

II. Biblical Biographies from the Bible
Biblical Biographies: Who? Why? How?
“Portrait #1: Enoch”

Genesis 5:18–24; Hebrews 11:5–6; Jude 14–16

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Let’s start by looking at Genesis 5. I love biographies and I think it’s an extraordinary way to study history, people and to learn. I’m hoping this series will get you into studying biblical biographies which I am calling portraits and this first one is a biblical biography and portrait of Enoch. We are not doing the Enoch that comes from Cain. We are doing the Enoch that comes from Jared. In the past I did a three sermons on this Enoch and for this study those three will be distilled into one. I have asked the Lord to allow me to do this so that you will profit but also that you might get interested in this matter of biblical biographies.

There is a movement in the Evangelical church about preaching biblical biographies. The notion is that you are focused on an individual and you end up with a ‘dare to be a Daniel’ sermon or ‘be like Joseph.’ One person calls it the ‘killer be’ sermons – be like (this person), be like, etc. That gets a little traction with people but personally I think that may be right-hearted but wrong-headed. In the last study I gave reasons why biographies are profitable and the main reason is they are in the Bible. There are 349 of them in the Bible and only 67 of them finished strong. In II Timothy 3 we know all Scripture is inspired by God and if He has put them in His Word there is a reason. They are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and training in righteousness as II Timothy 3:16.

So some would say that I’m going to get into moralistic preaching. There is a difference between biblical morality and moralisms. Moralism is another gospel. It’s an anti-gospel, no gospel. It is the notion we have the ability to change our life, we can be pleasing to God and have success in life through what we do. That is a work salvation and that’s not true. But in Christianity there is a morality. God gives ethical imperatives to us. He gives commands to us that are supposed to shape our lives which then means the way you keep it from becoming moralisms is that you don’t point people to themselves as having the ability to embrace this way of life. You point people to Christ for it is Christ who made Daniel, Joseph and the rest.

You will see how Christ did His work in Enoch in this study. We will see Enoch’s life in a way in which is what Christ did in him, to him and through him. And what He can do in and through you. You will also see areas in in these people’s lives where they had not surrendered to Christ, where they did not walk with the Lord in every way. I’m sure Enoch was not perfect himself. So we can learn from the areas where people fixed on Jesus was uneven, imperfect and faltered yet the Lord was always patient to keep working with them. We will see how Christ is their strength.

There is a phrase that we have from the Word of God theologically that I love dearly. The phrase is ‘in humble reliance upon Divine grace and the power of the Holy Spirit I will endeavor...’ This is what our new members vow when they join the church. In this phrase we see sanctification – a hundred percent engagement and a hundred percent dependence upon the Lord alone who can give us the strength to do it. As we learn about these people were pointed to Christ with humble reliance on Divine grace and the power of the Holy Spirit yet we endeavor to embrace this way of life because it comes from the commands of the Lord. It is a biblical

morality and not a moralism of what we would do to be right with God. It is a morality that comes from those who are dependent upon God and right with Him.

Then there will be areas in their life in which these people in the Bible will become a type of Christ to point us to Christ. Those are things I love to see in the lives of these people. So let's get into the life of Enoch and there are three passages that speak of Enoch in the Bible. We will start with the passage in Genesis 5.

Genesis 5:18–24 says [18] *When Jared had lived 162 years, he fathered Enoch.* [19] *Jared lived after he fathered Enoch 800 years and had other sons and daughters.* [20] *Thus all the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died.*

[21] *When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah.* [22] *Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters.* [23] *Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years.* [24] *Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.*

I have consulted various commentaries and commentators on this. It was astounding to see how many of them had the same outline and so I was not planning on trying to improve on all these godly men's outline of Enoch for when you look at these three passages on Enoch's life it kind of sets itself up. Here is your outline. Number one, Enoch walked with God. Number two, Enoch witnessed for God. Number three, Enoch went to God. All three are interdependent and they build on each other. All three are important and they all work together.

So what do we find out about Enoch walking with God? 'Walked with God' is an interesting phrase and it's only used four times in the Bible. There are other phrases that are similar to it but not exactly this one. Two times it is used with Enoch. The Bible also tells us that Noah walked with God and Levi walked with God. Levi was the great priest in the book of Malachi. So what does it mean that Enoch walked with God?

