

## “Faith Demonstrated By Walking With God”

Heb. 11:5-6

- INTRO. - Last week we saw that Abel (the second son of Adam) was the first member of the “Hall of Faith” in Hebrews 11. Today we move 7 generations beyond Adam to include Enoch.
- To many people Enoch is a mysterious person, but the Bible declares that he was a man of faith, and we can learn a lot about the life of faith through the example of this man.
- We saw that Abel exemplified *worshipping* through faith – here we will see that Enoch exemplifies *walking* by faith. One primary thing the Bible says about him is that he “walked with God.” And the author of Hebrews makes it clear that he did this “by faith.”
- The main point of this chapter is to hammer home the truth that God has never intended for men to come to Him through works – but always through faith.
- And as I have emphasized many, many times – salvation is never as a result of works – it is always by faith alone. Yes, good works are a by-product of genuine saving faith, but it is never the basis of our salvation.
- In fact, we could make a strong case that Heb. 11:6 is the key verse in this entire chapter. It says, “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”
- As far as importance in this chapter, it is on par with v. 1 (where we are given a definition of genuine faith). Here we’re told of some other key elements of true faith.
- What does Genesis tell us about this man Enoch? Well, we’re told that he was the son of a man named Jared (who lived 962 years). We’re told he became the father of Methuselah at the age of 65.
- In Gen. 5:21-24 we read, “And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”
- Now, the translation of Enoch into heaven is what he is most known for. If you read the entire 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis, you will notice (over and over again) the phrase, “and he died.” Even though they lived much longer than people do today, we see that each descendant of Adam eventually died.
- But the one exception is Enoch, because he did *not* die – God just took him to heaven without having

to face death. We could say he was the first “raptured” saint in the Bible. The old story is that Enoch was out for a long walk with God one day, and the Lord said, “It’s getting late – and we are closer to My house than yours – so let’s just go to My house.”

- Now, that’s what we focus on (because that’s a pretty cool thing for God to just take you to heaven without dying), but it is important for us to understand – that is *not* what the author of Hebrews was focused on.
- The author of Hebrews wants us to see that this happened as a result of his *faith* – and that he lived a *life* of faith long before he was ever translated out of this world.
- In fact, it is in connection with *this* man that the author of Hebrews lays out the critical maxim, that it is *impossible* to please God apart from faith. The Genesis account does *not* specifically mention Enoch’s faith, but twice we are told he “walked with God” (before he was caught up to heaven).
- This indicates he had to have been a man of faith. We know that Adam and Eve walked with God in the Garden of Eden, but that stopped when they sinned and were expelled from the garden.
- But (as John MacArthur explains), “The ultimate destiny of man is reinstated with Enoch, who

stands as an illustration for all men of what it is to be in fellowship with God.”

- So we have (in a sense) some progressive revelation here, as Enoch took faith to a new level – the level of living a life of faith that enabled him to walk with God.
- Now, we’re *not* told this (specifically) in Scripture, but I believe his life of faith *had* to have *included* the offering of a blood sacrifice (like that of Abel) because the Bible declares, “without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sin.” (Heb. 9:22)
- Enoch could *not* have been cleansed of his sin and made right with God apart from that blood sacrifice, and therefore would *not* have been able to walk with God. So I think this is implied in his case.
- This principle has never changed (even in this dispensation) that sin has to be *initially* dealt with (through justification) before you can proceed to a life of progressive sanctification and fellowship with God.
- In other words, you have to be *saved* by faith before you can begin to live a *life* of faith. (Pause) Now, I see four main elements of Enoch’s life of faith we need to examine – and we begin with:

## I. THE COMPONENTS OF ENOCH’S FAITH

- And I want to start with the first phrase in v. 6, "...without faith it is impossible to please [God]..." This is one of the most important statements in all the Word of God! Absolutely *nothing* (from men) can please God apart from faith!

- Nationality or heritage cannot please God. This was critical for the Jews of that day to understand, because they thought they were pleasing to God simply because they were descendants of Abraham. But most of the time they were very displeasing to God.

- The Bible makes it clear that men cannot please God through the keeping of the Law. In Rom. 3:20 Paul declared, "...by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight..."

- No man can ever become pleasing to God through good works. Paul said, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

- Faith is the only way any person can ever become pleasing to God. "Without faith it is impossible to please [God]." The word "impossible" is a very strong word (in the Greek). It means "no way Jose!" (OK, that's a loose interpretation, but you get my drift...)

- It means that there is absolutely no way you can ever please God apart from genuine, biblical faith. Unbelievers cannot be pleasing to God. No matter how many so-called

"good deeds" they may attempt to do, they will never be pleasing to God.

- This is an absolute maxim! Notice, this doesn't say, "It is hard to please God without faith." It says it is IMPOSSIBLE. It means it is *not* going to happen.

