

Enoch: Faith Walking

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: 27 May 2018

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 00] Well, would you turn with me this morning to the letter to the Hebrews and chapter 11. Hebrews chapter 11, and with the Lord's help we're continuing our study of this chapter, this chapter of faith.

Hebrews chapter 11, and this morning we're reading, we're considering the man we were reading about in Genesis 5, Enoch.

So Hebrews chapter 11 at verse 5. It says, By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found because God had taken him.

Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God, and without faith it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists, and that he rewards those who seek him.

It was once said that every graveyard gives a warning, but every grave tells a story.

[1 : 24] Every graveyard gives a warning, but every grave tells a story. Every graveyard gives to us the solemn warning that it's appointed unto man once to die, and after that, the judgment.

Every graveyard warns us that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and give an account. Every graveyard reminds us, as we were just singing in Psalm 90, that our life is like a tale that is told, and that we should number our days that we might apply our hearts to wisdom.

My friend, every graveyard reminds us that we need to be ready. We need to be prepared. We need to be saved. We need to have faith in Jesus Christ.

Every graveyard gives a warning, but every grave tells a story. Every grave is individual. Every grave is unique.

Every grave tells the story of someone who was a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, a father or a mother.

[2 : 36] Every grave tells the story about someone who was known, someone who was loved, someone who was cherished, someone who is missed.

My friend, every grave tells the story of someone who lived in this world, but because of the wages of sin, they encountered death. Every graveyard gives a warning, but every grave tells a story. But you know, what's remarkable is that the man of faith we're considering this morning, he certainly knew the warning of the graveyard. But his grave never told a story. He never had a grave. We read in Genesis 5 that Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. And Enoch is mentioned in Hebrews 11, he's mentioned here as a man of faith, but Enoch didn't die in faith because he didn't die.

And of course, that's very difficult for us to get our heads around, and well, hopefully we'll consider that a bit later on. But if you remember the reason Enoch is mentioned here, is because Hebrews 11 is all about answering the question, what does it mean to have faith in Jesus Christ?

[3 : 51] What does it mean to have faith in Jesus Christ? And as we said before, faith in Jesus Christ, it involves confidence in Jesus Christ, it involves conviction about Jesus Christ, and it also involves commitment to Jesus Christ.

So faith in Jesus Christ involves confidence, conviction, and commitment. And you know, Enoch is mentioned here because he was a godly man, and he was an example of someone who walked by faith.

And there are just three things that I'd like us to consider about Enoch this morning. I want us to consider his context, his character, and his commendation.

His context, his character, and his commendation. So we'll look first of all at his context. Look again at verse 5 of Hebrews 11. It says, By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found because God had taken him.

Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God. So Enoch, he may not have had his own grave, but when we're introduced to Enoch, we find him in a graveyard.

[5 : 09] Because Enoch, as we read, he was briefly mentioned to us in Genesis chapter 5, and he's mentioned in amongst this graveyard of names. That's Enoch's context.

His context is a graveyard of names. He's surrounded by a graveyard of people who have died. But these people, they aren't people he didn't know.

They were his own family. They're his descendants. They're part of his family tree. And that's what Genesis 5 is. It's the family tree of Adam and Eve.

It goes from Adam's third son, Seth, to Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And so Enoch, he's found within the context of a family tree, and he's surrounded by a graveyard of names. And you know, Enoch's context is a solemn context. Because apart from Enoch, every person in Genesis 5 were told, and he died.

[6 : 12] And he died. And he died. And he died. It's a solemn context. The reformer John Calvin, he says that the phrase, and he died, was by no means pointless.

Because he says, we must reflect upon our lamentable condition. Because the image and likeness of God, it has been destroyed. And we are all hastening to our death.

We need this reminder, says Calvin, because there is nothing that we are more prone to dream about than our own immortality. Death is frequently brought before our eyes so as to affirm to us that we are now exposed to the curse unless we obtain deliverance from it.

You know, my friend, Enoch's context, it's there for us as a solemn reminder of the fact that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

our Lord. And you know, Calvin's point that he made, it's so true because we all dream about our immortality. We can't imagine a world without us.

