

Walking With God

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Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[0 : 00] Our opening psalm tonight, psalm of praise, is psalm 30. Psalm number 30, that's in the Scottish Psalter. You'll find that on page 239. Lord, I will thee extol, for thou hast lifted me on high, and over me thou to rejoice made'st not mine enemy.

For thou who art the Lord my God, I in distress to thee, with loud cries lifted up my voice, and thou hast healed me. Down to verse 5, for but a moment lasts his wrath, life in his favor lies.

Weeping may for a night endure, at morn doth joy arise. Words that are so full, vibrantly full of life, and full of thanksgiving to God for his salvation, and call upon us as God's people to sing praise to him in accordance with that.

Psalm 30 then, verses 1 to 5. Lord, I will thee extol. Lord, I will thee extol, for thou hast lifted me on high, and over me thou to rejoice, may it's not mine enemy.

O thou who art the Lord my God, I in distress to thee, with thou hast lifted me, with thou Christ, may it's not mine.

[1 : 59] I will thee extol, for thou hast lifted me, with thou Christ, may it's not mine. O Lord, I will thee extol, for thou hast lifted me, with thou Christ, may it's not mine. And love, and still let me be.

O Lord, I will thee extol, for thou hast lifted me, with thou hast lifted me, with thou hast lifted me, with thou hast lifted me.

O Lord, I will thee extol, for thou hast lifted me, with thou hast lifted me, with thou hast lifted me, with thou hast lifted me, with thou hast lifted me. O Lord, I will thee extol, for thou hast ing it, with thou hast magnetic system.

O Lord, I will thee extol, ye socher! O O Lord, ye that high this holy one, sing praise unto the Lord. Son to the Lord, and give unto him thanks when ye his holiness reward.

[3 : 20] For God's hope and last is right, like in his favor lies.

We've been before a night endured, a thorn of joy arise.

Now we're going to engage in prayer, let's call upon the Lord in prayer. Amen.

We pray that that may be the experience of each one of us here in this building tonight. That we can meaningfully and joyfully sing praises to you, knowing you as the rescuer who has brought us from death.

Who has brought us life in its abundance, in the Lord Jesus Christ, your Son. Lord, we give thanks that we are here once again, gathered in this building to worship you.

[4 : 54] We are conscious of drawing near to you, even though we cannot see you. And we nevertheless know that you are here. And we know that we consciously come into your presence as we come to worship you, whether collectively, with others or privately for ourselves.

And we give thanks for the privilege we have of being able to draw near to God. And help us, we pray, to do so with faith and with longing.

Enable us to draw near to you, believing that you are indeed a rewarder of those who seek you diligently. And we ask tonight, Lord, that as we gather together, so your word once again will be impressed upon our minds and hearts.

Feed our minds, we pray, so that we will grow in our understanding of your truth. And of the great things that are revealed in your truth. When you reveal to us yourself, your ways and ourselves and the world in which we live.

When you bring before us things of eternity and of time. We give thanks that you set out for us, especially the way of life against the way of death.

[6 : 05] Help us, we pray, as we become familiar with these things week by week. That our concern will be, Lord, to grow in our understanding and our appreciation of them.

We come before you, Lord, as those who also need to come with our confession of our sin. We pray, Lord, that you would enable us to do so meaningfully.

To come before you, even though we have maybe expressed our sin to you penitently before many times. Yet, O Lord, it is appropriate for us, indeed, as you taught your disciples, to forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

To forgive our sins, to cleanse us from our iniquity. We come with that confession, O Lord. We have sinned against you even since we met here this morning.

And our sins, we know, are sins of our mind as well as of our outward actions. And we ask your forgiveness. We ask your restoration whenever we have gone aside from your ways.

[7 : 09] We ask that you would give us tonight that sense of assurance that our sins are truly forgiven in Christ when we come to place our trust in him. And we pray, gracious one, that our thankfulness may truly extend to include the fact that our sins, when forgiven, will never return to us again accusingly.

We pray that you would grant to us, each of us here, O Lord, that such may be our relationship with you. And that our concern will be not only to know that for ourselves, but to commend it as an experience we have come to know to those around us, too.

Bless us, Lord, we pray tonight in our homes and our families, in the circumstances of life we find ourselves in. We pray that your blessing will be with us in all that we do and wherever we appear. And we ask as we were dwelling our minds this morning, O Lord, upon the importance of revealing by our way of life that you are our covenant God, that we are your people.