- Faith is the door, the gateway, the only access to God. If you go on (in v. 6) you see another very strong word (in the Greek) and that is the word "must." It says, "he who comes to God must believe..."

- One author said, "There is an urgent necessity about it. We must believe...we must trust God." This is the only way we can come to God – by faith. This is how Enoch came to God and was able to walk with God. But notice there were two elements of that faith. First:

#### A. He Believed in the Reality of God

- Verse 6 says, "...for he who comes to God must believe that He is..." In other words, you have to *begin* by believing that God *exists*. This is pretty obvious, but it is important. You can't (very well) live a life of faith without even believing that God exists.

- Now, believing that God exists is *not* enough (in and of itself) but it is an essential first step. There are those who believe that God exists, who do *not* know Him, much less walk with Him. But (of course) no one who denies His existence would ever come close to a life of faith in Him.

- The first step, is believing that God “is” – and please understand – this is *not* just believing in *any* old god; it is believing in the God of the Bible. It’s *not* believing in God as some vague, cosmic “force.” It’s *not* believing in “the man upstairs.” It’s *not* believing in the philosophers’ “ground of being.”

- It is believing in the one true God – the God that is revealed to us in Scripture. It is believing in the God who made His will known to the fathers through the prophets and has spoken to us in these last days through His Son. It’s *not* enough just to believe in *a* god – we must believe in the true God.

- The faith that the author of Hebrews has in mind is the belief in him who is “the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God” (1 Tim. 1:17).

- People today have all kinds of fallacious caricatures of God. Some see Him as a grandfatherly-type old man who caudles people and winks at their sin. Someone who would never hurt a flea.

- Others see Him as this stern policeman whose primary job is to make people suffer. Others see Him as the god of the deists, who wound up the world and then just lets it run on its own.

- But none of those false concepts of God is what the Bible has in mind here. The idea here is that we believe in the true God – the God that we see revealed to us in Scripture.

- You see, since “no man has seen God at any time” (John 1:18) the only way we can know about Him is through His own revelation of Himself. And the only place we can find that is in His Word.

- We cannot know God by observation. We cannot know God through human reason. But we *can* know He exists by looking at the evidence for His existence. We can see the incredible way He has created this world and know that there must be a Master-Creator.

- We can look at the phenomenal complexity of the human body and realize how insane it is to think that it just happened by accident. We can look at the laws of “cause and effect” and the “law of entropy” and know there must be a “First Cause” (and only God qualifies for that role).

- One pastor writes, “Go to the apple orchard and find an apple that is growing. As we look at the leaf that grows in a spiral around the stem of the apple, we will notice that the sixth line of the leaf always overlaps the first line. It does that without exception. Go into a corn field and find a full-grown ear of corn. Shuck that ear and count the rows. Without exception, it will have an even number of rows.” Then he asks, “How did that happen once, let alone myriads of times?”

- Oh, but please understand, science cannot prove or disprove the existence of God. Science can help us better understand the *evidence* for the existence of God, but it

can't prove His existence. Ultimately your belief in the existence of God is "by faith."

- It is impossible to apply the scientific method to *everything*. Apologist Paul Little points out that science cannot prove the existence of Napoleon (or any other historical character). Why? Because history is *not* repeatable (and the scientific method requires that).

- And (of course) we can't step back in time, to the days of Napoleon, and observe him with our senses. In the same way, we can't go back to the beginning of creation and verify the existence of God and His creative work. But just because these things can't be proven by science is no reason *not* to believe them. We have God's self-revelation and we have mountains of evidence.

- I think two of the most powerful chapters in all of the Bible are Job 38-39. In Job 38:4 God says to Job, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding..." In v. 2 He asks, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?"

- You can just hear God thundering this from heaven. And someday He is going to ask all the "fools" who call themselves "atheists" the very same kinds of questions.

- You say, "Oh pastor, don't call them 'fools'." Why *not*? That's what God calls them. Ps. 14:1 says, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" I'm just saying what the Bible says.

- I've heard people say, "It sure takes a lot of faith to believe in God." No, *not* really. It takes a whole lot *more* faith *not* to believe in Him. It takes a whole lot *more* faith to believe that this entire universe just came out of some primordial ooze by accident.

- I don't know about you, but I don't have enough faith to be an atheist. I don't have enough foolish insanity to deny the existence of God.

- But this is where a life of faith has to start. You must first believe that God is. Jay Adams writes, "...the entire business of calling on a god—any old god (if there is such a thing) is in vain. Prayers like, 'O god, if there is a god...' [just don't cut it]. One must believe in Him (that is, the God of the Scriptures) or He will not respond."

