

CGYG / LIFE Bible Study Series 2006-07: Genesis

Genesis 5-6:10 – Walking with God, by faith

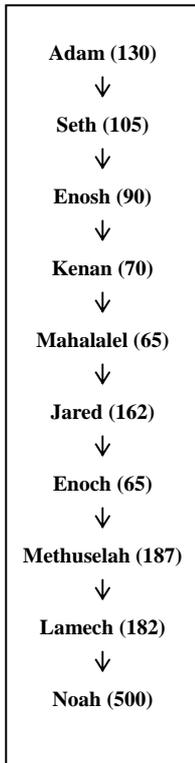
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One of the things that genealogies do is remind us that God always fulfills His promises, even though it may seem to take a long time in our small, finite minds (2 Peter 3:8 reminds us that God always works in His own, sovereign time!). The genealogies in the Gospels, for example, show us the lineage through which God sends His own Son into the world, ultimately fulfilling the promise of Genesis 3:15. The Genesis 5 genealogy, however, also reminds us something tragic about ourselves – that we are mortals, and will one-day face death as God’s judgment for sin. But there is one exception, in a man named Enoch. Both Enoch and Noah (whom we will study further next study) are said by Scripture to be men who ‘walked with God’. We shall see in tonight’s study how the Bible says they did so, and why it is an important and timely reminder for us who are Christians today to walk with God, in the same way that Enoch and Noah did.

How would you explain to someone what ‘faith’ is? Do you think everyone has faith, or only those who are ‘religious’? As a Christian, the Bible reminds us that we ‘walk by faith, not by sight’ (2 Cor 2:7). What do you think it means to ‘walk by faith’? Can you think of an example in your life when you clearly needed to walk by faith? What happened, and how did this impact your relationship with the Lord?

Read Genesis 5-6:10. As you read chapter 5, fill in the names that are listed in the genealogy in the box on the right.

- In the middle of the long list of names in chapter 5, the Bible pauses to point out a specific man named Enoch. What do verses 21-24 say about Enoch? What stands out about Enoch that is different than the rest of the men listed in this genealogy?
 - He became the father of Methuselah at age 65
 - Enoch ‘walked with God’ for 300 more years and had other sons & daughters
 - ‘Then he was no more, because God took him away’
 - He did not experience death
- What do you think it means that Enoch (5:24) and Noah (6:9) ‘walked with God’? In what ways did Enoch demonstrate this close walk with God in his life (Hebrews 11:5-6, Jude 14)? What does Hebrews 11:5 say was the result (perhaps, a ‘reward’) of this? In what other ways does Scripture say that that God’s people need to walk with Him (Micah 6:8)?
 - Heb 11:5 → He was commended (by whom? By God) as one who pleased God; and it was by faith that he walked with God and pleased God
 - Jude 14: About men who ‘change the grace of our God into a license for immorality, and deny Jesus Christ’... Enoch prophesied that the Lord’s judgment would come → stood against evildoers, he wasn’t afraid to stand for God truth and pronounce judgment on sinners
 - RESULT: He did not experience death – instead, the Lord ‘had taken him away’
 - Micah 6:8 → to walk humbly with Him – act justly (doing what is right) and to love mercy are requirements of all who follow the Lord



3. Before God took Enoch away, he was commended as one who ‘pleased’ God. What was required for Enoch to please God (Heb 11:6)? From this verse, what does pleasing God entail (see also Heb 7:18-19), and what must we believe first in order to do this? As Christians, how would we live differently if we were constantly mindful of these things about God? How does God reward those who seek to please Him (Ecc 2:26)?

- Faith was required for Enoch to please God
- Pleasing God entails coming to Him (or drawing near to Him), but we must first believe He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him
- Ecc 2:26 → God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness to those who seek to please Him

4. Can just anyone and everyone approach God to please Him, even if they have a ‘sincere heart’ (see Rom 8:6-8)? What does Jesus say in John 14:6? What does the Apostle Paul write about those who know Christ in Rom 8:9-11?

- Rom 8:6-8 → Sinful man is hostile to God; one controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God
- John 14:6 → Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. **No-one** comes to the Father but by Him
- Rom 8:9-11 → ‘If Christ is in you... your spirit is alive because of righteousness.’