And we pray that that will be a burden on our hearts, that we will be concerned, O Lord, to show that wherever we have the opportunity to do so in the world and conditions of our day.

[8 : 29] Remember us, Lord. Lord, we pray in all our activities as well as once again we bring before you all that we seek to partake of in this coming week. Lord, we are conscious every time we come each Lord's Day to open our bulletin sheet how much, O Lord, you enable us to engage in how many different types of activities we find ourselves involved with.

And we pray that these will again be blessed, that we will be thankful that we are able to carry out these activities in your name and seeking the advance of your kingdom in them.

And we pray, Lord, that you would grant always your blessing to accompany all that we seek to do in your name. For without you, where can we be? Without you, we cannot know that effective blessing of the gospel that our hearts desire.

We pray again for your Holy Spirit to continue to guide us and to bless us as a people. Remember those of our number again tonight who are ill. We think tonight, Lord, of those in hospital, those who are recovering from illness, those recovering from surgery, from treatment, those who are still engaged in such treatment, we ask that you would bless them, bless those who watch over them and care for them in their own homes and families and may be anxious over them.

Lord, we pray that you would still all our anxieties, whatever they may be and whatever they may be related to. We pray that you would help us to follow the direction of your word, to be not over-anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, to make our requests known to God, that we may know the peace of God that passes all understanding, that is able to garrison our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

[10 : 27] We ask, O Lord, too, that you would bless our young folks. We bring our young people before you. Bless them, Lord, in their youngest days through to their adolescence and up into adulthood.

We pray that your blessing will follow all that's done in your name toward them, to teach them the things of God, to hold out for them the word of life. We pray your blessing, too, tonight for those who continue to mourn over the passing of loved ones, either recently or in times gone by.

We know, Lord, how fresh these things can be in our memory, even though the event may be long in the past. We seek your peace. We seek your stilling of our hearts, O Lord.

We ask that your comfort will be extended to those who know the pain of bereavement and of the sorrow of part and from loved ones. Grant your blessing to them all, we pray.

Throughout the world, Lord, tonight, we pray that your kingdom will extend and that your people will be blessed. We bring before you the conditions we know of the world's activities.

[11 : 37] As we find them, Lord, brought before us in news reports, we pray especially for those places where tonight there is war, terror, strife, anger and conflict and hatred.

And we ask, gracious one, that through the gospel you would bring about a lasting peace in all of these situations. We remember, particularly at this time, the situation, Lord, affecting Israel and the Middle East.

We pray that in those situations, Lord, peace may prevail. And we ask that you would help people to lay down their arms in the aggression that we know of, Lord, as that has taken place now over many months.

We pray that you bless the situation too in Ukraine. Oh, help them, Lord, we pray, as they seek to advance and come to gain victory over an aggressor that has sought to displace them and sought and brought much devastation into their nation.

Oh, Lord, our God, bring peace about, we pray, and grant, we pray, wherever such aggression happens from time to time in the world, Lord, we pray that you would grant by your own blessing that it may be stilled and that you would bring about conditions of peace throughout the world.

[13:03] We pray that your blessing now will be with us here. Bless us in this, our own community as well. Bless, Lord, all that is available to us to our advantage in the way that we find so much to help us, whether it be through ill health, through mental health provisions, physical ill health, all, Lord, else who help us from time to time with counseling, with various ways in which we find our lives benefited.

Bless them. We pray who have the skills to impart to us such treatment and such help at these times.

We pray your blessing to be with Muriel tonight as she speaks about her work. Lord, we ask that as she spends time with us during these days, that you will bless her, that you continue to bless the loved ones she's left behind for a time in Cambodia.

We ask that they too will be kept during the time that she's absent. And we pray that you would continue to bless her work there and enable us to continue prayerfully and practically to support her through her time of service there.

Continue to bless all efforts throughout the world, whether it be through charitable agencies or through the work of missionary activity. Oh, Lord, extend your kingdom, we pray, through all of these means.

[14:30] Hear us now, we pray. Accept us freely and all for Jesus' sake. Amen. We're going to again sing to God's praise. This time we're singing in Psalm 34.