Enoch walked with God for 300 years, not 30 minutes. One of my favorite definitions of a round of golf is it's an excuse to have a four and half hour walk with three friends. Enoch's walking with God suggests that he did this because he loved God. It's a relational statement – Enoch walked *with* God. If someone comes along side of you as you are walking and takes your arm or you take theirs, you are walking with each other. To walk with someone is to have a relationship to some degree of intimacy and if you walked with someone 300 years, what kind of intimacy is that? So note the intimacy and the relationship, but when you walk with God you walk in the direction that God takes a walk. So why could Enoch walk with God? It was not only because of his delight in God in his relationship but because of where God was leading Enoch wanted to go.

This was getting pretty obvious for me as I was studying this. My walk with God is not as consistent and intimate as it ought to be because there are so many times that sin sells me a bill of goods and I'd rather walk over there. Charles Spurgeon said this on Enoch; 'When we don't walk with God because sin has taken hold of our affections and we have started walking somewhere else, part of what we're saying to God is 'You are not enough for me and I'm dissatisfied with You.'" My attention and affection is drawn somewhere else.

So how do you walk with God? You might think that because Enoch is only seven generations from Adam that this isn't a big deal for where else is he going to walk? It's not like he has a lot of choice and they're probably living in a cave. What is there to draw him away from God? The Bible also tells us that there is another who is seven generations from Cain and his name was Lamech. Lamech was a murderer, he celebrated violence, immorality, murder, oppression, he wrote songs as epics to him as the hero of rebellion against God and he was the big guy in that culture. Right alongside of him was Enoch.

Over here is the line of Cain, the seed of the serpent. Over here is the line of God's blessings, the seed of the woman. The first one was killed who was Abel. Then the Bible tells us that God gave the woman another seed. That was Seth. Now seven generations we have Enoch here and Lamech there, but all around is going down. It is the cultural death spiral with violence, murder and the culture is in the hands of Lamech for he controlled the manufacturing, the music, the entertainment and everything. Yet over here was Enoch, walking with God, not because it was common in the culture for it was very uncommon, not because it was invited by the culture for on the contrary he is a counter cultural individual.

In fact, Enoch has a son and that son is Methuselah. Methuselah will have a son who is another Lamech and then his son will have a son whose name is Noah. In that period of time it says the daughters of men which is the seed of the serpent intermarry with the sons of God. In other words, there was not only depravity in the line of Cain, there was apostasy in the line of Seth. It all happened in the watch and the lives of the people after Enoch went to God. But you can see how that momentum would have been in that culture. Enoch's walking with God is not popular.

Do you have a Bible that gives you the light on the path to walk with God? Yes. Do you have the Spirit of God poured out to help you in the glories of the New Covenant? Yes. Enoch didn't have the Bible and there was no special revelation. His best shot for about 50 to 60 years of his life he had a shot at Adam. Adam, could you tell me some things that God said? That was Enoch's only shot at special revelation. We have 66 books of God's Word that is inspired, inerrant and infallible. We have the Spirit of God through the risen Christ who has been poured out and seals you in the covenant of grace. Enoch didn't have that yet he walked with God. He had an entire culture that was going into a death spiral that was so evil that God will bring a universal flood for a universal judgment upon all of humanity except the great grandson of Enoch and his family.

In the midst of this God identifies the path. Enoch walks with God, the path of God and he does that because he is right with God. We know he is right with God because he was converted and I think I know when he was converted. It's the same time I see a lot of people get converted, when he had a child. Somehow that has a sobering effect on people. Genesis 5:21-22 says [21] *When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah.* [22] *Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters.* There he now lives by faith and I know this because there is a passage that tells us this. It's in the hall of faith chapter in Hebrews.

Hebrews 11:5-6 says [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.* [6] *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.*

Isn't this interesting because in Hebrews 9:27 it says [27] *And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.* How many exceptions are there to this biblical fact in God's sovereign work? There were two. One is Enoch and the other is Elijah. Both these men were taken up into the Lord's presence. They were just no more. When Elijah was taken up they sent out 70 warriors to find him and they never found him. It looks like there were some who went out to find Enoch and that would be understandable because Enoch walked with God with a big family. He had 300 years to have his other sons and daughters who I'm sure all had families of their own. I'm sure Enoch woke up one morning and I'm not sure what all he

had on his calendar that day but he leaves his tent and doesn't come home. You know people were sent out for him when he didn't return.

Hebrews 11 says he was not found and the reason he wasn't found is because God had taken him. It also tells us that before Enoch was taken up he was commended for having pleased God. We don't know how God did this but others knew and that tells us he was a man of faith. I know he was converted because he walked with God by faith. Faith doesn't come from us, for faith comes from God to us to be exercised by us. Ephesians 2:8-9 says [8] *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast.* This life of faith has its origins in God's grace, not Enoch, that converted him after the birth of his first born son. Then he began to walk with God in intimacy by whatever general and special revelation he had through oral traditions from Adam. The first books of the Bible weren't written until Moses and so Enoch didn't have the written Word.

