

“THE BELL”



BANGOR LIBERTY
FRIENDS
NEWSLETTER

Walking In God's Obituary Column

George Burns joked many years ago that he read the obituaries to make sure he wasn't in there. Today we are going to spend some time reading a portion of Scripture that has been referred to as God's obituary column. In the fifth chapter of Genesis is a record of one thousand five hundred years of human history but the phrase that is used more often than any other is simply, "and he died." The phrase repeated eight times is like the tolling of a bell contradicting the lie of Satan in Genesis chapter three. When the serpent came to tempt Eve, he said to her "surely you will not die," but over and over through time God has shown that this was a lie. And men have died ever since.

However, there is one exception to this rule in Genesis chapter five. The seventh man in the list of ten is Enoch. The phrase "and he died" is never written for Enoch, instead, it is simply remarked, "he was not for God took him." This makes Enoch a very unusual person, because in all the words of Scripture there are only two men recorded who did not die—Elijah and Enoch. Also there were only two men in the Bible of whom it was said they "walked with God," Abraham and Enoch. There are also only two instances where it is said of a man that he pleased God, Jesus and Enoch. Clearly Enoch was a unique and exceptional individual.

For such an unusual person there are only three references in the Bible to Enoch. The first is in Genesis five where he is described as walking with God. But first it's stated that for the first sixty-five years of his life he did not walk with God and was no different than other people who were around him. In other words for the first sixty-five years Enoch lived life consistent with the culture of his day, living and trying to be happy without God.

Well, what does it mean to walk with God? I don't think it's that God appeared to Enoch daily and they strolled the hills and trails together. This is speaking more of a figurative than a literal walking. It means that Enoch was going in the same direction that God is going. That's a requirement to be considered walking with someone, you are moving in the same direction. So what direction is God moving? God is always moving in the direction against sin, against the evil in human life. This is because the deepest fact about God is that he is a God of love. His love is continually working against

anything that destroys, cheapens, harms or damages the creation that He loves.

If we walk with God we oppose all those things that God opposes. We hate what God hates and love what He loves.

While Enoch is moving in the same direction as God, he also would have had an agreement with God. It is one thing to move in the same direction but to walk with someone means to stay in step with that person. It is easy to say "I hate sin." The problem is we say, "I hate sin, but I enjoy my sin." Being in agreement with God is not resisting him in each step of our lives. It means surrendering to His will and ceasing to resist what it is God is wanting me to do. Walking is exactly, of course, the activity to which we are called in the New Testament, isn't it? Walk as children of light, Paul said Walk worthy of God, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. This is the very thing we're called to do.

In Hebrews chapter three we read the second mention of Enoch in Scripture, "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 attested as having pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please Him." (Hebrews 11:5-6) Enoch pleased God because he walked with him, agreed with him and had faith that God would accomplish all that He promised.

Now let's look at a small letter toward the end of the New Testament that is often overlooked. In Jude, the fourteenth verse, we have the third reference in Scripture to this man Enoch, and here we see a prediction which supplies a motive. Verse 14, Jude is speaking of the apostates, those who have left their faith. He says in verse 14,

"It was of these also that Enoch in the seventh generation from Adam prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness which they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14-15)

That was the revelation Enoch received from God that was the basis of his faith. Looking forward, he saw a time of judgment and a coming of the Lord to judge the earth. What he saw was the flood coming upon the world of his day, and as he looked he saw

the direction of God moving through history. He looked on to the end of the culture and comforts, and of the mechanical marvels of his day, to the day when God would judge men and the evil that was at work through them.

So when did he receive this revelation? For that we need to go back to Genesis chapter five. It was at the birth of his first child, when Methuselah was born. How do I know that? Because of what he named that boy, for the name Methuselah is an interesting name. It means, literally, from the Hebrew “when he dies, it will come.” When he dies, it will come.

If you do the math in Genesis five you will find that in the year Methuselah dies, 969 years later, the flood comes. The earth and the fountains of the deep are opened. Rain is released from the windows of heaven and the earth is destroyed by water. God gave Enoch in the birth of that baby a revelation of coming judgment and Enoch warned everyone with the naming of his son.

Enoch had no idea how long his child would live. The fact that he lived so long is a demonstration of God’s grace. Enoch knew that as long as that child lived that God was restraining judgement. That was the thing that kept Enoch always remembering, always walking with God day after day after day.

Just as Enoch watched the life of his son you and I have been given a life to watch as well. It is my own life and your own life. None of us know how long it’s going to last. Perhaps tomorrow, perhaps this evening. What we do know is that it is all coming to an end. Everything is leading to a day when “every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.” Hopefully this understanding has the same effect on us that it had on Enoch. That we see life as God sees it, that we look at all thing through His perspective, that we begin each day walking in His chosen direction. This is how we live a life pleasing to God.

OCTOBER 2019

LIBRARY LEDGE – More Donations

We have still more donations to add to our library, thanks to all you generous people. This month we are adding several Liberty USFW Reading Course books, so if you missed them in the past, or just

want to read them again, they will be here. They include Sue Monk Kidd’s **The Invention of Wings**, J. Ellsworth Kalas’ **Strong Was Her Faith** and Lyn Cote’s Quaker Bride series of three books **Honor**, **Blessing** and **Faith**.

Please come enjoy our wonder books. If you haven’t checked out our book sale, make sure you do before we pack them up. There is bound to be something you can use.

Missions

The October, November, December quarter offering, first one will be Wings of Refuge. Thank Offering in November will be divided equally between: a) RSWR (Right Sharing of World Resources) B) Camp scholarships c) Mesquakie Friends Church unless designated otherwise. Candlelight Offering will go to: Little Rock Ministries, CAPS (Child Abuse Prevention Services).

Reminder: Do not leave things in the refrigerator or freezer. Take things home or give them away.

Mystery Friend

Our mystery Friend for October was born in Marshalltown. He/She attends Wes Marshall. Our Mystery Friend has one sister. Favorite foods are bowtie noodles and fruit. Favorite activities are painting and drawing. He/she has traveled to Adventureland. Most people would know that this person loves LOL Surprise Dolls. They commented that they especially like the people and donuts and coffee at Bangor Liberty.

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Mystery Friend for September: Sharon Johnson

Coming Activities

October is Pastor Appreciation Month
October 18-22: Pastor's Retreat & Conference @
Camp Quaker Heights
October 27 Simplified CPR training & AED review

November 2: All Boards Retreat

November 6 will be a Fall party with a potluck