Psalm 34, and it's in the St. Sam's version. And the verses we find from verse 15. From verse 15 to the end of the Psalm, verse 22, that's page 41.

The Lord's eyes are upon the just. He listens to their plea. The wicked he rejects and blots from earth their memory. The righteous cry.

The Lord responds and frees them when distressed. The Lord draws near the broken heart and rescues the depressed. These verses 15 to 22.

The Lord's eyes are upon the just. The Lord's eyes are upon the just.

[15:31] He listens to their plea. The wicked he rejects and blots from earth their memory.

The righteous cry. The righteous cry. The Lord responds and frees them when distressed.

The Lord draws near the broken heart. The broken heart and rescues the depressed.

From all the troubles of the just. The Lord will set him free.

The Lord protects his death. The broken heart and broken heart will be.

[16:54] The wicked are condemned to death. All those who hate the just.

God saves his death. The broken heart and broken heart will be. The broken heart and broken heart will be. For in the Lord they trust.

Amen. Let's turn now to read and to hear God's word. We're reading tonight from the epistle to the Hebrews. The letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 11.

And we're reading from the beginning down as far as verse 16. As you know this is a great chapter dealing with faith.

But faith as it becomes visible in the life of God's people. So that each of those instances and examples of faith.

[18:00] Faith involves something that they did or achieved through faith. And we'll take your reading down to verse 16. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

The conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation. By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God.

So that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain.

Through which he was commended as righteous. God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith although he died he still speaks.

By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death. And he was not found because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God.

[19 : 00] For without faith it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists. And that he rewards those who seek him. By faith Noah being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen.

In reverent faith constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out not knowing where he was going.

By faith he went to live in the land of promise as in a foreign land. Living in tents with Isaac and Jacob. Heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations.

Whose designer and builder is God. By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive. Even when she was past the age. Since she considered him faithful who had promised.

[20 : 08] Therefore from one man and him as good as dead. Were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven. And as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

These all died in faith. Not having received the things promised. But having seen them and greeted them from afar. And having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out. They would have had opportunity to return.

But as it is. They desire a better country. That is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God. For he has prepared for them a city.

And may God again follow with this blessing. A reading of that portion of his own word. Now before we turn to a couple of verses in this chapter.

[21 : 11] We'll sing again. This time we're singing Psalm 73. And that's on page 316. Psalm 73 and verses 23 to 28.

And these verses comprise one of the most wonderful testimonies and convictions. Anywhere we find in the Bible.

The psalmist here having begun to. At the beginning to confess how very near he was to slipping away. How he had become envious.

At what he thought was the life of the wicked. That didn't as far as he was concerned. Then have much by way of difficulty. In contrast to himself as a believer.

But then when he went into the temple of God. To the house of God. He actually then he says understood their end. And surely he said in verse 18.

[22 : 10] They are actually in very slippery places. And suddenly brought to ruin. And so he continues now in verse 23. Nevertheless continually. O Lord I am with thee.

Thou dost me hold by my right hand. And still upholdest me. Thou with thy counsel while I live. Wilt me conduct and guide. And to thy glory afterwards.

Receive me to abide. So from verse 23 to the end of the psalm. Nevertheless continually. O Lord I am with thee.

that thou dost iç for me. And what I love is to be. Thank you. That thou dost be whole. I am still a bolder's feet.

With my power, still while I live, will be called that and guide.

[23 : 39] Until thy glory afterward receive me to abide.

In heaven, I am the heaven's high, but thee, O Lord, alone.

And in the air whom I desire, besides thee there is none.

My flesh and heart, the pit and fail, but God, the fail me never.

For all my heart, God is the strength and ocean forever.

[25 : 04] For all my heart, I fall from thee forever perish shall.

Then that powering from me go, thou hast destroyed all.

But surely it is good for me that I draw near to God.

In God I trust that all thy works I may declare abroad.

Well, for our time this evening, we're going to look at a couple of verses in Hebrews chapter 11, especially verses 5 and 6. By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death.

[26 : 31] And he was not found because God had taken him. Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please him.

For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. And the corresponding words we find in the Old Testament in Genesis chapter 5 are as follows in verse 21.

When Enoch had lived for 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah for 300 years and had other sons and daughters.

Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him.

So the words of Hebrews are based very much on that reference in Genesis chapter 5. Now we know that there can be many differences, indeed contrasts, between one believing life and another.