[7 : 28] Because even when we're confronted with the reality of death, we don't apply it to ourselves. We don't think I could be next. We don't think it could be me in that coffin.

We don't think that could be my grave being opened. But we don't think like that because we kid ourselves into thinking that it's not our turn and we have plenty of time.

But you know, the men mentioned in Genesis 5, they did have plenty of time. Adam lived, we're told, for 930 years and he died. Seth lived for 912 years and he died.

Enoch, Enoch, for 905 years and he died. Kenan, 910 years and he died and so on. Even Methuselah, he was the oldest man mentioned in the Bible, 969 years and he died.

These men, they had plenty of time to seek the Lord but we only have the three score and ten. But if you're blessed, you receive the four score and maybe some more.

[8 : 35] It's not long and it's not as long as those mentioned in Genesis 5. But the reason for that is sin. Because when you look at the following chapter in Genesis 6, we're told that when man began to multiply on the face of the earth, the Lord said, my spirit shall not always thrive with man for he is flesh.

His days shall be 120 years. And what the Lord meant there was that the days of mankind, they were going to be shortened because of their sin. But you know what's frightening is that as sin progressed to Moses' generation, Moses wrote as we sang in Psalm 90 that our lifespan had been shortened even further to 70 or 80 years.

And you know, now in the day and age that we live in, sometimes it feels that the lifespan of mankind has been shortened even further. Because let's never forget that it's the Lord who has appointed this.

He has appointed the day of our birth and he has also appointed the day of our death. And because our day, our appointed day is in his hand, not one of us can say that we have plenty of time.

Not one of us. As you know, we have men working at the church just now. And I was speaking to the scaffolder at the church the other day just before I went to the funeral of my great auntie.

[10 : 10] And as, well he asked, where are you going? And then I said, well I'm going to my great auntie's funeral. And then he asked, as you do, well how old was she? And my great auntie, well she was the same age as my granny who was buried the week before.

She was 85. And his response to hearing that both my great auntie and my granny died at 85, his response was, well they had good innings.

They had good innings. But you know, without even thinking I responded by saying to the man, it doesn't matter how many innings you have. The game always comes to an end.

And if the game comes to an end, I said, then we have to be ready when the end comes. And you know, I proceeded to ask the scaffolder as I ask you week by week, are you ready for your game to come to an end?

And you know, sadly, like many sitting here today, he confessed he wasn't ready. He wasn't prepared. And my unconverted friend here today, it doesn't matter how many innings you have, the game, it always comes to an end.

[11 : 19] But are you ready for that game to come to an end? Are you prepared to die? Are you prepared to die? I don't know, maybe you think I'm too direct.

Maybe you think I'm morbid, always talking about death. Maybe you're tired of hearing about death. But you know, the truth is, the longer I go on in the ministry, I see that death is no respecter of age or passion.

Death never asks you how old you are, or what's going on in your life, or if you have a spouse, or if you have children. Death doesn't ask you if you're ready. Death just takes. And because of this, my genuine concern for you is that you're ready for eternity.

Because my responsibility as your minister is to ensure that you know how to die well. that when your innings are up and your game is over, that you die in Christ, saved by his grace and washed in his blood.

That's my only desire. That's my longing for you all. That's what I want more than anything else.

That you know how to die well. Because at the end of the day, nothing else matters.

[12 : 36] Nothing else is of eternal benefit to you than knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. You can take nothing into that grave with you apart from Christ.

Because Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. And all that's required of you, this is the wonder of the Bible, all that's required of you is faith in Jesus Christ.

And as you know, faith in Jesus Christ, it involves confidence as to who Jesus is. It involves conviction as to what Jesus is all about. But it also involves commitment.

Commitment to this Savior Jesus Christ. That's what you need. You need commitment to this Savior Jesus Christ.

And so Enoch's context is a solemn context. But we're also told that Enoch had a character. His character was godly. So his context, his character.

[13 : 43] We're told in verse 5, By faith, Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death. And he was not found because God had taken him. Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God.

In Genesis 5, we were told that at the age of 362, Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him. And that's what's confirmed here in Hebrews 11.

