this past weekend, 35 years of age, he has a lovely wife and four children up in, uh, up in where? Carolina, Virginia, Virginia. And oh, the man was so broken, he said, Mr. Foss, I've just been up before the courts.

Oh, you get a sentence? Yes. What's your crime? Well, he said, I have a lovely wife and four children, but I was away on an assignment and I was lonely and I got friendly with a girl and I committed adultery. Oh, she was quite in agreement, we'd have a meal or something, we were both so happy, and then he said, I got, we got involved sexually.

She in no way protested, but afterwards she reported that he raped her. The Dallas police got him. They'd been unable to solve about six rapes, so they stuck them all on that one man.

They kept him there in a room all day and half the night till he was weary and worn out, trying to get him to make a confession, waiting, waiting till he was too mentally tired to make any real decision. And he would not do it. He said, I will never do it.

I never, I touch one girl and that's broken my heart and broken my marriage. He goes to jail, pardon me, he goes to the court, they pin these six other rapes on this man who only did this horrible thing to the one girl and by agreement he got 60 years in jail. Other men are going around that have done far worse than that and get off scot-free.

Oh, the wages of sin. It, what's the difference between the man who commits sin as a Christian and there's no difference in the sin, the difference is in the attitude. The man who commits a sin is broken hearted.

The man who's an habitual sinner, he goes on, it doesn't touch his conscience, doesn't keep him awake, he doesn't worry about the bad influence, he's in trouble. The Christian man groans and moans and repents before God, but even that doesn't get you off the hook. This man has done that.

He said, I've so repented and wept till I can't weep anymore. I've written to my wife, I've grieved, but I've got 60 years to do. He that is born of God does not commit sin and he cannot sin while he's walking in the light.

If he sins, he steps out of light into darkness. He did no sin, number one. Neither was guile found in his mouth, that's number two.

No duplicity, no duplicity. When he reviled, he reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judged us righteously.

This is where we have to walk, in righteousness, walk in truth, walk in holiness, walk in purity. But look at all we have to aid us to do this. Why were these men blessed? Because as we sang earlier, trust and

obey, there's no other way.

There's a man that draws the biggest crowds in America today, he never uses TV, he never asked for money, he just goes round from one meeting to another. I was sick early this year and he wrote me a lovely letter, Bill Gotham. Brother Len, I hear you've been sick, I'm so sorry.

He said, we've had a marvellous week this week. A hundred thousand people came to our meetings this week. So these other little boys on TV are all saying they get the biggest crowds, they don't.

This man never talks about his crowd, never asked for money, never uses TV, never used anything else. He was having dinner in a house with my good friend Dr Charles Stanley of the First Baptist Church in Atlanta. And Bill Gotham said, well, hey Brother Charles, that big church, 3,000 people Sunday.

He said, yeah, 3,000 people Sunday. Well, with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness you like? Few sheep, like David's brother said to him, with whom did you leave the few sheep? Oh, he said, I left them with a, oh, I don't suppose you know him, he's an Englishman, a bit of a strange fella, called Leonard Ravenhill. Leonard Ravenhill.

He said, I haven't seen him for years. He said, you know, he came to our house when I was 19 years of age, I think he said he came home from college that week. And over the dinner table, he said to my daddy, he said, you know, there's one secret, there's one word that's a secret to success in the Christian life.

And my daddy said, well, what is it Brother Ravenhill? He said, obedience. And he said, I decided that night to be obedient. Well, I'm very glad he took the advice.

It's a key, it's a secret. No, God didn't ask Noah to do what he asked Abraham to do. He didn't ask Abraham to build an ark.

Every man obeyed God, whether it was according to pattern or not according to pattern. The one thing that God required was obedience and faith. They don't cost much and yet they cost everything.

So what we have to do is what? Walk in newness of life. We have to walk in obedience. We have to be faithful.

We have to walk in holiness. We have to hate the things we've loved and by grace of God, love the things we've hated and establish that union with Christ in obedience, which neither, or as it says at the end of Romans, I'm going to quote that suddenly, but I can skip in here and quote it again. What did Paul say? What shall separate us from the love of Christ? You know, we blame the devil or the environment or friends when really the thing that severs our, not our eternal relationship, that severs our fellowship is disobedience.

You look back over your life. Isn't it strewn with vows and promises and commitments you never kept? That's when, when Elijah went and before the fire came from heaven, what did he do? Oh, you say built an altar. No, he didn't.

What did he do? He went and repaired the old altar that had broken down. We want to put on one side. Oh, I did make some vows and commitments and promises to God that he's a merciful God.

He'll forgive. From here, Lord, I just want to go on as though it never happened. The Lord says, go back and repair your fences.

Go back and put something straight. These days you hardly dare preach repentance anywhere, but much less do we dare to preach restitution as I mentioned last week. So going back and as far as we can humanly, of course, part of the humiliation is that you can't repair a lot of things.

I think those things should keep us humble. The one thing that should keep us humble amongst others is our failures, our breakdowns. Oh yes, I'm going to pray more.

I've made a vow that for the next year I'm going to be up every morning at five o'clock and pray. And we do it for about a week and then whoops, down we go. I'm going to spend one day in fasting except that the Smiths always invite us to dinner that night.

Isn't it easy to push God on one side? Why should God believe me in the next vow I make if I haven't kept 50 behind it? I've got to do something. I've got to have a thorough repentance. I've got to find some special promise and stand on it.

As I say, when the devil comes, what did Jesus do? He threw the book at him. Jesus said it is written, it is written, it is written, it is written. And I said to young people, say again here, if I were your age, of course, it's always good to have hindsight.

I would learn one proverb every week, a new one. I'd start off Sunday with it. I'd say to myself two or three times.

I get up Monday morning and say it again. I'd say it every day in the week until I'd memorized it. After all, that would do you more good than a little seminary.

Because at the end of the year, you'd have 52 precious promises tucked away in your heart. And when Satan comes, you just blast him with the Word of God. That's what Jesus did.

If it's good enough for him, it's good enough for me. It is written, it is written, it is written. And after all, there's nowhere else we can stand but except on God's Word, isn't there? If he could walk in the midst of all that corruption and sin and perfect obedience to the Father, you and I can do it today.

We have everything to strengthen us. The exceeding great and precious promises, the precious blood to cover us, the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling us, the fellowship of the saints. Enoch had none of them, but he walked before God.

Neither did Abraham, but God says, walk before me and be thou perfect. It can be done. We won't get arrogant.

The older you get, the more you know you don't know. I knew a lot more 30 years ago than I knew now. In fact, I knew almost everything 30 years ago.

But I forget when I sleep, don't I? I forget other things. But when we walk with the Lord, trust and obey, for there is no other way. It's as simple as that.

If you want to know God, read his love letters to you, and you'll become more precious than ever. Lord, we thank you for the examples of these precious people before us. They certainly humiliate us.

We think again of this Enoch, in the midst of all the corruption that just preceded the ark, a world so filthy you washed it all away, you drown it. And yet he lived amidst that corruption and vileness and impurity.

And homosexuality and every other devilish thing that was there at the time of Sodom and Gomorrah.

We thank you that we can walk in newness of life day by day. We want to do it. Help us to determine in our wills that supremely we'll do the will of God.

Because he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. I give you thanks in Jesus name.

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