[27 : 38] And within the experiences of the people of God, there are some very contrasting experiences and situations. So that, in matter of fact, there are times when we may be not able to follow to any great extent that which others are going through.

Or the experience they've had as people who have followed the Lord and believe in him. And when you look at these two people here, Abel in verse 4, followed by Enoch, they're obviously held in contrast.

They both lived by faith. But in the one case, Abel, through faith, offered this more acceptable sacrifice. But he ended his life in this world by being put to death.

He became a martyr. And yet, in contrast, you find, and I think it's for that reason that these verses are held one after another, Enoch, who lived by faith just as Abel did, but his days ended in this world by being taken away without seeing death.

There's the one person living by faith and he's put to death for his faith, if you like. And there's the other one living by faith and he doesn't see death because God takes him away without ever having to pass through death.

[29 : 00] And so it is in our lives as believers. There are so many contrasts that we may not be able to follow as we think of the experiences of other people. And that should not disturb us because when we come to know of the ways of God, he deals differently with every individual as he sees fit and he knows exactly what we need at any given time, even if that may be very different to the way that he deals with others.

So the fact that we differ, sometimes maybe markedly in our experience, from what other believers experience, we should never conclude from that, that we therefore must not have faith or that our faith cannot be genuine.

When you go through this chapter, there's such a great variety of experiences, but all the way through there is one common feature, one thing that they all have in common, and that's faith in God.

And in the case of Abel and of Enoch, they both had the same testimony that they pleased God, that they lived by faith in God through living, living through faith in God, they actually had this testimony that they pleased God.

So we're looking first of all tonight at the facts concerning Enoch that are actually revealed here, the facts about Enoch that we find in verse 5.

[30 : 23] And then secondly, we look at the faith that Enoch lived by, because there are a number of aspects of his faith actually revealed to us in these verses. So the facts that are given, there are two facts especially in regard to Enoch as a person, and the first fact is that he was taken up so that he would not see death, and the second fact is that he pleased God.

Before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God. These two great facts, the fact that he was taken up by God without seeing death, and the fact that he pleased God prior to that, living through faith or by faith.

And when you see here that he was taken up so that he should not see death, that's literally what we understand. This is not something that's given us by way of just an imaginary type of person or situation.

From the Old Testament passage, Genesis 5, and from this he was taken away by God. He was not found. He was taken up, and he was not found, because God had taken him.

Now when it says he was not found, that I think implies that there was a search made for him. There was a day when his relatives, people who knew him, his friends, expected to see him, and there was no sign of him.

[31 : 48] And there was no sign of him, because God had chosen to take him away. And just as the language is very abrupt, so that whole incident, in the case of Enoch, would have been a very abrupt taking.

God took him, and he was not found. It's not that he died overnight, and was found by his relatives to have died, and passed away quickly, as happens to some.

Here is somebody who wasn't found. Somebody who could not be located. Somebody who was well known, but he was not found, because God took him.

And we believe these words literally, for what they say. This is God telling us through his word, this is exactly how it was. This is what happened. He did not die.

He was taken away bodily. And that's not just a matter of fact sort of thing that's mentioned. It really indicates that there's such a thing as victory over death.

[32 : 51] Death did not claim Enoch. Death did not take him away. He was taken away so that he was above death. He was taken away, but he didn't see death.

Not by death, but without seeing death, victory over it. A sudden change. And you notice, if you go through this passage in Genesis chapter 5, this great list that you find there of the generations of Adam, a series recording the people who came from Adam all the way down until you reach the end of the chapter, which speaks about Noah.

And then you're into chapter 6, giving more details about Noah. But all the way through, you find all of these people marked by these words, and he died, and he died, and he died.

You follow it right through, and he died, all the way through until you come to verse 21. And then you come to verse 24. Enoch walked with God, and he died.

No, he was taken. He was not found, for he was taken. And there you see a wonderful demonstration, really, in words, of how different it was in the case of Enoch, that he walked with God all the days of his life, and then he was not, for God took him.

[34 : 15] He demonstrated, God demonstrated through him, that death did not have the last word in human experience. That there was such a thing in the hand of God as victory over death.

And in fact, you could say that that, for the Old Testament church, for the people of faith in the Old Testament, the likes of what happened to Enoch, and their knowledge as that was passed on to them, and came eventually to be written in the book of Genesis, that held out for him the prospect of victory over death.