But as we said, this is a very difficult concept for us to get our heads around that Enoch didn't die because God took him. And apart from Elijah, the prophet, who was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire, Enoch is the only other person mentioned in the Bible who didn't die and went to heaven. But you know, the explanation that the Bible gives for Enoch being taken up to heaven is that he walked with God. He walked with God. But the problem with that is there are many people in the Bible who walked with God.

In Genesis 6, we were introduced, we're introduced to Noah and we're told that Noah, he walked with God. And Abraham, he's described as the friend of God.

[14 : 59] Moses, he spoke with God face to face. Jacob wrestled with God. David was the man after God's own heart. Daniel, he knew his God personally and intimately when he prayed three times a day.

And so Enoch, he wasn't the only man mentioned in the Bible who walked with God. So what does it mean to walk with God? Why? Why do we need to walk with God?

What does it mean to walk by faith and not by sight? It means to live your life wholeheartedly committed to Jesus Christ and looking to him for salvation.

My friend, commitment to Jesus Christ walks by faith and not by sight. Commitment to Jesus Christ walks with God. And I know I always go on about this word commitment.

And maybe you're saying to yourself, well, Murdo, you're always telling me that I need to commit my life to Jesus Christ. But what does that mean? What are you asking me to do? How do I commit my life to Jesus Christ?

[16:02] How do I become a Christian? How do I know that I'm a Christian? My friend, commitment to Jesus Christ walks by faith. It walks with God. But what on earth does that mean?

It means that you get to know Jesus and you stay close to Jesus and you make Jesus your best friend. that's how Abraham was described.

He was the friend of God. And as you all know, a friend is someone you speak to. A friend is someone you know personally. A friend is someone you love.

A friend is not just an acquaintance. A friend is someone you speak to regularly, that you meet with regularly, that you're open with and you discuss with them everything that's going on in your life.

A friend is someone who's faithful and you're faithful to them. And that's what it means to be committed. To walk with God. It's to have Jesus as your friend.

[16:58] A friend that you know by reading your Bible. Because that's how Jesus communicates with you. This Bible, this is God's love letter to you.

And Jesus wants you to know that he loves you and he wants to be your friend. That's why Jesus said greater love has no man than this or a man lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you. Jesus wants to be your friend. He wants you to love him and speak to him and follow him. But more than that, Jesus wants you to come and meet with him.

With all his other friends. Jesus wants you to be in church. Because that's where he meets with all his friends. And that's where he speaks to them as a group.

That's where he encourages them to love him and to love one another. My friend, if you want to be saved, if you want to be committed, if you want to be a Christian, then you need to make Jesus your friend.

[18:00] Jesus just can't be an acquaintance that you hear about now and again an hour on the Lord's Day. Jesus can't be this acquaintance that other people talk about.

but you don't really know him yourself. No, Jesus has to be your friend. And being his friend must be the greatest desire in your heart.

Wanting to know Jesus, it can't be a leisurely or a lackadaisical desire. Your friendship can't be half-hearted. It must be whole-hearted. It must be whole-hearted commitment in which you actively read your Bible.

You want to pray and speak to the Lord throughout the day and enjoy fellowship with the other friends of Jesus. My friend, if you really want to be saved, then you need to make Jesus your friend. You need to listen to him speak to you from the Bible. You need to speak to him in prayer and meet with him in church. If you really want to be saved, be in the Word, be in prayer and be in church.

[19:05] Be in the Lord's house, be with the Lord's people, be under his Word because faith, it comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. If you really want to be saved, come to church morning and evening.

Come to church during the week. I don't know why you don't come to church more often. This is the best place in the world apart from heaven.

I don't know why you don't come. Of course, coming to church it won't save you. But when you come to church, you get to know Jesus better. My friend, if you really want to be saved, you have to make Jesus your friend.

You have to be committed to him. You need to walk with him. That's what Enoch did. He walked with God and he was not for God took him. But as we said, there were many others who walked with God.

There was Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jacob and David and Daniel. They all walked with God. And as they walked with God, the Lord had a plan and a purpose for their lives and the Lord used them as servants who were willing to commit their lives to him by faith.

