

WALKING WITH GOD

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What a beautiful SUBJECT we are going to be studying now. I cannot imagine anything that could be more exciting than “WALKING with GOD”, can you? One day that will happen to all who are faithful to GOD, which should give us an incentive to be faithful. In this lesson, we are going to develop the lesson we had a while back, “Bible Sanctification”, so that we can better understand our part in GOD’S Plan of SALVATION.

Some persons and teachers teach that there is nothing we can do, or have to do, towards our SALVATION; however, that is not correct according to SCRIPTURE. Once we have surrendered our lives to JESUS, once He has forgiven our sins, we must live our lives in OBEDIENCE to GOD. Of course we need the help of JESUS to be OBEDIENT, and we will need to be forgiven many times before JESUS COMES again to take His people HOME. Sanctification is a work of a lifetime. Our first texts are found in the book of Hebrews.

Heb 5:12-14

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of GOD; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”.

Paul wrote to the Hebrew believers, or Israelites, (known also as Jews); explaining that since JESUS had died on the cross for our sins, there was no need for them to carry on worshipping GOD by using the “ceremonial law”.

He then informed them that because they had been GOD’S CHOSEN people, and had prior knowledge of His Plan of SALVATION, they should have been in the position of teaching the Gentiles the WAY to be SAVED, instead of needing to be taught again themselves from the very basics.

Paul called them “babes” in The FAITH, and told them they were still being fed on milk, (the very basic simple truths), instead of on meat (the more advanced teachings or truths).

Heb 6:1

“Therefore leaving the principles of the DOCTRINE of CHRIST, let us go on unto PERFECTION; not laying again the foundation of REPENTANCE from dead works, and of FAITH toward GOD”.

REPENTANCE and CONFESSION are the first steps in GOD’S Plan of SALVATION. The Hebrew people were to leave that basic teaching and get on with Christian living, which leads on to PERFECTION, or TRUE CHRISTIAN LIVING. Of course we could never do that without the help of JESUS, and neither could the Hebrews.

Phil 2:12-14

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always OBEYED, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, WORK OUT your own SALVATION with fear and trembling. For it is GOD which WORKETH in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Do all things WITHOUT MURMURINGS and DISPUTINGS”:

Paul stresses WILLING (not forced) OBEDIENCE, or OBEDIENCE just because someone is watching us. Then he informs us that with GOD’S HELP, (it must be important if GOD thinks it is

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necessary to work in and through us), we must willingly and cheerfully live according to GOD'S Plan.

This is NOT TEACHING SALVATION by WORKS, but it is teaching that we will be "JUDGED" by our WORKS, (doing things cheerfully, and promoting GOD'S WORD), and "SAVED" by the BLOOD of JESUS CHRIST.

1 Cor 10:13

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but GOD is FAITHFUL, WHO will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make "A WAY" [JESUS CHRIST is "The WAY", Jn 14:6] to ESCAPE, that ye may be able to bear it".

This is a very wonderful text. GOD promises to help us overcome every temptation, but He expects us to do our part. He doesn't do everything for us; nor does He force us to follow Him. We must want to overcome the temptation. Many times JESUS helps me overcome a temptation by my singing a favourite hymn, or by my saying a prayer. This has also helped lots of my friends to be victorious. You too must try that, because it works. Remember, JESUS is "The WAY" (to escape). Four out of five of the Interlinear Versions in my collection, say "The WAY", instead of "A WAY".

Jude 24,25

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from FALLING, [JESUS], and to present you FAULTLESS before the presence of His [The FATHER'S] glory with exceeding joy. To The only WISE GOD [The GODHEAD, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST], our SAVIOUR, be GLORY and MAJESTY, DOMINION and POWER, both now and ever. Amen".

When Jude penned these verses he wanted to give us CONFIDENCE in GOD, and His SAVING POWER. He told us that in The JUDGMENT, JESUS wants to, and can, present us to The FATHER "FAULTLESS", (PERFECT in JESUS CHRIST) - that is, just as if we had not ever sinned. Not only that, but JESUS gets a great deal of JOY and PLEASURE out of doing that. However, JESUS can only do that if we REPENT and TURN AWAY from, and CONFESS, the sin that has turned us away from GOD.

Notice that Jude didn't stop there but proceeded to praise JESUS, our "WISE GOD and SAVIOUR". What was good for Jude is also good for us. I think, that if we all give some honest thought to our PRAYER LIFE, then we will see the need to give GOD more praise than we ordinarily do.