The assurance that death was not the great victor after all, but that God was. That God had something by which death would be overcome, and was overcome.

Interesting, in the psalm, we sang Psalm 73, where the psalmist, in such a wonderful way of expressing it, said, You shall guide me with your counsel.

I am continually with you. You will guide me with your counsel, and afterwards, you will receive me into glory. Now, literally, the word receive is actually the word take.

[35 : 26] Afterwards, you will take me into glory. That's exactly the same word that's used in Genesis 5 to do with Enoch. Enoch was taken.

The psalmist in Psalm 73 is saying, Afterwards, you will take me into glory. You will take me above death. You will take me so that death will not actually have victory over me.

What a wonderful testimony, all the way through the Old Testament days, that he could go to such words as these, and such events as, in the case of Enoch, and to the testimony of the psalmist, and be able to say, by faith in God, Lord, thank you that death is not final, that death is not the final victor, but that life is, the life that you give.

You will receive me into glory. And in fact, you could say, that it's an indicator of resurrection from the dead. In the case of Enoch, and in the words of the psalmist, now I'm not saying by that, that they understood resurrection the way in the New Testament it came to be revealed, and especially following the resurrection of Christ.

It was really a dim reflection of life by resurrection compared to what came to be revealed in the New Testament. But essentially, it is exactly the same.

[36 : 47] essentially, it is holding out before us victory over death. And where is victory over death rooted? Where is your own victory over death?

Why is it that you as a believer tonight are conscious of and confident that death will not be the final victor in your life? Because you're united to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And who is he? He's the one who died and rose again from the dead. And united to him and united to him in his resurrection. You can say like the psalmist, you can say as was true of Enoch, nevertheless, I am continually with you.

You hold me by the right hand. You guide me with your counsel and afterwards you will take me.

You will take me up from the grave. You will take me to be with yourself.

He was taken, Hebrews 11 says, taken up that should not see death. In other words, the word taken up there, the words taken up you could say are maybe better translated, well, maybe better, the rendering might be better using the word translated.

[37 : 56] When you translate someone from one situation to another, you're moving them on from one state to another, from one situation to another. And what's really said here about Enoch is God translated him.

He took him out of one set of circumstances. He took him out of one situation to a better one. He took him out from a situation where normally you would see death and he took him above death and he took him beyond death and he took him in a way that could reflect on how God had overcome death in his experience.

Now tonight that's important to yourself because the same faith that Enoch had is the faith that every true believer has had all the way down through history.

And you tonight as a believer in Christ, even if your faith you might complain, well, it's very weak, it's a faith that you don't see in any way as robust compared to others. It's something that you're conscious of, maybe fluctuates from one day to the next in a way that you maybe don't have such great assurance and yet you would never say you're not actually a believer in Christ.

Well, it doesn't matter whether it's small faith or large faith or strong faith or robust faith. Here is what it's attached to. It's connected to this person of Jesus.

[39 : 20] And because it is connected to him, you're assured that death will not claim you, even if your body and soul are separated in physical death.

That's not death's victory when you're united to Christ. Because in Christ you have victory over death. And the day will come when your body will be raised from the grave and reunited with your soul.

And bodily and spiritually as a complete person, you will share in the victory of God's people as they're united to the victory of Christ.

What a wonderful concept. God's people as a great man. And how marvelous that even in the Old Testament days, even though not as fully revealed by any means, and it couldn't be really in a sense, till Jesus himself rose from the dead.

But it's there. It's there so that you can see it in root form or embryonic form, if you like, in the revelation of God then. And then comes to a more full light in the New Testament age.

[40 : 27] So that's first of all, he was taken up by God. He was translated from one state to a better state. The second fact is that he pleased God. Before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God.

Again, it's maybe better to just have a different form of words there. He was commended as having pleased God, is what we read here. But you could translate it, he had it testified of him that he pleased God.

And why does that make a little difference? Just a nuance, really, of meaning? Well, it makes a difference when you think of it this way. He had it testified of him that he pleased God. It wasn't something just private to himself.

It wasn't something that was true of him as an individual that nobody actually saw but himself, that nobody was aware of but himself. When you say he had it testified of him, it means this was how he was known publicly.

