

Colossians
Walking in Christ
Colossians 2:6-7

August 28, 2022

HDBC

Have you ever gotten in trouble because you did not watch your step? We've all stumbled because of a misstep. And our steps have probably brought us closer to danger than we might imagine. Brothers and I playing in the "sand pit" near grandmother's house. Played all morning around water and old piece of plywood. Only as we were leaving did my brother lift the board to reveal a water moccasin.

Another time oldest brother Bob and I walking through woods when we were suddenly attacked by swarm of angry yellow jackets. One of us walked too close to their nest. Where you walk and how you walk is important.

The worst was when I was walking down sidewalk around 5:00 in the morning, saw a bunch of racoons in a carport, including a baby. I was looking at them and walked right into a mailbox. Ouch!

For most of us, walking is not difficult, but it is amazing how quickly you can get into trouble when you do not **watch your step**. The same is true of spiritual walking. As Paul used the term in Col. 2:6-7. **Walking** is a metaphor for living, particularly in a spiritual sense. So, when you see the word walk, think life or lifestyle. Walking is living. Walking in a certain way is living in a certain way.

1. The manner of our walk (6)

Question: How are we to live?

Answer: In the same way that we were saved!

Our lifestyle is to match our conversion experience. How did you receive Christ? What were the most important factors in our conversion? There are 2.

A. Faith in Jesus

Placed life in His hands, trusted Him with eternal destiny. Trusted His death and resurrection for your salvation. We denied the ability to save ourselves. We are to live in that same way, trusting Jesus. Trust Him for daily provisions, direction, believing His word and obeying it.

Now, let's be honest. Most of us live lives more characterized by fear than by faith. **Waiting for results from medical test, facing job interview, entering classroom for 1st day of classes, attempting to share your salvation testimony with a friend.** Were you practicing fear or faith?

But we are called to walk by faith. The same faith I Christ that saves you from Hell will deliver you from anxiety and fear. That means we don't have to know all the answers before we act. It means we don't have to know the outcome first. It means we choose to do the right thing regardless of where it takes us or what it does to us.

Each morning we awaken to another set of unpredictable circumstances. These might include things that would challenge your faith. So, before your feet ever hit the floor determine to walk by faith and not by sight. Walk in faith and not in fear. The choice is yours. **Fear is relying on self and hoping for the best. Faith is trusting Christ and knowing it will be alright.**

B. Surrender to Jesus

Note Paul's words; *as you received Christ, Jesus the Lord.*

At salvation, you surrendered your will and your life to Christ. This surrender involved a true confession and repentance over our sins, as well as a complete yielding of our lives to Jesus. Words are important. Notice the three words Paul used to describe Jesus.

1) Christ

The word speaks of Jesus as the ***anointed one***, the ***messiah*** of the Old Testament. He was the one who fulfilled all the messianic promises under the old covenant. This reminds us of the divine nature of Jesus, for only one who is divine could fill that role. But Paul also says they received Him as Jesus.

2) Jesus

This is His human name. It speaks of his humanity. He was a real, historical person who actually lived. Just as He was fully divine, He was fully human. Paul makes that clear in verse 9. The Colossian believers were hearing from false teachers that Jesus was not fully God and fully man. Paul refutes that in this letter multiple times.

3) The Lord

We not only receive Jesus as fully God and fully man, but also as Lord. When the Colossians received Jesus they received Him as their sovereign Lord. **Billy Graham wrote this:**

No man can be said to be truly converted to Christ who has not bent his will to Christ. He may give intellectual assent to the claims of Christ and may have had emotional religious experiences; however, he is not truly converted until he has surrendered his will to Christ as Lord, Savior and Master.

Charles Spurgeon offered this:

*It is interesting to notice that the Apostles preached the Lordship of Christ. The word Savior occurs only twice in the Acts of the Apostles. On the other hand it is amazing to notice the title "Lord" is mentioned 92 times. The Gospel is "Believe on the **Lord** Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.*

Paul's point is that as they received Jesus as Lord, they were to live their lives with Him as Lord. Yielding to His will in all things. **To quote Bethany Davis, it means we are to put our yes on the table.**

2. The foundation for our walk (7)

Paul is not telling us to do what we cannot do. We have a solid foundation which enables us to live same way that we received Christ. Paul mentions three things that highlight our stability in Christ. Illustration of a plant.

