

Walking Daily with the Lord

*“He that saith he
abideth in him
ought himself also
so to walk, even as
he walked.”*

—I John 2:6

THE SCRIPTURES ABOUND

with figures of speech signifying various aspects of our relationship to the Lord and the Truth. We are told to ‘run with patience;’ ‘having done all, to stand;’ ‘sit down and count the cost;’ ‘wait upon the Lord.’ Perhaps the most frequent portrayal of this relationship is in the sense of walking. We are told to ‘walk in the light,’ ‘walk circumspectly,’ ‘walk by faith,’ ‘walk by the same rule,’ ‘walk in the Spirit,’ ‘walk ye in him,’ ‘walk in newness of life,’ ‘walk in Truth,’ ‘walk honestly as in the day,’ ‘walk after his commandments,’ ‘walk worthy of our vocation,’ ‘walk humbly with thy God,’ and ‘walk in love.’

In our title text, the Apostle John declares that if we say we abide in the Lord then it is vital to us that we walk worthy of our vocation, and that we walk daily with him. The Lord is proving us in our daily walk, and we are living in a time when it is increasingly more difficult to walk circumspectly.

We must learn to become so subject to the new mind that all we think, say, and do is ‘as unto the Lord.’ Considering our weaknesses, this is a great project that requires all of our attention and energies.

The chief concern in the life of each one of us, whether we are just starting out, or whether we have been in the Christian way for many years, is to heed the apostle’s words, “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.” (Col. 1:10) As we think of how God is dealing with us and is preparing us for a place in that great spiritual temple, it is needful to consider our daily walk with him. The Scriptures tell us that walking worthy of the Lord involves every aspect of our consecrated life. Let us notice just a few of the many scriptures along this line.

A WALK OF FAITH

Ours must be a walk of faith—“We walk by faith, not by sight.” (II Cor. 5:7) It is this important element of faith that sustains us daily. It is faith that makes it possible for us to endure severe trials of health, family, the job, and many other problems and disappointments which beset us from time to time, and yet rejoice in heart at the blessings of the Lord’s overruling in our life and the lessons being learned. It is faith that makes it possible for such to not complain, but to praise God and thank him for these experiences. It is faith that prompts us, even as we may “walk through the valley of the shadow of death” (Ps. 23:4), to value the lesson in the experience, that our spiritual life is being made even richer. It is faith that makes it possible for the

consecrated child of God to say no to the allurements and temptations of the world and take their stand on the side of truth and righteousness. It is faith that will make it possible for all of the Lord's people to surmount every difficulty, every trial, and temptation that is before us in our Christian walk, regardless of how severe.

The flesh would have us desire to walk by sight. In order then to walk daily with the Lord, we must first have a foundation of faith and trust in him. The Apostle Peter says that after having this basic faith we must add to it, or build upon it, the various qualities of character—virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. He indicates that these are all qualities of the new mind, and which we are required to have in order to prove faithful. “If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—II Pet. 1:5-11

We recall Jesus' lesson of faith, that except we be as little children we would not enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 18:3) Here is given a beautiful picture. Think of the faith of a little child and their complete dependency upon their parents. As a child is led through a strange place, it has complete faith and trust and has no fear whatsoever as long as he or she firmly clutches the hand of their parent. This is our position since we placed ourselves in God's hands. He took hold of our hand and lifted us up out of the miry clay of this world. (Ps. 40:2) Later, the psalmist says, “So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I

am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.”—Ps. 73:22-26

WALKING IN TRUTH, HUMILITY, WISDOM, AND LOVE

The Scriptures also say that we must walk in truth. “Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear [reverence] thy name.” (Ps. 86:11) The Truth, as found in God’s Word, must be the standard that is before us constantly in our walk with the Lord. We read, “Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart.” (Prov. 3:3) Here is another beautiful text, and so meaningful to those walking with the Lord.

We can only walk successfully in the Christian way if we are clothed with humility. The prophet said, “What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Mic. 6:8) We must also walk in wisdom. “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” (Eph. 5:15,16) This reminds us that an important part of the Christian walk is that of our stewardship. ‘Redeeming the time’ means using it wisely, remembering that all that we have belongs to the Lord and must be used in a way pleasing to him, and for our best interests as New Creatures in Christ. Our stewardship covers

everything that we have control, or influence, over in our Christian life. “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”—I Cor. 4:2

To walk worthy of the Lord, we must also, “Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us.” (Eph. 5:2) We prove our love to God by demonstrating it to our brethren. Think of the joy, the unity of the Spirit, the many blessings that have come to the Lord’s people because of the outpouring of love one to another. This is shown through prayer, acts of kindness, words of comfort and encouragement, and the assistance provided one to another in sickness and in trial. All this is a part of our fellowship, and these same cords of love that unite us together in our walk also unite us with our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus.