This was how people knew him. This was the kind of lifestyle that he showed as he went about his business in the world. He was known as a God pleaser.

[41 : 47] He was known as somebody who lived specifically to please God. He gave off this testimony. He had it testified about him by others that he was a pleaser of God.

In other words, that his life was one that sought to gain the approval of God. And that's how it is with faith, isn't it?

Your concern as a believer tonight is that you will have God's approval. Because unless we have God's approval, what does it matter? It doesn't matter what that world out there thinks about you if you don't have the approval of God.

It doesn't really matter what approval the world might give you or anybody might give you. It all comes to nothing at the end of the day unless our life is right with God and God approves of us through faith in Christ.

What does it matter? And the opposite is also true. If our faith is in Christ, if we have our trust in God, if our trust is located there, if our life is handed over to him and we live by faith in him, what does it matter what the world thinks of that?

[43 : 03] What does it matter if our testimony to the world is that we live to please God? The world may not accept that. The world may laugh at that. The world may find that just ridiculous.

The world may think, well, surely you're not living by such outmoded ideas of what a life and a lifestyle should be. But you know, faith does not change down through the generations.

Faith is essentially trusting in God. And trusting in God carries with it God's approval of that life. Not for anything we've done, but by virtue of what Jesus has done. And our union with him brings us into the approval of God.

He had this testimony. He had this said of him, testified of him, that he approved, that he pleased God. And there's something else about it as well.

[44 : 03] When you go to the Genesis passage, as we read it there, Enoch walked with God, and he was not or was not found because God took him.

He walked with God. It was an aspect of his life of faith. He lived a life of communion with God. Every day for Enoch was a life where he walked with God, where his path through life had God with him, and he was with God.

He was his companion. He was his friend. He was the one he shared things with. He was the one he trusted in. You know, in the court of session in Edinburgh, there's a large hallway there.

And in that hallway, QCs or KCs, as they are now, actually sometimes meet with their clients, maybe in between sessions of a case being heard in the court of session.

And that large hall, it's a large hall, and what happens is when a KC wants to have some words with the client, he takes them into the hall, he stands at one end of it, and off he goes.

[45 : 19] Or she goes. And they walk together from one end of the hall, discussing things, or maybe the KC asking for certain things, certain details. And back they come again, and they do that until the KC has more information, or whatever it is he's seeking.

The point is this. They're walking together in conversation. They're walking together in the business that they have together. And not until that business is finished Do they then depart?

The KC, the court case resumes. The KC goes back to his place, and so does the client. That's really what happens ordinarily, but in terms of a spiritual situation, that is what a Christian life is about.

Enoch walked with God. God was his chief advisor. God was the one who looked after his life. God was the one he conversed with. God was the one he gave his life over to. He walked with God. And he was not found because God took him.

[46 : 31] And in that very close friendship, so many things were shared together. Now, we don't have any record of, but inevitably that would be the case.

When you go, for example, to Psalm 25, I like the way it's translated here in the ESV, Psalm 25, where you find at verse 14, these words, The friendship of the Lord is with those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.

The friendship of the Lord is with those who fear him. Those who fear the Lord, those who trust in the Lord, those whose lives are in the hands of the Lord, those who have given over their life to him, however you think about it as faith, those who live by faith, the Lord reveals to them his covenant.

They converse with each other. God reveals things to them from his word, through his spirit, things that belong to them as his people, things that are true of their relationship with him.

He reveals to them his covenant. Is that so of your own life tonight? Is it as true of you that you're walking with God?

[47 : 56] I'm not asking you to what extent you're assured of this, not asking how much can you explain of this. Is it true that you're walking with God?

That your life in this world as a life of faith is as it was for Enoch, a life in which you walk with God? Is that what characterizes your life?

Is that your testimony? Is that how it is with yourselves, with us as individuals? Am I tonight walking with God?

Am I in conversation with God regularly? Am I praying to him as I should? Am I worshipping him? Am I putting him out foremost in my life as my great advisor, my KC, if you like, in representing me in his own presence?

Enoch walked with God. He had this testimony before he was taken as having pleased God. The facts about Enoch then, very briefly, the faith that Enoch lived by.

[49 : 11] He was taken, in verse 6 here, without faith it is impossible to please God, and so on. It wasn't because of his faith that Enoch was taken by God so as not to see death.

