

TWO WAYS TO WALK

A Life of Disobedience or A Life of Faith

Ephesians 2:1-10

To Walk: to live or behave in a specified manner; the conduct of one's life

THE WALKING DEAD (v. 1-3)

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked...”

Following:

- The World
 - Controlled by values, beliefs, and morals in contrast to God's
 - Mind set on self-centered ideologies of culture rather than the ways of God
 - “You can recognize the ‘ways of the world’ wherever sins seems acceptable and righteousness seems strange.” -David Wells
 - “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2
 - “I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.” John 17:14
- The Devil
 - A created being, lacking the ability to be omnipresent.
 - His influence is secondary, through his demonic associates and his power and influence over the world's systems
 - Revelation 13
 - Ephesians 6:11-12
 - His tools are lies and accusations
 - “You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the **father of lies.**” John 8:44
 - “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, **the deceiver of the whole world**—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who **accuses them day and night** before our God.’” Revelation 12:9-10
 - His goal is disobedience
 - He was disobedient to God's Word and he promotes his followers to doubt God's Word, promoting disobedience to God in all things
 - When a person believes and practices a lie, he becomes a son of disobedience

- He is a wanderer with no reign or authority
 - “Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.” John 12:31
 - “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8
 - “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.’” Matthew 28:18
- The Flesh
 - Desires and appetites of the body and mind: both intellectual and physical
 - “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.” Galatians 5:19-21
 - The fallen nature of all mankind
 - “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Psalm 51:5
 - “The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies.” Psalm 58:3
 - Enslaved to carrying out these desires
 - Does not mean a sinner only does evil or is incapable of doing good.
 - Incapable of doing anything to merit salvation or meet the high standards of God’s holiness

THE WALKING DEAD ARE:

- Dead
 - Death = Separation from life
 - “but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.” Isaiah 59:2
 - “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23
- Children of Wrath
 - God is holy, which means He is perfectly just and loving
 - John Stott’s definition of God’s wrath: “God’s personal, righteous, constant hostility to evil, his settled refusal to compromise with it, and his resolve instead to condemn it.”
 - “The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.’” Exodus 34:6-7
 - Romans 1:18-32: A clear picture of God’s wrath upon those walking in death

SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH (v. 4-9)

But God...takes action

- Made us alive TOGETHER WITH CHRIST
 - By the Spirit
 - “Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’” John 3:5-6
 - By the Word
 - “since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” 1 Peter 1:23
- Raised us up WITH HIM
- Seated us WITH HIM in the heavenly places IN CHRIST JESUS
 - We are united to Christ by the Spirit, and are forever resurrected and seated with Him
 - “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39

God’s Character Revealed in Salvation

- Love (4)
 - “God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.” 1 John 4:8-9
- Mercy (4):
 - An extension of His love
 - A relief of misery by compassionately withholding due punishment
 - “So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.” Romans 9:16
 - “According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...” 1 Peter 1:3
- Grace (5, 7, 8):
 - Divine favor; an undeserved gift
 - All of the spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3-14)
- Kindness (7):
 - Being gentle, sympathetic, warmhearted
 - “But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:4-7

Not Your Own Doing

- Paul wants to make sure he is very clear:
 1. This is not your own doing; 2. It is a gift of God; 3. Not a result of works; 4. No one may boast
- Liberates you from the pride of imagining you can save yourself.

WALKING IN GOOD WORKS (v. 10)

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

- We have gone from being dead in our trespasses to being a new creation in Christ
- We are saved unto good works, not through good works
 - “So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works...For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.” James 2:17-18, 26
- Knowing we have been saved for good works prepared beforehand by God liberates us from:
 - a lazy or loveless disengagement from the needs of the world
 - from ever feeling insignificant or useless
- Good works: useful, good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy, excellent, distinguished, upright, or honorable.
 - “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16
 - “...who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” Titus 2:14

AN ENTIRELY NEW LIFESTYLE

“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might **walk in newness of life.**” Romans 6:4

Walking in Good Works		Once Walked
BY THE SPIRIT	“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16	By the flesh
BY FAITH	“...for we walk by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7	Following the course of the world
ACCORDING TO HIS COMMANDMENTS	“And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments...” 2 John 6	In disobedience
IN THE TRUTH	“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.” 3 John 4	According to lies
IN WISDOM	Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.” Colossians 4:5	In the ways of the world
WORTHY OF THE LORD and PLEASING TO HIM	“...so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.” Colossians 1:10	Deserving of God’s wrath

DISCUSSION

1. What forces of the world, the devil, and the flesh lure or compel us to go in the wrong direction spiritually? Which ones are more blatant? Subtle?
2. How's is understanding God's wrath challenging? How is it comforting?
3. If we are already made alive, have already been sealed with the Holy Spirit, and already possess eternal life, what does it mean "that in the ages to come He might show us" more? What does He have left to show?
4. In what ways are the good works we do in Christ different from the 'works' (vs 9) prior to Christ, in their source, motive, substance, etc.?
5. We are to "walk in" the good works prepared beforehand for us. How is walking in good works different than just performing random acts of kindness?

HOMEWORK

The Walking Dead: Romans 1:18-32

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

How does Romans 1:18-23 show the influence of the world upon sinners?

How does Romans 1:24-25 show the influence of the devil upon sinners?

How does Romans 1:26-32 show the influence of the flesh upon sinners?

WALKING IN NEWNESS OF LIFE: EZEKIEL 36:23-32

²³ And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. ²⁴ I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. ²⁸ You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. ³⁰ I will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations. ³¹ Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations. ³² It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord God; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel.

³³ “Thus says the Lord God: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. ³⁴ And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. ³⁵ And they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.’ ³⁶ Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am the LORD; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it.

1. Underline or highlight every time the Lord says “I will...” What do you notice? How does this parallel with what we learned of God’s grace in salvation in Ephesians 2?
2. The Lord says, “I will cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”(v.27) What does He give us to empower us to walk in His ways? What does He remove and cleanse us of?
3. In what ways does the Lord show the riches of His holiness, kindness, grace, and mercy in this passage?