A. You have been firmly planted

Tense indicates: Past action which has continuing benefits.

This is not something you have done. God did it for you. When you were saved, he planted you in Christ. As the roots of your spiritual life are planted in Christ you receive spiritual nourishment which enables you to bear fruit. The fruit is reflection of the soil in which the roots are planted. **The soil makes all the difference when it comes to the health of the plant.**

B. You are being built up

Tense indicates: Present continual action being done by another for you. God is the one doing it. At salvation you were planted in Christ and He

began to cause you to grow up in Him. This is what Jesus was referring to in John 15 when he spoke of ***abiding in Christ*** in the same way that branch is connected to the tree. It has to be connected to get nourishment and life.

C. You are being established in your faith

Continual action. Means *to make firm or to make stable*. The more you grow in Christ, the stronger your faith becomes. Bible Study, Prayer, Worship, Fellowship with other believers, Ministry, etc.

Science writer Hope Jahren shares an interesting fact about plants, especially how a tiny seed starts to put down roots, which is the most essential thing for a plant's survival. She writes,

No risk is more terrifying than that taken by the first root. A lucky root will eventually find water, but its first job is to anchor ... Once the first root is extended, the plant will never again enjoy any hope of relocating to a place less cold, less dry, less dangerous. Indeed, it will face frost, drought, and greedy jaws without any possibility of flight.

She calls taking root a big "gamble," but if the seed takes root it can go down twelve, thirty, forty meters. The results are powerful. The tree's roots can "swell and split bedrock, and move gallons of water daily for years, much more efficiently than any pump yet invented by man." If the root takes root, then the plant becomes all but indestructible: "Tear apart everything aboveground—everything—and most plants can still grow rebelliously back from just one intact root. More than once. More than twice."

What a great picture of the stability we have because we have been planted in Christ.

3. The gratitude in our walk (7b)

Overflowing with gratitude

This word speaks of uncontainable joy. Joy that is spilling out. For the person who has been born again there is a deep and abiding joy that cannot come from any other circumstance or situation. For the true believer, there is a sense of thankfulness for salvation that will accompany us throughout life, regardless of the circumstances. *This is bad, but praise God, I'm saved!*

Another way to think of it is this. *Gratitude is the fruit of a life lived the way Christ calls us to live.* When we think of our salvation we are thankful. When we consider the stable foundation that Christ has provided, we are thankful.

We have been called to walk a certain way. I came across an interested fact in my research. *Apparently, it is impossible to walk a straight line while blindfolded.*

In 2009, a German scientist named Jan Souman took a group of subjects out to empty parking lots, blindfolded them, and instructed them to walk in a straight line. Some of them managed to keep to a straight course for ten or twenty paces; a few lasted for 50 or a hundred. But in the end, all of them wound up circling back toward their points of origin. Not many of them. Not most of them. Every last one.

"And they have no idea," Dr. Souman reported. "They were thinking that they were walking in a straight line all the time." Dr. Souman's research team explored every imaginable explanation. Some people turned to the right while others turned to the left, but the researchers could find no discernable pattern.

As a group, neither left-handed nor right-handed subjects demonstrated any predisposition for turning one way more than the other; nor did subjects tested for either right- or left-brain dominance. The team even tried gluing a rubber soul to the bottom of one shoe to make one leg longer than the other. "It didn't make any difference at all," explained Dr. Souman.

Citing that study, Robert Krulwich, science correspondent for NPR said, ***there's just something about our inner orientation that causes us to walk in a crooked or warped way.*** Boy, there's a spiritual application there.

Of course everybody *thinks* they're walking in a straight line, until they remove the blindfolds and see their crooked path. This tendency has been studied now for at least a century. Apparently, there's a profound inability in humans to [walk] straight.

According to this research, there's only one way we can walk in a straight line: **by focusing on something ahead of us—like a building, a landmark, or a mountain.** If we can fix our eyes on something ahead of us, we can make ourselves avoid our normal crooked course.

For believers, that something is a person and his name is Jesus. To live as Christ wants us to live, we need to keep our eyes fixed on Him.

So, let's review and evaluate from last to first.

1. Is your life characterized by thankfulness?
2. Are you growing stronger in your faith, enabling you to stand strong when the storms come?
3. Is your life characterized by faith and surrender to the Lordship of Jesus?
4. Have you truly been born again by trusting Jesus as Savior and Lord?