It was by faith that he lived. It wasn't his faith itself that provided the grounds of his acceptance with God. But it was through faith that he came to be accepted by God and into friendship with God. And what a marvelous thought and concept that is, isn't it? That through faith in God, through the exercise of faith, through trusting in God, we actually come into real, spiritual, lasting friendship with God.

The Bible tells us that as sinners we are enemies, that we are at enmity with God. But through Christ, through what God has done in Christ, when we come to trust in him, then we come into the possession of something quite remarkable, something amazing, the friendship of God.

We come to actually walk with him. We come to know him as our great friend. And that's why he says here that without faith, it is impossible to please God.

[50 : 26] It's not possible to please God without this faith. We can try it, but it just will not work. And I think in the passage itself here, we find some evidence of that.

Cain, for example, tried, it's not mentioned in the passage, but Abel's brother, you remember Cain, who murdered him, and he brought an offering to God.

Cain brought of the flock, the animals of the flock, a sacrifice. Cain brought the fruit of the ground.

And some people think that he was refused acceptance because he didn't bring an animal.

But I don't think that's what the passage actually is meaning at all. Cain took off something that belonged to his own way of life in the world.

His employment was in tilling the ground and looking after the crops and so on. And he brought something of that to offer it to God. Whereas Abel brought of the flocks that he looked after.

[51 : 27] The problem's not what they gave, but the spirit in which it was offered. Cain couldn't care less what God thought of him.

He just went through the motions, almost as it were, just throwing a few vegetables together to bring to God. Whereas Abel, by faith, came to offer to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, it says in verse 4.

It wasn't what he brought as a sacrifice that condemned Cain, but the manner in which he brought it. It wasn't by faith. It wasn't in a love for God as his life afterwards showed.

Whereas Abel did. And so you find as well with the Egyptians. If you go through the chapter, you'll find that eventually you come to the people of Israel, verse 29.

The people crossed the Red Sea as if on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. That, I think, is telling us that there's something in the Egyptians that sought to follow the ways of the people of Israel who lived, who by faith, entered into the Red Sea and went through to the other side, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do the same, came to disaster.

[52 : 52] You know, we can try and copy faith. We can try and imitate faith. We can try and pass ourselves off as believers, but it's not really from the heart.

We can try outwardly to live a life of faith that tries to copy the lifestyle of somebody we know as a genuine believer. Friends, tonight, trying to imitate faith, trying to copy faith, without genuine faith, is a disaster.

It will not work. It leads to death. It's not approved of by God. But by faith, we are guaranteed God's acceptance of us in Christ.

By faith, this was how Enoch lived. And so, whoever comes to God, it's saying, whoever would draw near to God, must believe that he exists, or that he is, as the old AV has it.

By whoever draws near to God, must believe that he is. And that means more than just believing in a bare existence of God. You come to draw near to God, and that's really the language of worship, primarily.

[54 : 05] You draw near to God. That's what we're doing tonight in worship together. We're drawing near to God. When you go on your knees, or however you pray to God, you're drawing near to God. And what it's telling us here is that drawing near has that purpose of worshiping and pleasing God.

And it's believing that God is as he has revealed himself to be. It's all too easy. Nowadays, I'm afraid, to find people just taking, saying, well, I'm actually an evangelical.

I believe in the Bible. I believe that I'm a Christian. But I don't believe such things as that the death of Christ on the cross was a propitiation for sin.

That there was anything there to do with seeking to pacify the anger of God. I don't believe any of these things at all. I'm not saying you can't be a Christian without believing that. But what I'm saying is that if we cut out and excise or delete things in the Bible that we've got and say, that's not appropriate for today's generation.

That's kind of really Old Testament stuff we've long since moved away from that. Well, that's not a sign of a believer. And if we believe things about God different to what's revealed in his word, that's not a sign of a believer either.

[55 : 22] we believe that he is. And that he is as he has revealed himself to be as recorded in his word.

You know, this is so important for us, friends, to have confidence in this Bible as the word of God. If we don't have confidence that it is the word of God, that it has God's own authority and imprint on it, then everything else we believe is liable or can at some time just be dismissed by us.

It's on the basis of this being the word of God that we actually believe things about Jesus, about his death, about his resurrection.