Heb11:24,25

"By FAITH Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of GOD, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season";

Moses was a wise man who refused popularity, power, wealth, and sin; choosing rather to be persecuted with GOD'S people. He made a sensible decision way back there in time, how about you and me, how about us?

I have found more blessings than problems, as I have followed JESUS for over forty years. It has been my EXPERIENCE that GOD never asks us to GIVE UP ANYTHING that is GOOD for us; and if He has asked us to give something, He always replaces it with SOMETHING BETTER. And I have spoken with many others who have had the same experience. It is not until we decide to TRUST GOD, that we find out how WONDERFUL it is to HAVE GOD in our LIVES.

Dan 1:8

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“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s MEAT, nor with the WINE which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might NOT DEFILE himself”.

Daniel was determined to not offend GOD by eating things that were not good for him. He knew that the food provided by the king had been offered to idols, and was considered “unclean” by GOD, and that GOD could not bless the eating of that kind of food. Sometimes we do not stop to think of the consequences of our wrong actions.

Even something as “SEEMINGLY INSIGNIFICANT” as the food we eat. Verse 16, GOD HONoured DANIEL’S FAITH, and he and his friends were not made to eat the king’s food, which was then replaced by GOD’S PREFERRED DIET.

The result of their “SEEMINGLY UNIMPORTANT”, (to most people), DECISION”, was that GOD gave them better learning abilities than that of all of the king’s “wise men”, (read verses 17-20). That is the result of being OBEDIENT to GOD and His TEACHINGS. That verse teaches that we need to be careful how we live, or WALK with GOD, so it is IMPORTANT what we do, and HOW we LIVE, ACCORDING to GOD and His WORD.

Jas 4:7

“SUBMIT yourselves therefore to GOD. RESIST the devil, and he will flee from you”.

Many people make the mistake of believing that the first part of that text is the most important; but you try just “SUBMITTING to GOD”, and not “RESISTING the devil”, and see HOW LITTLE SUCCESS you will HAVE. One is as important as the other. This is a song I learned as a child in religious instruction at School, from two Salvation Army girls. This is a good song for us adults to put into practice also.

“Sometimes I know the devil
is extra busy so
he tries to get us doubting,
but then, what should I do?
But glory be to JESUS,
When we kneel down to pray,
Each doubting devil flaps his wings
and quickly flies away”.

Singing that little song has helped me to be victorious many times in my battle with the enemy. Try it for yourself. That is “RESISTING the devil” with GOD’S help. Think about this next situation. A man who was used to thieving from others attended a series of meetings and learned about GOD. He decided to give up his old ways, he “SUBMITTED HIMSELF to GOD”.

But later on he put on his black overalls, gloves, and balaclava, grabbed his burglar tools, and set off down the road in his car looking for a good place to rob. Is he LIKELY to CHANGE his WAYS? Is he likely to OVERCOME the TEMPTATION to rob people? He followed the first part of Paul’s advice, he thought he had “SUBMITTED to GOD”, but he didn’t “RESIST the devil”.

Will he be a successful Christian? No wonder Paul told us in Phil 2:12, to “Work out our own SALVATION, with fear and trembling”. [But this verse should never be read without reading verse 13], “For it is GOD which WORKETH in you both, to WILL and to DO of His GOOD PLEASURE”.

Lk 21:34

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“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, [dissipation, debauchery, RSV,GNB] and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day, [the day of judgment], come upon you unawares”.

JESUS warns against our letting the things of this world take over our lives. He tells us that we must live as He LIVED, and that was “for The FATHER” and “for Christianity”. JESUS was SURE that it DOES MATTER how we LIVE.

Col 4:2

“Continue in PRAYER, and watch in the same with THANKSGIVING”.

Paul warned of the importance of PRAYER, so did JESUS; some people find it hard to understand how important that activity is for the Christian.

I was told many years ago, that in the conflict in Viet Nam, a Seventh-day Adventist soldier in the Medical Corps was asking that he be allowed his SABBATHS off from ordinary duties. All his Officers were unsympathetic to his requests, so he eventually demanded his RIGHTS to a hearing from the Supreme Commander of the U.S. Army, Brigadier General Westmoreland.