[20:21] And you know, my friend, the same Lord has a plan and purpose for all of our lives. But the question is, are we willing to make ourselves available for him? Are we willing to do what the Lord is calling us to do?

Are we willing to humble ourselves and submit to the Lord's will by committing our lives to the Lord by faith? You know, the Lord, he had a plan and a purpose for Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jacob and David and Daniel.

But we're told that Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him. So does that mean that the Lord didn't have a plan and a purpose for Enoch? Certainly not.

I believe the reason Enoch didn't die and that the Lord took him was because Enoch was a promise to his people. Enoch was a promise to God's people.

Although Enoch's context as we saw in Genesis 5, although his context was death and he was surrounded by names of people who had died, Enoch's character of walking with God, it was a promise.

[21 : 35] It was a promise that there would be a great resurrection morning. My friend, Enoch was taken in order to remind us that those who walk with God in this life, there will be for them a great resurrection morning.

death may come into our experience, but having Jesus as the resurrection and the life, that's the hope for the great resurrection morning.

You know, Jesus, he says to us, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And he who lives and believes in me shall never die.

And you know, when Jesus made that statement in John 11, he asked that all-important question afterwards. Do you believe this?

Is this your hope? Is this your foundation? Is this what your life is all about? Do you have the promise of eternal life and the hope of the resurrection? You know, my friend, Enoch's character, it ought to remind us that there will be this great resurrection morning.

[22 : 51] Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him. And you know, I say all this because the phrase God took him, it's a wonderful phrase. But it's the same language that Jesus used when he was speaking to the disciples about heaven.

Do you remember when Jesus was in the upper room with his disciples and he was telling them that he had to leave them? The cross was before him and then after his death and resurrection, Jesus would ascend into heaven.

But in order to encourage these discouraged disciples, Jesus said in John 14, let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions.

If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, he says, I will come again and take you to be with myself.

That where I am, there you may be also. My friend, Jesus promises that those who walk with him by faith, Jesus promises he will prepare a place for them in heaven.

[24 : 01] And on that great resurrection morning, when all the graves are opened and all the dead in Christ shall rise first, Jesus says he will take his people to be with himself.

And where he is, there they will be also. And so Enoch's character, they ought to remind us of this wonderful promise.

The promise that for those who walk with God by faith, there will be a great resurrection morning when Jesus will come again and take his people to himself.

You know, is that not what the hymn writer said? When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more and when the morning breaks eternal bright and fair, when the saved of earth shall gather over on the other shore and the role is called up yonder.

The hymn writer could say, I'll be there. But can you say, I'll be there? Can you say, I'll be there when the role is called up yonder?

[25 : 17] Would you like to be there? Would you like to be there? If you would, then make Jesus your friend today.

And so we've considered Enoch's context and his character. But lastly, we see his commendation. His commendation.

Look at verse 5 again. By faith, Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death and he was not found because God had taken him. Now before he was taken, he was commended as having pleased God.

And without faith, it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

You know, in these verses, the writer to the Hebrews, he tells us that before Enoch was taken up to heaven, he was commended as having pleased God. And of course, Enoch pleased God because he walked with God by faith.

[26 : 24] Because as it says here in verse 6, without faith, it's impossible to please God. Without faith, it's impossible to receive this commendation. So how do we receive this commendation?

How do we please God? What is it that pleases God? My friend, the only thing that pleases God the Father is the righteousness of his own Son, Jesus Christ.

The only thing that pleases God the Father is the righteousness of his own Son, Jesus Christ. And the only way that sinners can be made righteous is through faith in the cross of Jesus Christ.

Because as the Bible tells us, it was at the cross that Jesus became sin for us. He knew no sin, but he became sin for us all so that we could be made the righteousness of God in him.

And now as sinners, we have the promise of receiving the righteousness of Christ. We have the promise of being made as righteous as Jesus Christ himself.

[27 : 33] And yes, we are completely unworthy of this promise of righteousness. We don't deserve it. But this is why the gospel is such good news. This is why the gospel is the best news that you'll ever hear in your life.

Because in it we're being promised blessing and salvation. And it's all being held out to us by God himself. And all we have to do is receive it by faith. Because as we're told in verse 6, whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he will reward those who diligently seek him.