As we daily walk with the Lord we should become familiar with, and seek application of, the Scriptures which speak of this walk, for the hand of the Lord, and his will for us, is revealed through his Word. The Lord is gently leading us from day to day and is giving us such experiences that will best prepare us for the great work that he has in mind for us to do at a future time, that of helping to bless “all the families of the earth.” (Gen. 28:14) It is therefore necessary that we submit ourselves fully to the will of the Lord if he is going to accomplish in us all that is necessary before we will be prepared to share with him in that great work of the future.

DEVELOPING A NEW CHARACTER

As cited earlier (II Pet. 1:5-11), Peter tells us that the very purpose of these many and varied experiences

of our daily lives is that we might develop a new character. This new character is not associated with the old fleshly mind, but represents the attributes of the new mind of Christ dwelling in us. After laying the groundwork of our faith, we begin the lifelong task of adding to our faith all of these various branches of character, and that the only way this can be done is through the experiences of life.

It is easy to seek the Lord for guidance and display the facets of Christian character in the larger, more important matters of life. If we look over the record of our lives we may find that our greatest failures to uphold the principles of Truth lay in the relatively minor experiences of this life. "All things work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. 8:28) Perhaps we would be surprised to know how carefully the Lord is silently observing our conduct of life, in every experience great or small. If we could always think of him as having hold of our right hand, how differently we would speak and act many times, even in the seemingly mundane experiences of daily life.

LEARNING FROM FAILURES

The Heavenly Father knows we are going to make mistakes and have many failures. Jesus has been touched with a feeling of our infirmities and knows how difficult it is to do all things as unto the Lord. Accordingly, he has arranged our experiences of life in such a way that our failures many times are really laying the groundwork for future successes, even as a child fails a lesson and has to do it over until it is learned. Once learned, such lessons are not likely to depart from memory.

We might illustrate this in the following way. Perhaps we have had occasions in the past when circumstances were such that we said and did things in the spirit of anger against someone whom we felt had wronged us. If this was our attitude, then it would be evidence that our conduct in such an experience did constitute failure. If, after reviewing our initial anger, we regret having allowed the 'old man' to rise up and assert itself in such a way, and determine that in the future we would more carefully try to keep our bodies under and bring them into subjection concerning these matters of our daily walk, then the seeming failure will have been turned into success.

WALKING TO EMMAUS

We learn many lessons by observing the way the Lord revealed himself to others. We remember the story of the two disciples who were walking along the road to the village of Emmaus, near Jerusalem. (Luke 24:13-32) They had been on the mountain-top of joy as they followed the Master and listened to him expound to the people the wonderful words of life. Then the one whom they had supposed to be the deliverer of Israel was crucified, put to death by his enemies. After witnessing the events of his betrayal and death, they were returning home, sad and disappointed and without hope concerning the future. They were discussing the things that had transpired over the preceding days when suddenly a stranger joined them and began to enter into their conversation and expound unto them the Scriptures. As they walked and talked with the stranger along the way, their courage and faith

began to be renewed, and a ray of hope began to enlighten their hearts.

There are times when we have 'Emmaus road' experiences, and severe trials come to us in our lives that for the moment seem to form a cloud of separation between us and the Lord. Is this an indication that he has turned his back on us? No, the Lord has given us the assurance that he will never leave us nor forsake us. (Heb. 13:5) Sometimes these perplexing experiences come into our lives because of our own bad judgment or misunderstanding of God's will. We may momentarily lose sight of the smile of his face and the warmth of his hand. Nevertheless, he is still with us, even though as a 'stranger,' as he was to the two walking to Emmaus. He is with us only as a stranger because we have been unable to see the Lord's leading in some very trying experience. When these occasions come into our lives, he tells us to go to the Word of God, as this 'stranger' did. If we do that diligently, we will find the answers to all these perplexing matters. Only through looking into the Word of God can we find that comfort and help, and the peace "which passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7), which lifts us up from the depths of discouragement back to the mountaintop of joy in the Lord!