And that's why we believe too that God is as he has revealed himself to be. Those who draw near to God must believe that he is in other words, we come to him tonight, for example, as we've gathered here, we've drawn near to God believing that he is, believing that he receives us in the name of Christ, believing that he's pleased with us when our faith and confidence is placed in Christ, believing that he will never leave us or forsake us as we place our trust in him.

All of these things and many, many more are revealed by God to be true of himself. That's who he is. That's how he is. And we draw near to him believing that he is that.

[56 : 56] And that he is too a rewarder of those who seek him. That he rewards those who seek him. Really literally, again, that he is a rewarder.

Even more literally, what it says is that he becomes a rewarder. And what difference does that make? It makes a difference from the perspective of the believer or the person that's drawing near to God.

When it's saying God becomes a rewarder of those who seek him, what it's really saying is this is what we find out when we draw near to him in faith. He becomes then, as far as our experience is concerned, he becomes a rewarder.

He becomes one who dispenses blessings to us. You don't find that out unless you've come to believe. Unless you've placed your trust in him.

Then he becomes a rewarder in your case, in my case, and of all those who actually seek him or seek him diligently. So the seeking, what does it mean?

[58 : 05] Well, we use the word seeking sometimes for those who have not yet come perhaps to assurance that they're saved. You have not come to make a confession of their faith in a public way.

And we might say, well, they're seeking. They're seeking the Lord. Or people who maybe have some thoughts that they didn't have before and begin to attend church or whatever.

And we say about these people, sometimes we say, well, they're seeking God. They're seekers. They're seeking after him. And it's not wrong at all to say that. But if you look at the Bible, most of the cases that you find of people who are seeking the Lord are already believers.

Because seeking means drawing near to him and seeking are very closely connected together, virtually the same thing. And tonight, as a believer, you're seeking God.

You want to meet with God. You want God to speak to you through his word. In so many ways, you're seeking the Lord. Lord. And that's why he rewards those who seek him.

[59 : 11] Seeking, not trying somehow or other to find God, but also, but rather, having found God or being found by God more accurately.

We seek after him. We seek to follow him. We seek him in the Bible. We seek him in these means of grace and church services and so on.

We seek him as we come ourselves privately and individually to worship him. So Enoch's life was all about seeking God, really.

It was all about a life that was devoted to God in such a way that he received testimony that he was, in fact, a God-pleaser.

He was taken up by God not because of his faith, but through his faith he had this testimony, he had it said of him that he pleased God and he drew near to God believing that God is.

[60 : 16] And so again, I have to ask myself, where am I in all of this? Is it enough for me that I attend church? Is it enough for me that I preach from a pulpit or try to preach?

Is it enough that I've spent these 37 years creating sermons, delivering sermons, having a place in the church as a minister?

Is that enough for me? Will that give me a place of God's approval? Will that provide a ground of acceptance? No. I need Christ. I need the Jesus I preach.

I need to live by faith in him. I need to accept that God is and deliver my life over to him. So I just looked after by him that I become a pleasing individual to God and that I come at last when this life is over to be taken by him and to be taken into his glory.

May God bless these words to us this evening. Let's conclude our service now singing in Psalm 119. Psalm 119, that's on page 157, verses 1 to 8, the first section of the psalm.

[61 : 45] Blessed are those of blameless ways who live according to God's word. Blessed are those who keep his laws, who with their whole heart seek the Lord. They keep themselves from doing wrong by walking in his perfect ways.

You have established laws for us that are to be obeyed always. These verses at the beginning of the psalm to God's praise. blessed are those of blameless ways who live according to God's word. Blessed are those who keep his laws, who with their whole hearts seek the Lord.

They keep themselves from doing wrong by walking in his perfect ways.

You have established laws for us that are to be obey your ways.

[63 : 19] O that my ways were steadfast, Lord, and making you decrees my name.

So when I think of your commands, I would not feel this place for shame.

I'll preach you with an upright heart as your just laws are learned by me.

All your decrees I will obey. Do not forsake me after thee.

I'll go to the main door after the benediction this evening. Lord our God, we ask that you would receive all that we had offered to you in worship. We pray that you would bless what is prepared for us for our bodily needs in the hall.

[64 : 41] We ask again that you would bless Muriel as she comes to speak to us. And now we pray that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit will be with us now and evermore.

Amen. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, always beCould have a ■■■■■ and forever as I worship what is you know, make sure you go to war.

But that's what His record is