

# Enoch

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Dr G.N.M.Collins

[ 0 : 00 ] Will you turn with me to the book of Genesis, Genesis chapter 5, to take for our meditation this morning, the words that you will find in verse 24.

Genesis 5 verse 24. And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. If I were to suddenly ask you today, what do you know about Enoch?

I don't imagine for a moment that the first thing you would tell me about him was that he was the seventh from Adam, or that he was the father of Methuselah.

I imagine that the fact that it would more immediately occur to your mind is the one that is mentioned in our text, that Enoch walked with God.

That is his epitaph, and it occurs in the Old Testament and in the New. And a better epitaph no man could have. Now there are certain walks that we should all, I'm sure, like to take, or like to have taken.

[ 1 : 11 ] For instance, Adam's walks with God, while Adam was in his state of innocence. The fellowship that only a sinless man could have with his creator.

And the walks that the disciples had with Jesus.

For example, we read that he oft times resorted to the Garden of Gethsemane. Gethsemane that means so much to every believer today.

It's a favorite haunt of his. And the disciples must have heard many a good word from there. And the walk to Emmaus, too.

What a difference that made to the disciples who were so puzzled and bewildered by what had happened in Jerusalem so recently, his crucifixion.

[ 2 : 21 ] Until he joined them. Their faces were sad and their hearts heavy.

But when he came into the walk, things changed. And they said, reflectively afterwards, Our hearts did not. Our hearts burned within us as he spake with us by the way and opened unto us the scriptures.

And that walk, that last walk that he took with his disciples out to Bethany before he ascended. And from which the disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy for his ascension.

told them a great deal of what they wanted to know about him. And the promise of his coming again. But these are all events of history now.

And we obviously cannot participate in them. But the best walk of all, the walk that Enoch took, in that walk we can share.

[ 3 : 49 ] Enoch walked with God and was not for God took him. And that's how it ended. Now there are other references to Enoch, as you know.

We read two this morning. In Hebrews and also in the Epistle of Jude. And they're both very helpful in, when we try to imagine the kind of man that Enoch was.

It's not all left to imagination. And this expression, Enoch walked with God, this walking with God is something that is said again and again in Holy Scripture about good men.

Men who are careful to maintain a right relationship in life with God and to obey His will. And this walking with God can be taken as the pattern of the Christian life and indeed it must be if we are to be Christians at all worthy of the name.

And I want to think of this Christian walk today. Walking with God in the Christian sense. And very simply I want to put these points to you for our consideration first of all that it has got a definite beginning.

[ 5 : 26 ] And secondly that it's got a definite progression. And thirdly that it's got a definite destination.

It's got a definite beginning. It began for Enoch where it must begin for you and for me in a definite encounter with God.

No man can be a Christian without that. What the circumstances of Enoch's first encounter with God were we cannot tell.

That at least is not revealed in the other references to him. but the result of the encounter is indicated in the New Testament where we read that Enoch believed God.

And we are told that without faith it is impossible to please God. And that Enoch prior to his translation had this reputation that he pleased God.

[ 6 : 34 ] And without faith it is impossible to please him. So you see that was where it all began. Enoch came to believe in God.

To believe savingly. Like Abraham he saw Christ's day and rejoiced. Somehow or other he came to know himself as a sinner and sorrowed for his sin and turned to God.

God showed him his plan the plan of his own loving heart for the salvation of the penitent.

And that was the beginning. Enoch walked with God. God and that's where it must begin with you and me if we are to lead the Christian life.

There must be this encounter with Jesus Christ in the gospel. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth that's where the stress is believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

[ 7 : 58 ] He that believeth on the son said Jesus himself hath everlasting life. He that believeth not the son shall not see life but the wrath of God abideth on him.

It is this changed attitude to God through Jesus Christ that marks the beginning of the walk. God when the Jews once asked Jesus what shall we do that we may work that we might work the works of God Jesus replied this is his commandment that ye believe in him whom he hath sent.

That's where it all begins. Not in an external religion that's good enough in itself. But external religion does not save by itself.

There will be an externalism to true religion it's true. Faith without works is dead. But works without faith is dead are dead.

And they do not mark the beginning of the Christian life the walk with God. Faith in Christ does. And without faith it is impossible to please him.

[ 9 : 25 ] So somehow or other God revealed his secret to Enoch. Revealed his plan for the salvation of his people.