5. Scripture gives many other examples of what it means to please God with our lives. What do the following passages tell us about living lives that please God (Col 1:10-12, 1 Thess 4:1-12, 1 Tim 2:1-3)?

- Col 1:10-12 → Please God entails 1) bearing fruit in every good work, 2) growing in the knowledge of God, 3) being strengthened spiritually, 4) giving thanks to the Father
- 1 Thess 4:1-12 → 1) Avoid sexual immorality, control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 2) Love one another, 3) Lead a quiet life – basically to be a good witness for the Lord
- 1 Tim 2:1-3 → Praying for those in authority, so that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness

6. Throughout Scripture, God has always commanded that His people live and walk with Him by faith. For instance, even as Israel was peering into the land that God had promised them, they needed to believe by faith that God would enable them to conquer its inhabitants, though their enemies seemed powerful and their cities seemed impenetrable (Num 13:28). What do these other passages say about faith and the power of a life that is lived by faith in the Lord?

Faith necessitates a firm conviction about God, who is unseen:

- Hebrews 11:1 → Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see
- 2 Cor 5:6-10 → “We live by faith, not by sight”
- John 4:24 → “God is Spirit, worshippers worship in spirit and in truth”

Faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is what imputes to us the righteousness required to please God:

- Rom 1:17 → “For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith””

True faith in the promises and power of God is demonstrated by action in obedience to Him:

- James 2:14, 21-24 → Abraham believed God, and this belief was confirmed by His obedience in offering Isaac on the altar

True faith in the promises and power of God can (but doesn't always) result in the extraordinary

- Matthew 17:20 → Faith even as small as a mustard seed → nothing is impossible with faith

Living by faith requires perseverance, and will be rewarded by God

- Heb 10:35-39 → Living by faith requires perseverance → and the reward from God will come

Read Genesis 6:1-10 again

Verses 1-4 are difficult to understand in that most commentators think that the Hebrew term for 'sons of God' here refers not to men, but to angels (e.g. Job 1:6). In other words, the sin that grieved the heart of God was inter-marrying between the heavenly and earthly realm, an over-stepping of boundaries between the divine and the human that God had set in place, with angels defiling their nature by marrying sinful man. Another possible interpretation is that 'sons of God' referred to those from the line of Seth (the line from which Christ would ultimately come), while 'daughters of men' referred to those from the line of Cain. The 'Nephilim' were literally 'men of name' – that they were of great renown was an indication of their arrogance before God, because it is the Lord who gives his people a name and makes them renowned (e.g. God's promise to Abram in Gen 12:2).

7. How were the ways of man becoming increasingly sinful, and what did God say would be the judgment for their sin (6:5-7)? Who was exempt from this judgment, and more importantly, why?

- V. 5: Every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil ALL the time
- Judgment was that God would wipe out every creature from the face of the earth – except Noah
- Noah 'found favor in the eyes of the Lord'; he was a 'righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.'

8. What do you think it means, that verse 6 says "the Lord was grieved that He had made man on the earth"? Does this mean that God made a 'mistake' in creating man?

- Mal 3:6 → "I the LORD do not change"
- James 1:17 → "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows"

Taking every thought captive...

Everyone, without exception, lives by faith in something. From the critical to the mundane, living by faith is the nature of being creatures, bound in a specific point in time, with finite minds that are only able understand things beyond us superficially at best. When you wake up and take your first breath in the morning, you do so by faith, trusting that your lungs will fill properly and not collapse on you, and that the oxygen you inhale will adequately sustain you. When you sit on a chair, you do so by faith, trusting that it won't give out on you and give you a horrible injury. In your life, on what or whom do you place your faith and trust? If your hope is based on your own wisdom and successes, or on man-made traditions and religions, then your life is built on sinking sand, for all of these are bound to fail. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ alone is the solid rock on whom we must place our faith. All things were created by Him and for His glory, and it is in Christ that all things hold together (Col 2:16-17). Walking with God assumes, quite naturally, that we aren't enemies of God. But that is exactly what Scripture says we are (e.g. Col 2:21, James 4:4) if we have not placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ to forgive our sins. If you haven't already, turn to Christ today for the forgiveness of your sins, so that you can draw near to God and enjoy the intimacy of walking with Him by faith.