- Enoch had never seen God with his physical eyes, but he believed in His existence. He believed in the reality of God. But there is a second component of his faith, and that is:

## B. He Believed in the Reward of God

- Look at v. 6 again, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

- It is *not* enough to believe that the God of the Bible exists. We must also believe that we can fully trust Him. We must recognize that He is a gracious, loving God who

rewards those who diligently seek Him. Until we come to this point of faith, we will *not* live our lives in light of the promises He has made. The life of faith is a life based on complete confidence in the goodness and trustworthiness of God.

- Enoch fully trusted in God, in spite of his limited revelation of Him. He believed on the basis of the revelation he had. But what we need to understand here, is that he did *not* see God as some sort of impersonal force – he saw Him as a God who delights in having a personal relationship with men.

- For 300 years Enoch “walked with God.” He had personal fellowship with God (even though the Scripture does *not* tell us he ever saw him with his physical eyes). He had a personal relationship with Him through the eyes of faith. He took the hand of the invisible God by faith and walked with Him. He came to know God as loving, merciful, forgiving, and gracious.

- And (of course) he is an example for us to follow. We too can live this kind of life of faith. We too can have a close, personal relationship with God through faith. In fact, we can have an even greater relationship because we have much more revelation than Enoch had.

- John MacArthur writes, “It is not enough just to postulate a God. Einstein said, ‘Certainly there is a God. Any man who doesn’t believe in a cosmic force is a fool, but we could never know him.’”

- MacArthur goes on to say, “Brilliant as he was, Einstein was wrong. We *can* know God. In fact, in order to please Him, we must believe that He is personal, knowable, loving, caring, moral, and responds graciously to those who come to Him.”

- Again, it is *not* enough just to believe in a god – or even to believe in the *true* God – we must commit our lives to Him in genuine faith. The Jews of that day believed in the one true God (the God of the Scripture) but they were *not* committed to Him in faith.

- In contrast, Enoch fully believed that God *not only* exists, but that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. His whole life of over 300 years was spent in walking with God through faith.

- By the way, notice that phrase (in v. 6) “those who seek Him.” The KJV has “those who diligently seek Him.” Someone will immediately say, “Wait a minute! Didn’t Paul say (in Rom. 3:11) ‘There is none who seeks after God’?”

- Yes, he does say that (quoting from Ps. 14:2) but we need to balance that out with all the other passages in both the Old and New Testaments that talk about seeking God and finding Him.

- For example, Jer. 29:13 says, “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.” 1 Chron. 28:9 says, “If you seek Him, He will let

you find Him...” Prov. 8:17 says, “I love those who love me; and those who diligently seek me will find me.”

- O’Brien says, “[The phrase] ‘seeking the Lord’ is a common biblical expression, particularly in the Psalms, to refer to those who rely firmly on God, trust that his promises will be fulfilled, and find in him the source of their deepest satisfaction.”

- Even Jesus (in the NT) said (in Luke 11:10), “For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened.”

- So what’s going on here? Why did Paul say that there are none who seek God? I believe that we should read Paul’s statement as, “No one seeks God on his own.” I believe that what Paul was emphasizing is the fact that the natural response of an unredeemed sinner is to run away from God rather than to Him.

- But once God does a regenerating work in a sinner’s heart, *then* he will seek Him. And those who seek Him will find Him. And the point the author of Hebrews is making, is that those who *do* seek Him will be those who believe He is absolutely trustworthy.

- And what will be the reward for those who seek Him in faith? His eternal salvation. All the promises of God. As the well-known John 3:16 declares, “...whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” That’s what motivates a life of faith. This leads us to a second major point, which is:

## II. THE CONSISTENCY OF ENOCH’S FAITH

- Believing that God exists is the first step *toward* faith – believing that He rewards those who seek Him is the first step *of* faith – but a life of faith involves consistently “walking” with Him.

- As I said, in Gen. 5 we are told twice that Enoch “walked with God.” He had a close, personal relationship with God. And (of course) the concept of walking with God is a common theme in the NT.

- In Rom. 6:4 it says, “...we have been buried with Him through baptism into death...so we too might walk in newness of life.” In Eph. 4:1 it says, “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...”

- 2 Cor. 5:7 says, “...for we walk by faith, not by sight...” Gal. 5:16 says, “...walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.” Eph. 5:2 says, “...walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us...”

- There is no doubt – the NT described the Christian life as a “walk,” and (like Enoch) we are to walk with God daily. A life of faith is a life of walking close to God in personal relationship with Him.

- Now, this faith walk assumes certain things to be true. First, it assumes that the person who is walking with God

has been reconciled to Him. Amos 3:3 says, “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” (KJV) And (of course) the Scripture tells us that we are “by nature children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3). We are born with a sin nature that is in rebellion against God, so we have to be reconciled to God through faith.

- We have to assume that Enoch had experienced this reconciliation with God. In fact, Heb. 11:5 tells us, “he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.”