And Enoch accepted it. it was the beginning of the fellowship which is indicated in these words he walked with God.

And it is not obvious my dear friends that that's how it must be. For as the prophet asks how can two walk together except they be agreed. They'll be quarreling or along the way they'll be parting company and if they come together again they'll soon part again.

And God will certainly not walk with a man who scorns his offer of salvation or even neglects that salvation and seeks some other way of reconciliation.

No it must begin at the cross. The Israelites were taught that in the form of worship that was given them under the Old Testament. God had always his meeting place with men and when the tabernacle was set up you remember that one of the things that was set up was the mercy seat and that place was inaccessible to the people except through a representative the high priest.

[ 11 : 05 ] And the high priest went in there on the great day of atonement and sprinkled the blood of sacrifice upon the mercy seat. And God said to the people by Moses there will I meet with you.

You see it all pointed to Calvary. The mercy seat was the foreshadower of the cross. That is where God reached for the sinner.

I came to Jesus as I was weary and worn and sad. I found in him a resting place and he hath made me glad.

That's what happens at this encounter. the Christian life is not just that initial encounter. Some people seem to get the idea that if you get a man converted that's all he needs.

Well he needs a whole lot more. Not for his salvation but for the outworking of that which the Holy Spirit has wrought in him. so my dear friend if conversion is a recent experience in your life don't rest in it.

[ 12 : 24 ] Work out your own salvation but it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do with his good pleasure. The encounter with God in other words is the beginning of a new life.

If any man be in Christ he's a new creature a new creation all things are passed away behold all things have become new. And if you've already made a beginning my dear friend in this walk with God then working out your own salvation day by day by God's Spirit working in you you can sing the song of the pilgrim with all confidence thou with thy counsel while I live wilt me conduct and guide and to thy glory afterwards receive me to abide.

Today then just as in the days of Enoch the Christian life the life of faith begins in an encounter with God. there will I meet with you at the mercy seat to which the blood of the sacrifice has been brought and sprinkled there will I meet you with you at Calvary where the proclamation which the world was waiting was made from the cross it is finished and there remain no more offering for sin upon a life I did not live upon a death I did not die another's life another's death I stake my whole eternity the

Christian life has a definite beginning I pass on to elaborate a bit more the second point that I made and that is that the Christian life has got a definite progression it wasn't a meeting with God and a standing still progression is implied in the very word that is here used Enoch walked with God the fellowship formed at the meeting was developed and sustained in the subsequent walk and conduct let me remind you again of the words in which Enoch's walk is summarized before his translation he had this reputation that he pleased

God and without faith it is impossible to please him for he that cometh unto God must believe that he is and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him that was Enoch that's you my friend you who believe in Jesus Christ there was the inevitable and indispensable encounter and since then the progression the growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ the way the path of the justice is the shining light which shineth more and more unto perfect day did we not sing so they from strength on weary go still forward unto strength until in Zion they appear before the Lord at length the man who walks with God is a man who has turned his back on the old way way he had never intended to turn unto

[16:44] God and the old way was satisfying enough while it lasted until he came to a knowledge of better things but now he walks with God and he would not have it otherwise so henceforth we will not go back nor turn from thee at all oh do thou quicken us and we upon thy name will call the encounter makes a tremendous difference to a man's prospects too Andrew and Peter and James and John were fishermen when the encounter took place but not for long came that day when Jesus said follow me and I will make you fishers of men

Levi the publican was at his receipt of custom when Jesus came along and Jesus said follow me and Levi immediately arose and was a publican no longer left all and followed Jesus Saul of Tarsus was a scholar and a zealot a man who as he told Agrippa thought that he ought to do many things against the church of Christ and that made him a persecutor that his encounter with Christ took place on the Damascus road and Saul of Tarsus never finished the task which sent him out that day to Damascus he looked up into the face of the

Christ who had captured him and said Lord what will thou have me to do and he recalls it all when he tells us that he was in the past a blasphemer a persecutor and injurious but through the love of Christ he became not a whit behind the very best of the apostles William Carey was a humble shoemaker when he encountered took place in his life you might have thought that he could have been content to stay at his last but God had another plan for that man he turned from his former occupation and became a veritable apostle in India a great educator a great civilizer as well as a great missionary nevertheless the call to Christian witness does not always mean that a man has got to change his trade or his profession there are cases when a man's duty after his conversion is as

