

# The Life That Pleases God – Genesis 5:21-24

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. *An Oasis*

1. Lying in the middle of Death Valley is an oasis known as Furnace Creek.
2. It stands in stark contrast to the surrounding land because it's lush with dense vegetation while all around is barren rock and dirt.
3. While any desert is largely lifeless, an oasis is a center of life.
4. In the ancient world when trade was carried out by caravans that moved from place to place, the oasis was crucial.
  - a. ancient highways were the trade routes that drove the straightest line possible from one oasis to the next.
  - b. these oases were more than just watering holes;
  - c. they were centers of joy and celebration because they offered a renewal of life and the promise of moving further on toward one's destination and HOME!

### B. *Enoch As An Oasis*

1. In Genesis 5 we find a spiritual oasis in the story of Enoch.
2. Enoch was the 7th from Adam through the godly line of Seth.
3. Only three of Adam & Eve's children are named: Cain, Abel, & Seth.
  - a. we know what happened to Abel, he was murdered by his elder brother Cain.
  - b. in ch. 4 we read of Cain's fate and his descendants.
  - c. they carry on in the tradition of the Fall and Cain's angry and brutal example.
  - d. but Seth, Adam & Eve's third son became the one through whom God's Promise of redemption would be fulfilled.
  - e. his descendants constitute the godly line & the path of faith.
4. Like a trade route through the desert of godlessness represented by Cain's descendants, Ch. 5 charts their course of the line of Seth – which comes to an oasis in the life of Enoch.

## II. TEXT

### A. *Vs. 3-11*

**3**And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. **4**After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. **5**So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

**6**Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. **7**After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. **8**So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

**9**Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan. **10**After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived

**eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. 11So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.**

1. And so it goes through the story of Cainan, and Mahalalel; Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech.
2. We read they were born, lived so many years, had their firstborn child, then they lived so many more years and had more kids.
3. Each record ends with the same sad words, and he died.”
4. There is only one whose story is different – Enoch.

## **B. Vs. 21-24**

**21Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah.**

1. His story begins in the same as the others -
2. Following the pattern of the rest of the genealogy what we expect to read is -

**22After he begot Methuselah, Enoch lived three hundred years and had sons and daughters.**

3. But that’s not what we find. We read -

**After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters.**

4. Whereas others merely walked this earth, Enoch walked with God.

**23So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.**

5. This returns to the pattern for the rest, but in v. 24 we find a very different end for Enoch.

**24And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.**

6. His walk with God is repeated because in the end, it took him beyond the border of this world into the very presence of God.
7. On their way home from church one day a mother asked her son, “What did you learn in SS today?”
  - a. the boy answered, “We learned about Enoch.”
  - b. the mother said, “Tell me about him.”
  - c. he replied, “Well, Enoch & God were friends.
    - 1) They spent a lot of time together.
    - 2) They liked to walk and talk, talk and walk.
    - 3) One day, they walked and talked for so long God said, ‘Look Enoch, we’ve come so far together, we’re now closer to My house than yours. Why don’t you just come home with me?’
    - 4) And so he did.”
8. This simple child’s spin on the story of Enoch really does capture its essence.

## **C. Enoch’s Example**

1. The writer of Hebrews sets Enoch before us as an example of what it means to have faith.
2. Hebrews 11:5 says -

**By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found,**

**because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.**

3. The writer equates true faith to the phrase in Genesis 5, that Enoch “walked with God.”
4. And he says that it was this faith, manifested in Enoch’s walk with God that so pleased Him it resulted in his being translated from Earth to Heaven without ever seeing death.
5. He then draws this conclusion from Enoch’s example – v. 6

**But 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 diligently seek Him.**

#### ***D. The Life That Pleases God***

1. Enoch shows us the life that pleases God!
2. It’s a life of simple faith; a faith that expresses itself in simply walking with God!
3. According to the wisdom and ways of the world, the successful person is the one who attains fame, power, or wealth.
4. Why, even among God’s people we tend to define success in life as achieving some great accomplishment for God.
  - a. we think that in order to please Him we have to save so many lost souls -
  - b. or embark on some arduous missions venture.
  - c. we think the level of God’s pleasure rises when we add more to the offering or deny ourselves some pleasure.
5. Does pleasing God mean building a hospital or orphanage, or church?
6. Does pleasing the Lord mean giving all we have to feed the poor?
7. Consider Enoch’s example – what does the text say?
  - a. how did he please God? HE WALKED WITH HIM!
  - b. there’s no mention here of some great work Enoch performed.
  - c. we read nothing of him building or making a great offering.
  - d. he simply walked with God!
  - e. this doesn’t mean Enoch didn’t do any of these things;
  - f. he may have – but that’s not what stands out about him,
  - g. that’s not what he’s commended for or is presented to us as something we ought to seek to emulate
  - h. what’s emphasized is that he walked with God!
8. 2 Cor. 5:7 shows us what it means to walk with God. Paul’s says -

**We walk by faith, not by sight.**

9. Then in v. 9 he says -

**We make it our aim . . . to be well pleasing to Him.**

10. What pleased God was Enoch’s faith, which expressed itself in a simple, daily communion with Him.
  - a. as it says in Heb. 11:6 – Enoch simply came to the Lord, expecting to find Him;
  - b. and to have that expectation answered with sweet fellowship with Him.
11. We read no where that Enoch built an orphanage or hospital or Bible college.