- Now, we don’t know exactly what that testimony entailed (because we’re *not* told) but there was some kind of tangible confirmation from God that he was pleasing to Him. That tells us his sin was dealt with and that he was reconciled to God.

- But there is a second assumption here, and that is, that Enoch was created in the image of God, and therefore had the ability to walk with Him. This is the uniqueness of man over the animal kingdom.

- People today get so attached to their pets, and some pets exhibit a great amount of loyalty to their owners – but no pet can have a relationship with God. Only a person (who is created in God’s image) can do that.

- And even unbelievers are created in the image of God – but their nature is so corrupted by sin that their fellowship with God is severed. Only those who are spiritually regenerated can walk with God.

- As the Apostle Peter says, we “become partakers of the divine nature” when we are born again through saving faith. In Christ we have been given a new nature that enables us to have true fellowship with God.

- Walking with God assumes that our sin has been cleansed and that we are surrendered to God’s will. The NT describes this kind of faith life as being continually filled with the Spirit. It is living a life of obedience to Christ and a life that is submissive to His lordship.

- Perhaps it is best summed up in Col. 2:6-7, which says, “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.”

- And the picture (I believe) the author of Hebrews wants us to see, is that of a consistent walk of faith that lasted 365 years. Enoch believed God, and he continued to believe God all throughout his entire life.

- His faith in God was *not* a one-time thing, it was a lifetime of believing God. And there is something else we need to see about Enoch’s faith, but to see this we will need to go to the NT. So thirdly, we see:

### III. THE COMMUNICATION OF ENOCH’S FAITH

- For this we have to turn to the NT (to Jude 14-16). (Pause) Here we read, “And about these also Enoch, in

the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.’”

- Apparently Enoch was a prophet who received a word of revelation from God. He proclaimed an inspired message of warning against the ungodliness of his day. This prophecy (which is confirmed as inspired by God here in Jude in spite of the fact that it is recorded in the noncanonical book of Enoch) was *not only* a warning to the generation of Enoch but for those of the last days of human history.

- Now, we are *not* told how effective this message was, but Enoch was faithful to deliver it. As with *all* preaching, it is *not* the response that is important but the faithfulness of the preacher that counts.

- Enoch (in faith) delivered the message and then left the results to God. But one thing is for certain – those who heard the message could *not* say they had *not* been warned of God’s judgment. This is very similar to the *next* man we will see, which is Noah.

- This report of Enoch’s preaching (from Jude) tells us a lot about his generation. It was filled with unbelief and rebellion against God. It was (to use his own language) a generation characterized by ungodliness.

- Already the corruption of sin had risen to a monumental level. Already Satan had taken full advantage of the sin nature of fallen mankind, and had filled the world with false teaching and false teachers. Already he had employed the temptation of sin to lead to near total ungodliness.

- So when we see the faith of Enoch we must see it against the backdrop of such sin and corruption. Like Noah, it took tremendous courage and faith to stand against the opposition of his day and to remain faithful to God and faithful in the proclamation of His Word.

- That should be an encouragement to us today. We are *not* the first generation that has faced a generation of people immersed in sin and deceived by Satan. We are *not* the first generation of men that opposes and resists the truth of God. We must be people of faith and be faithful as Enoch was.

- Well, there is one last thing we see about the example of this man of faith, and that is:

#### IV. THE CONSEQUENCE OF ENOCH’S FAITH

- Going back to Heb. 11, we need to take note of v. 5, “By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.”

- After more than 300 years of faithful walking with God and faithful preaching of His Word, he got some sort of confirmation that he was pleasing to God – and God just took him right to heaven.

- He never had to face death. He never had to go through that valley of the shadow. He pleased God so much, and had such close fellowship with God, that the Lord just reached down and lifted him right up to heaven.

- Someone might ask, “Well, why did God wait over 300 years to translate him to heaven?” We’re *not* told, but it is likely because he had a life of godliness to live and a message God wanted him to proclaim. But when his work was done, he received the reward he trusted God for.

- Another question that is often asked is, “Why did God take him in such an unusual way, when He doesn’t take others this way?” That’s one for the secret counsels of God, but whether we have to go through the corridor of death or (as some future generation of believers will experience) through rapture, we can know that “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones.” (Ps. 116:15)

- All those who live by faith will experience the same reward from God – eternal life with Him. He is really the reward, but this is promised to all those who live by faith. “The just shall live by faith.”

- Enoch is a beautiful picture of the generation of believers who will be taken up from this world directly

into heaven someday (when the Lord returns for His bride, the church).

- Paul wrote about that in 1 Thess. 4:17, “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

- And as Ron Phillips puts it, “Our life of faith ought to be a walk with God until, at the hour of death or at the sound of the trumpet, we are called home to be with Him.”

- PRAYER