And for you, my unconverted friend here today, yes, you're a sinner. Yes, you're unworthy. Yes, you're undeserving of this great gift. But that shouldn't keep you away.

That should make you want to come and embrace this promise of Christ's righteousness. That should make you want to come and receive this offer of salvation.

Because I have no doubt that you believe that God exists. I have no doubt that you believe that Jesus is real and that Jesus died for sinners. I have no doubt that you have confidence in Jesus Christ and conviction about Jesus Christ.

[28 : 51] But the question is, do you have commitment to Jesus Christ? Do you have commitment to Jesus Christ?

Because the only way to please God is to diligently seek Jesus by faith. The only way to be made righteous, as righteous as Jesus Christ himself, is by faith in Jesus Christ.

the only way to be saved, is by committing your whole life into the hands of Jesus. My friend, you are promised, on the pages of scripture, you're promised the reward of salvation if you diligently seek Jesus by faith.

So are you seeking him? Are you diligently seeking him? I'm not asking if you want to be saved before you die. surely everyone wants that.

Surely everyone wants to be saved before they die. What I'm asking is, do you want to be saved now? Do you want to be saved today? Are you diligently seeking Jesus with all your heart?

[30 : 03] Is it what you want with all your heart? Is it your priority more than anything else in this world? God? And if it's not, it should be. It should be.

Because it's the only way you're going to be saved. The only way. You know, Jesus is saying to you today, ask and it will be given to you.

Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. receives. The one who seeks, finds. The one who knocks, it will be opened.

He rewards those who diligently seek him. My friend, you need to wholeheartedly cry out to the Lord and say to him, Lord, I can't save myself.

You need to save me. And when you get off your knees, you need to live your life. Walking with God by faith.

[31 : 11] Looking to Jesus, the author and the finisher of your faith. So, you know, his context, surrounded by death, just like us.

His character, he walked with God. Is that you? His commendation. He pleased God. He was made righteous by faith in Jesus Christ.

Again, is that you? Is that you? Because without faith, says the Bible, it is impossible to please God. God. But whosoever would draw near to God must believe that he is and that he rewards those who diligently seek him.

Oh, my friend, make sure you're seeking this Christ for time and for eternity. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us.

[32 : 21] Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to thee for the warnings and even the witness. The warnings, Lord, that our time is short.

But we bless thee for the witness of thy people, of those who walked with God by faith in this life. And help us, we pray, to not only follow in their footsteps, footsteps, but to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, to realize that he is one who calls us to be his friend and that he promises to stick closer to us than even our own brother.

O Lord, bless thy word to us, we pray. Help us to lay hold of the offer of the gospel and to receive Jesus by faith and to know this Christ for time and for eternity.

O Lord, do us good, and we pray. Bless us. This day, the Lord's day, help us to rest. Help us to wait patiently upon thee, that thou wouldst go before us and do us good.

Take away our iniquity. Receive us graciously, for Jesus' sake. Amen. We shall bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 73.

[33 : 41] Psalm 73 in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 73 It's on page 316.

In Psalm 73 it was written by a man called Asaph. Asaph wondered why the world was prospering and he as a Christian was suffering. But it was only when he came into God's house that he realised that those who didn't have Christ, that when they died, that was their end.

But for him, as a Christian, the best was yet to come. And that's what he says in these verses, in verse 23 down to the verse Mark 26. He's talking about the best that is yet to come.

He says, nevertheless continually, O Lord, I am with thee. Thou dost me hold by my right hand and still upholdest me. Thou with thy counsel while I live, wilt me conduct and guide and to thy glory afterward receive me to abide.

So Psalm 73 from verse 23 to 26 God's grace is to God's praise.

[35 : 00] We Thou hast Lord, I am with thee.

The dust may hold by my right hand, as ill the coldest need.

Thou with thy counsel while I live, with me in contact and guide, and to thy glory afterward, receive me to abide.

Whom I die in the heavens high, but thee, O Lord, alone, and in the earth, whom I desire, besides thee there is none.

My flesh and heart doth faint and fear, but God doth fail me never.

[37 : 09] For of my heart, God is the strength and portion forever.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.