The Commander listened to the charge, and then asked the soldier if the charge was correct. When the soldier confirmed the charge, the Commander told him that he would be given time to pray out loud, so the assembled Officers could hear, and then he was to be shot dead for not obeying orders.

The young man kneeled, and prayed for forgiveness for the ones who would have to shoot him, and for the Officers who had not understood his reasons for keeping THE SABBATH DAY. Then he prayed for courage to die like a true Christian. He prayed for his family that they would not hold it against the United States Army, that the decision was made to shoot him for NOT OBEYING ORDERS. Orders from JESUS who was greater than them, had been given to him. JESUS far outweighed, and outranked them. Orders given him by JESUS were to be followed; and with another request for strength, he placed himself in GOD’S CARE, and stood to his feet.

To the surprise of the young soldier, and to the Officers present, The Supreme Commander gave the young man his SABBATHS OFF with complete SABBATH PRIVILEGES. He then dismissed the soldier, and then he privately told the Officers that he knew that no amount of force could persuade a true Seventh-day Adventist from keeping The HOLY SABBATH of his GOD, and that Military Rules and Regulations gave every Seventh-day Adventist that right.

He had tested the soldier by asking him to pray aloud, so that they would learn how to test a true Christian. He said, “A true Christian knows how to pray to his GOD, and for his FELLOW MAN”.

Lk 18:1 JESUS speaking;

“....., that men ought ALWAYS TO PRAY, and not to faint”;

We should be praying continually for GOD’S GUIDANCE, GOD’S HELP and PROTECTION, and GOD’S BLESSING, and giving to GOD all the GLORY due to Him, and also all the THANKS that He DESERVES. Like the soldier in the story, we should be prepared to “stand up for” our BELIEFS.

Col 3:2

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth”.

That’s good advice. But all too often satan is successful in keeping us too busy to have time for serving GOD, and in that way he causes many good people to lose their way, and miss out on SALVATION. HEAVEN is more important than the things of this earth.

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Rom 10:17

“So then FAITH cometh by hearing, and hearing by The WORD of GOD”.

FAITH grows by LISTENING to, and STUDYING GOD’S WORD, and PRAYER helps us to UNDERSTAND, and put what we learn into practice.

1 Jn 5:4

“For whatsoever is BORN of GOD OVERCOMETH the world: and this is The VICTORY that OVERCOMETH the world, even our FAITH”.

Their FAITH IN GOD is what makes Christians STRONG. Being “BORN of GOD”, means that we really have this FAITH in GOD that makes us VICTORIOUS. PRAYING to GOD helps us OVERCOME satan and his TEMPTATIONS.

Psa 119:105

“Thy WORD is a LAMP unto my feet, and a LIGHT unto my path”.

GOD’S WORD, The BIBLE, is a LAMP, or GUIDE for my FEET; and a LIGHT, which shows the way unto my path. GOD’S WORD gives me direction and guidance, a path for my life.

Gen 6:9

“.....: Noah was a just man and PERFECT in his generations, and Noah WALKED with GOD”.

Now you see where we got the title for this lesson. We would say today, that NOAH was a TRUE CHRISTIAN Gentleman. In this text, The BIBLE is teaching that even though a person may sin, if they “CONFESS” and “REPENT” of those sins, GOD will FORGIVE those SINS, and the person is then “PERFECT & JUST” in GOD’S eyes.

That is one of the hardest lessons for people to learn, because unfortunately, most of us tend to remember our own faults, and the previous wrongs of others; that is one of satan’s traps.

And this happens, even after we know that GOD has forgiven those problems. The CHRISTIAN is often harder on himself, than he is on others. The thing to remember is that GOD is a “FORGIVING GOD” & the new Christian must learn to TRUST GOD. The New Christian must learn also, that we need to FORGIVE ourselves, as well as forgive others.

It is important for you to really understand this section. When GOD FORGIVES you of any sin that you have confessed and from which you have turned away, He then sees you “JUST as if you had NEVER SINNED”, and that makes the FORGIVEN CHRISTIAN “PERFECT” in GOD’S eyes.

The “PERFECT” robe of CHRIST’S RIGHTEOUSNESS” covers the FORGIVEN Christian. The Christian now “WALKS with GOD” in that new relationship with Him, and he then continues to follow GOD’S TEACHINGS. WONDERFUL! – isn’t it?

2 Pet 1:5-11

“....., add to your FAITH VIRTUE; and to VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE; and to KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE; and to TEMPERANCE PATIENCE; and to PATIENCE GODLINESS; and to GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS; and to BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY”.