Paul reminds the believing Corinthians to abide in the same calling wherein they were called now obviously there were certain forms of service in Corinth and particularly in Ephesus where the people were so given to idolatry where Christians simply couldn't retain a Christian conscience and continue to work at their former trades many of them were silversmiths and goldsmiths and gravers serving in the cause of idolatry by making idols promoting an idolatrous worship how could men like that how could they testify for Christ and continue in those trades no it couldn't be done John Newton was a slave trader when he came into the faith and it took him a little while to learn that he couldn't be a Christian and a slave trader but the conviction came and he acted upon it he became a minister instead and many have blessed the day that John Newton was called into the ministry George Whitefield was a tapster in the Bell Inn in Gloucester when the call came to him but he soon

learned as he tells us that he couldn't continue there drawing wine for drunkards and at the same time serve Christ so he left that and he too with very great diligence and application became a student and was licensed to the ministry and became the greatest evangelist possibly that [ 22 : 40 ] England has ever known so there are certain callings in which we are expected to abide unless God gives direction otherwise but if we do abide in those callings if our commitment to Christ does not mean a change of occupation a change of outward circumstances then my dear friends there should be a change in the nature of the service that we rendered wasn't it Wesley or was it Whitefield who said that if a man was only a shoe black if he was a Christian he ought to be the best shoe black in the town in which he served there is there ought to be a quality a distinctive quality about the service of the Christian in whatsoever capacity he is rendering it do all things says Paul whatever you do do all to the glory of God and what a difference a truly consecrated man can make to those who know him best to the welfare of those with whom he rubbed shoulders every day if he brings this change that

Christ has wrought in him into the way that he does his work and the way that he conducts himself in his various relationships it's not very long since we had Professor Loughridge of Belfast across with us in the college some of you were there when he spoke on religious movements in Ireland and I myself was deeply impressed indeed when he reminded me of what happened under the ministry of W.B.

Nicholson there W.B. Nicholson had been a sailor and his rough sailor ways continued with him even after he entered the ministry because he wasn't a highly educated man by any means but in his own rough and tumble way was a most effective evangelist and such a movement occurred in Belfast in the vicinity that men who had been working in the shipbuilding yards there came under conviction of sin and they had been pilfering in the shipyards quite a common custom apparently and quite a common custom still and it didn't trouble their consciences very much but the world went home and these men began bringing back to the yards and to the sheds things that they had pilfered and eventually a shed was set apart for the reception of these things that were being returned the men were allowed to go in quietly and just drop them there and the shed was filled with these once misappropriated articles and we are told that that fact when it got known throughout the north of Ireland had the profoundest influence and opened the way for W.B.

Nicholson wherever he went afterwards to preach and no wonder that's how the gospel works and if a man abides in his own calling the calling that he was in when he was called then let him see to it that he serves from that moment as a Christian and the changed life will have its own influence now it may be that you think it was easy for enough to walk with God to develop his own character as a believer life was so simple you see they didn't have the temptations the subtle temptations that we have to face today was it as simple as all that let me remind you what it was like he is talking about the kind of life that the believer had to live in those days that is

Jude in the days of Enoch and this let me remind you was his description of it Enoch also the seventh from Adam prophesied of these saying behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of saints to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him these are murmurers complainers walking after their own lusts and their mouths speak great swelling words having men's persons in admiration because of advantage sounds rather contemporary doesn't it walking with God God requires an effort and more than man's best effort it requires the grace of God and God supplies it walking with

[ 28 : 55 ] God is an educative and inspiring experience I sometimes recall as I walked down the high street in Cannon Gate a walk that I had there in student days with a delightful man who knew that old ridge of Edinburgh better than any man I've ever known with every step there was a story and everything was engrossingly interesting and I never walked down the high street and the Cannon Gate since then I think without recalling something or other of what that man had told me that day well if a walk in congenial fellowship and with a well instructed man can have that effect and make life so interesting what think you does it mean to walk with God oh but you know of course you know my dear fellow believer you have been walking with him everything changed the station brook says

Saul came on the morning after his conversion the station brook to my new eyes was bubbling out of paradise I thought that every creature knelt from rapture of the joy I felt it's a new way it's an interesting way an instructive way we grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus

Christ think what it meant to Cleopas and his friend to walk along the maze road with his companion who had joined them beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded to them and all the scriptures the things concerning himself Christ preaching his own gospel do you wonder that their hearts burned within them to hear the gospel preached by him but the best of it is that you and I can have that experience today not that Christ is physically present with us but the same Christ has said lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world as we walk with God we too have been conscious have we not of his influence the new light that we got on things that troubled us before we joined him the whole of life was changed transfigured we gained a new objective a new purpose as we walk with him and what a transforming experience it is if we walk in the light says John as he is in the light and that's the only way in which this sustained fellowship is possible how can two walk together except to be agreed if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another and the blood of

Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin that brings me finally to the definite destination yes the encounter is definite it's an encounter with Christ in whatever circumstances it came and the progression is definite the difference between a traveler and a tramp as I heard a minister in my youth say the difference between a traveler and a tramp is that a traveler is going somewhere a tramp is just a vagrant what is life to you do you have a definite objective have you looked ahead to the end and said that's the way I want my life to run and that's the way I wanted to end well that is the privilege of the believer the man who walks with

God the destination is definite you remember how the psalmist in that highly figurative psalm in which he uses so many metaphors and figures of the life of faith tells us about the storm passengers and the different ups and downs that they had in the course of their journey but this was the end of it so he says he bringeth them to their desired haven that was their chosen destination when they set out there were times when it didn't look as if they were ever going to reach it but he bringeth them to their desired haven and so it is in the Christian life always there's no failure no falling short I recall in my days on the client side that an enterprising bus company that was formed in those days used to specialize in what they called mystery tours they're popular enough today but they weren't so well known then and there was this element of mystery that attracted some people and the mystery as it was elucidated was very pleasing to some and very disappointing to others and you set out and you thought well the mystery is solved

[ 35 : 30 ] I know where the road this bus is taking just where we're going and yet it didn't go there somewhere further along the road the bus took a turning that you didn't expect and then you began to calculate again oh I know where he's making for this time but you didn't and when eventually you came to the place you were perhaps disappointed but the Christian life is not a mystery tour with every turning in the way every unexpected experience along the way God is working out a definite purpose think of the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to the promised land oh how they wandered wandered yes wandered in one sense that yet the psalmist looking back on it all sees that the element of wandering was really eliminated by God's purpose them also in a way to walk that right is he did guide that they might to our city go wherein they might abide and all the seeming wanderings were part of God's plan disciplining his people making them meet for the inheritance when eventually they should arrive there well then how is it with ourselves

I'm sure that most of you have heard the story because it's often been told of the little girl who went home from sabbath school one day and when her mother asked her what she had been learning in the sabbath school that day she told her quite excitedly your mother she said teacher told us about a man called Enos and he went for a long walk with God one day and he walked so far with God that he got tired and God said to him at the end of the day Enos you'll not go back you'll just come in and stay with me taking liberties with the text perhaps and yet by and large it wasn't a bad impression to be left by the lesson that's it in summary Enos didn't go back the believer doesn't go back against increasing weariness sometimes he goes on and on stumblingly and falteringly but they that wait upon the

Lord shall renew their strength thou shalt mount up with wings as eagles they shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and fear not they go from strength to strength every one of them appeareth before God in Zion their chosen destination he bringeth them to their desired haven and you see that's the difference between the ending of the two ways the believer has chosen he has committed himself to God and he's going to reach the desired haven the unbeliever whatever his religion may be and he may be outwardly a very religious man he has not had this encounter with

Christ he hasn't committed himself to God's grace he's just stumbling on and on and on hoping no doubt that all's going to come well in the end but it doesn't and to ye end at the straight gate straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few that be they find but broad is the gate wide is the way that leadeth unto death and many there be that go in their earth in which we are we today let us if we have not already begun it pray that we may begin this walk with God let us if we have begun it and if we've been faltering and stumbling and falling ask God to give us more grace to walk more carefully and more confidently and that is if we're growing tired and if the destination is near commit ourselves anew to him who goes right through the valley of the shadow with his people and enables them to say with confidence as the shadows gather around them in God's house forevermore my dwelling place shall be because that's the destination the father's house is at the end of the way let us pray oh lord our god we thank thee that thou hast given thy people a vision which changed the whole of life for them a vision which enabled them to choose Christ and Christ's way a vision which enabled them after the manner of Christ himself for the joy that is set before them to despise the cross and endure and the shame endure the shame grant oh lord that that spirit may be given to us for thy name's sake amen for thirty heart so I can't lift a heart and the can't Ray that will this way so it means that they mean that harm