When the two disciples reached their home at Emmaus, being late in the day, they invited the stranger to tarry with them for the night. "It came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to

another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"—Luke 24:30-32

There are times in our walk with the Lord when we must come apart from the world for meditation and study and for refreshment at the Lord's table, such as we enjoy every time we meet together for fellowship with the Lord and his people. One of his promises is that, even where only two or three are meeting in his name, he will be in their midst to bless them.—Matt. 18:20

THE LORD DESIRES TO SUP WITH US

One of the unusual circumstances in connection with this experience of the two disciples is that the Lord, who was the invited guest, was the one who broke the bread and gave it to his hosts. That arrangement would not be customary in today's society, and yet we believe the Lord was here giving a very important lesson to his people. We recall his words: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—Rev. 3:20

It is necessary that we open the door of our heart and invite him to come in, sit down, and sup with us. We perceive that we have nothing worthy to offer the Lord, and we wonder by what means we can invite the Lord to tarry with us. Then the Lord says, I know that you are poverty stricken and that you have nothing worthy to offer that could be acceptable, and yet I see in you a sincere desire to know God and to do his will. I have brought you food and raiment, and a place of shelter for you.

You will be provided with the bread that comes down from heaven, and he that feeds upon me will have life everlasting. A beautiful robe of righteousness has been provided that will cover all your imperfections, and this is made possible through the shedding of my blood on the cross. I am not giving you this robe outright, but it is for you to use as long as you are in this life, and then you must return it to me. Then you will dwell in the house of the Lord.

When we invite the Lord to come in and sup with us, he brings all of these blessings to us and declares that these are the gifts of the Heavenly Father, and all that is required of us is that we walk worthy of our vocation, that we may prove ourselves worthy to share in all these wonderful blessings. We truly dwell “in the secret place of the most High,” and “abide under the shadow of the Almighty,” and this is all by grace. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”—Ps. 91:1; Eph. 2:8

BREAKING THE BREAD OF TRUTH

While tarrying with the two disciples at Emmaus, the stranger took bread and broke it and gave it to them to eat. By this action, they immediately recognized that he was the risen Lord. There were other occasions in which the Master was identified by his manner of breaking bread. No doubt he had an unusual way of doing it and was very consistent in doing it in the same manner each time. The Master was not identified because he had the bread, but by the way in which that bread was broken.

As we have learned to study to show ourselves approved unto God, and as we endeavor to rightly divide the word of Truth, the Lord reveals himself in a most marvelous way. We see the beautiful harmony of the Scriptures. We see that all scripture given by inspiration of God “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (II Tim. 3:16,17) Through the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit and the various helps that have been provided by the Lord in breaking unto us the bread of life, we have come to see that every text of scripture has its proper place and fulfillment in the outworking of God’s great plan of the ages. It is the daily appropriation of this bread of life to ourselves that will help us to grow stronger in him and increase our ability to walk faithfully with him.

LOOKING BACK AND AHEAD AT OUR WALK

When these two disciples looked back over the experience, they exclaimed one to another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?’ This is likewise true with us. Many times our hearts burn within us as we look back upon some of the more bitter trials and experiences of the past, and from this vantage point see how, though the experience seemed grievous at the time, the Lord was using it for the purpose of drawing us closer to him, the Truth, and to our brethren. Looking back, we can praise the way the Lord has led us day by day.

As we look ahead, we know not what awaits us in the way of trials and testings, but our faith

should be such that we recognize it is by his right hand that we are being led, and that gives us confidence and peace respecting the future. Our Lord indicated that the Christian way was a strait and narrow way. A strait is a narrow body of water forming a passageway between two large bodies of land. An ocean strait is usually very rough and narrow and dangerous for ships to pass through except by exercising extreme caution. In most straits where there is a considerable use of the passageway, a special pilot comes aboard the ship to safely guide the vessel through.

We are told that “strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” (Matt. 7:14) If it were not for our pilot—Jesus, the Captain of our salvation—who is carefully leading us along this narrow way, we would certainly be dashed upon the rocks. The fact that we are still in the way is proof that the Lord has us by his own right hand, and is safely guiding us through. Therefore, we have no need to fear what lies before us, but simply rejoice in the fact that we are on the way that leadeth unto life, and that more abundantly, if we continue walking with him.—John 10:10

If we are faithful unto death, and reach that glorious eternal condition beyond the veil, each one of us will look back upon the way that we have trodden and ask ourselves how could we ever have weighed the eternity of blessings with the Lord against the trivial allurements of this world! Let us continue to set our affections upon spiritual things above, and may each one of us have a firmer determination to be faithful to the one who has called us out

of darkness. Let us prepare ourselves for that future work of glory, remembering that this can only be done if we are ‘walking daily with the Lord.’ We know the Lord will do his part in this. Let us not neglect to do ours. ■