- a. all these verses say is that he had some children and lived 365 years.
  - b. what stands out about his life, what marks him as being pleasing to the Lord is that while everyone else just lived through their years on earth – he walked with God through those years.
  - c. now, it may have been that that daily communion and fellowship with the Lord resulted in all kinds of specific leadings and tasks –
  - d. we would expect it to; such intimacy with the Lord will bear a rich harvest of fruit.
  - e. but it was not on the fruit that the favor of God fell; it was on the intimacy itself – the simple longing of Enoch to be with the Lord!
12. And make no mistake, that was a difficult time in which to live and maintain such a lifestyle!
- a. we may think it's a challenge, a difficult thing to live the life of faith today because of the abundance of evil around us.
  - b. but it was just as bad in Enoch's day!
  - c. don't forget, those were the days just prior to the Flood; when the wickedness of man was so great it demanded a radical judgment!
  - d. yes, it is bad today – but Jesus said that the last days would parallel the days of Flood.
13. It wasn't easy for Enoch to walk with God; evil surrounded him too.
14. And yet, he kept his focus and maintained his walk.
- a. if Enoch could do it – so can we!
  - b. in fact, we have even greater potential to walk with God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation because we have something Enoch didn't –
  - c. the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God.
15. There's a subtle clue as to the secret of Enoch's success found in v. 22
- After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters.**
- a. it was after Enoch fathered Methuselah that he walked with God!
  - b. the name "Methuselah" means, "Dying, he shall send" or "When he dies, it comes."
  - c. Methuselah lived a total of 969 years, longer than any other –
  - d. but in the year that he died, the Flood came!
  - e. when Enoch was born, God warned him that in the year that son died, judgment would fall,
  - f. so Enoch gave a prophetic name to the boy and called him Methuselah.
  - g. from that point on, Enoch walked with God.
16. Even though people lived to be hundreds of years old, Enoch realized that in the light of eternity, man's days on earth are but a vapor; they are like the morning dew that evaporates when the sun rises.
17. Life is short – and then eternity.
18. The choice we make about God is made in that short life, and it determines where we spend that eternity.
19. While the rest of the list of names in ch. 5 simply says they lived, and died, Enoch's story stands out because for him, to live was God and living in such a

way meant victory over death.

**Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.**

20. Enoch becomes the prototype for all who bring themselves before God and simply say, “Lord, here I am and the life you have given. I give it back to you.”

21. “For me, to live is Christ.”

22. To such a one, Jesus says what He said to Mary & Martha – [John 11:25-26]

**“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”**

23. Note that – Jesus said, “Whoever lives and believes in Me” = LIVES & BELIEVES!

24. In light of Enoch’s example – isn’t that the same thing as walking with God?

25. Jesus is saying that the believer IS the one who walks with God.

26. And over that one, death has no power –

a. because when their time on earth is finished, whether it’s 365 years, as it was for Enoch, or 87 years, or 62, or 34 or even a mere 14

b. then God will say, “It’s time to come home!”

### **III. CONCLUSION**

#### **A. Who Is God To You**

1. As we read through Genesis 5 and the descendants of Adam thru Seth, were brought up short by Enoch’s story.

2. His life and example is an oasis of faith in the midst of a spiritual desert.

3. His ancestors and descendants listed here around him all are in the godly line of Seth, so there was some measure of faith in them.

4. But they all fell short of the intensity and sincerity Enoch’s faith rose to.

5. Enoch and his relatives remind us that even among those who believe in God, not all walk with Him!

a. for many, God is Creator, the Great Deity who rules Heaven and Earth.

b. He’s the Lord and Master – the Final Judge before Whom they will stand,

c. so they live their lives with a faith that holds God in deep reverence and fear.

d. they see Him as an Inspector before whom they occasionally come for review.

e. the problem is a faith that only sees God as Inspector General probably will not be much of a motivation to intimate fellowship!

1) do you want to hang out with someone who’s constantly critiquing you?

2) of course not! And a faith that only sees God as Judge will not encourage a walk with Him.

6. Others see God as a Resource, a great Rescuer to turn to when they’re in trouble – the Heavenly Paramedic and prayer is a spiritual 911 call.

7. Others come a bit farther in faith and see God mostly as the One Who Saves them from sin, death, and hell; He’s Savior and for this they are profoundly thankful.

8. But Enoch's faith goes farther –
  - a. while he sees God as Creator, Judge, Lord, Refuge and Savior, he sees Him as something MORE still –
  - b. Enoch sees God as Friend, as Companion – as One to WALK with.
9. Listen to the words of Jesus at the Last Supper - John 15:13-17

**13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.**

- a. "command" – sounds like a Lord/Servant thing
- b. but what Jesus means by command here is something richer and more intimate than that
- c. it's the bond and commitment friends have with one another – the agreement they have BECAUSE of their friendship

**15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. 17 These things I command you, that you love one another.**

- d. we didn't chose Jesus – it isn't that we say, "I will walk with Jesus!"
  - e. Jesus chose us, He welcomes us to His side!
  - f. who wouldn't accept such an offer??
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10. So let me ask - Who is God to you?
11. Where does your faith in God TAKE you?
12. It ought to take us to His side – every moment of every day.

## ***B. The Life That Pleases God***

1. It's funny how as we get older, while our eyes get weaker our vision gets clearer.
2. What I mean is – how as the years pass and we gain wisdom on what's important in life, we look back on our youth and realize how our priorities and values were so mixed up then.
3. I'd guess that most of us would like to go back and live our teen years over again, but with the insights and knowledge we have now.
4. Many would love to go back to school and take their classes over again.
  - a. what they'd do differently is apply themselves to their studies and strive for "A's."
  - b. when they were in school, they were more concerned with being popular and funny– so they constantly disturbed the class with stupid comments.
  - c. it was more important to be held in high esteem by their peers than to have high grades.
  - d. and now they realize how very foolish such thinking was.
5. I have news for you – we're all still in school; this life is school.
6. We have a choice – what's important to us? To live a life that's pleasing to the world, or pleasing to God?
7. The life that pleases God is to simply come to Him and say, "Lord, meet with me; let me walk with You, TODAY!"