These verses are fondly known as “PETER’S LADDER”. They teach that the Christian’s life is one of GROWING and DEVELOPING, day by day. Our DILIGENCE must grow into FAITH, and FAITH must grow into VIRTUE or goodness, which in turn must develop into GREATER KNOWLEDGE.

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But there is no stopping there, we must learn MODERATION in everything that is GOOD for us, - and to ABSTAIN from those things that are BAD for us. This must develop and grow into PATIENCE, followed by becoming KINDER and more like GOD in our ways; and BECOMING MORE LOVING in our DEALINGS with our FELLOWMAN.

So the Christian life is a DEVELOPING EXPERIENCE, where we learn to overcome the devil's temptations, more and more as the day of His APPEARING approaches. Unless we grow more like JESUS we will not enter HEAVEN. Clearly, what we "DO" does have a PART to play in our SALVATION. We are NOT "SAVED" by what we "do"; but we are "JUDGED" by what we "do". (See Jas 2:12).

In the last book, and the last chapter of The BIBLE, we find one of the blessings that GOD pronounces on the FAITHFUL. [His followers].

Rev 22:14

"Blessed are they that "DO" His COMMANDMENTS, that they may have RIGHT to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city".

GOD pronounces His blessing on The FAITHFUL, OBEDIENT people only, and He explains that they, the FAITHFUL and OBEDIENT, have the "RIGHT" to LIVE ETERNALLY in GOD'S HEAVENLY CITY.

Rev 14:12

"Here is the PATIENCE [ENDURANCE] of the SAINTS: [BELIEVERS]: here are they that KEEP The COMMANDMENTS of GOD, and The FAITH [TEACHINGS] of JESUS".

Rev 12:17

"And the dragon was wroth [angry] with The WOMAN, [The TRUE CHURCH], and went to make war with the REMNANT of her SEED, [GOD'S REMNANT CHURCH, people], which KEEP The COMMANDMENTS of GOD, and have the TESTIMONY of JESUS CHRIST. [or, "The SPIRIT of PROPHECY"]", (See Rev 19:10).

Rev 21:8, (Which describes the DISOBEDIENT).

"But the FEARFUL, and the UNBELIEVING, and the ABOMINABLE, and MURDERERS, and WHOREMONGERS, and SORCERERS, and IDOLATORS, and all LIARS, shall have their part in the LAKE which BURNETH with FIRE and BRIMSTONE: which is the SECOND [FINAL] DEATH".

Rev 22:15

"For without [outside the CITY] are DOGS [UNBELIEVERS], and SORCERERS, and WHOREMONGERS, and MURDERERS, and IDOLATORS, and whosoever LOVETH and MAKETH A LIE".

I'm sure that you can see that GOD has JUDGED these people UNWORTHY to live in HIS HOLY CITY, because of what they have "done", or, the WAY that they have "LIVED" THROUGHOUT their LIVES.

As we usually do, let us revise what we have learned so far in this lesson:-

1. That human beings "WALK with GOD", by being OBEDIENT to Him, and His COMMANDMENTS
2. That what we "DO", and how we "LIVE", is important to GOD, and to our SALVATION.

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3. That the wicked are lost because they don't BELIEVE they need to follow the TEACHINGS of JESUS.
4. That GENUINE REPENTANCE, and CONFESSION, leads the former sinner into CHRISTIAN PERFECTION. Both are necessary.
5. That GOD works "IN", & "THROUGH" Christians, helping them to be OBEDIENT to Him and "KEEP" His COMMANDMENTS.
6. That GOD makes the "WAY" for us to OVERCOME TEMPTATIONS - if we let Him.
7. That it is no good "SUBMITTING to GOD", unless you "RESIST the devil" as well.
8. That even "SEEMINGLY UNIMPORTANT THINGS" like the food we eat, are IMPORTANT to GOD.
9. That PRAYER, & THANKSGIVING, are IMPORTANT in GOD'S Plan to save us from our sins.
10. That the Christian must be GROWING more like JESUS day by day, if he / she wants to LIVE in HEAVEN.

What a wonderful lesson today. Next visit we will learn more about GOD'S Ownership of all that we have", or how does GOD finance His Church. Till then, may GOD be with you and keep you and your loved ones in His care. 'Bye for now, see you soon.

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