Enoch had to have had the Spirit of God because he couldn't have believed without being born again and you are given the Spirit of God to be born again. So you now believe in God and in the promises of God. As he walks with God, God commends him and sometime after his commendation God takes him. We don't know all he did or why he did what he did when God took him.

If you get interested in biblical characters John Brown of Haddington wrote a wonderful book titled Brown's Dictionary of Bible Characters. It is a really interesting book. Then there are multiple volumes of Alexander White's book Bible Characters. I love his insight and the way he words things. I love the story of White being invited to hear a young Scottish preacher who he had been told would be the next Alexander White. As White is listening to this young man he bounds up the high pulpit just full of himself. The young man catches a glimpse of White and begins to fumble around as he is preaching. Finally he finishes his sermon and slumps back down from the high pulpit. When White was asked about this new preacher he said 'he is a fine lad with some extraordinary gifts and if he had gone up the pulpit the way he came down the pulpit then he could have come down the pulpit the way he had gone up the pulpit.'

About Enoch White makes this absolutely insightful comment; "I don't want to over personify God but it's like God has said 'I have given all of you Enoch long enough, come on home son.'" And he was no more as he was now with the Lord. He becomes one of only two people that we know of that don't go through the separation of the soul from the body. He also doesn't go through the reunification of the soul and the body. Why is this important?

The Bible says we will all appear before the Judgment Seat. Now thankfully if you are in the Book of Life then your judgment will be for stewardship and rewards because Jesus has already taken your judgment for salvation. How do we appear before the Judgment Seat? The Bible tells us that we will appear before God in our flesh. God will raise every body, some to everlasting judgment and some to everlasting life. We all will appear not as a disembodied soul and everyone will have a resurrected body that is designed for eternity. Elijah and Enoch never have the separation of the soul from the body or the reunification because their bodies were already translated, already had put on immortality.

When Jesus is on the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elijah are with Him, there from heaven. How did they get there? The Bible says that Elijah has his glorified body and that doesn't surprise us. What about Moses? The Bible says that Michael the angel had a job to do and that was to go get Moses' body. In other words, they had already gone through what are bodies are yet to go through. Then again Enoch becomes an encouragement to us in that he now

goes into the presence of the Lord without disengaging in death, being translated with God and that tells us that if you're still breathing when Jesus comes back that what happened to Enoch will happen to you, without separation from soul from body and with the catching up with you in your body that will be brought into eternity with a new body into the new heavens and the new earth.

Now I'd like us to see one more thing about Enoch from Jude. Enoch not only walked with God but he witnessed for God and that was his calling, his vocation. Enoch didn't change vocation for he only changed location. Instead of walking with God by faith, God brought him home and he walks with God by sight.

Jude 14–16 says [14] *It was also about **these** that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, [15] to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him."* [16] *These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.*

What was Enoch's job? He was a prophet. While Enoch did not receive special revelation from others, Enoch was an instrument of God, not for the canonization of Scripture but for the proclamation of the Word of God. Here we are given one of his sermons where God is going to come in judgment and God will execute judgment on all of those who are against Him. He continually repeats this ungodly thing. In other words he is making a point of those who are living without reference to God. Enoch is telling them there will be payday someday. So Enoch walked with God but my guess is he was not a very popular man in the culture.

You don't go preach judgment and calling those around you ungodly sinners who need to repent for their ungodly sin, way, purposes and manner and expect to get a parade for it. But Enoch was faithful to the Lord and he wasn't a recluse for he was out in the culture preaching. He likely is what we call today a street preacher. His message was repent and come to God for God is coming in judgment for all of those who stand against Him. In this witness, the context was a culture that was going into degradation. The line of the seed of the woman was beginning to apostatize. In the midst of it Enoch's call was to repent of their sins.

Enoch did this in the midst of having a big family and he was part of a big family. His son was Methuselah. Don't say he was the oldest because Enoch never died while in the Bible you will hear 'he lived, he died, etc.' Enoch was the seventh generation and then God took him. He walked with God as a man, father, husband and as a faithful prophet proclaiming the Word of God.

Thirdly, Enoch went to God, into the presence of God. God took him and people couldn't find him and he was no more. Notice that this is given to us in the negative and the positive. It says that he walked with God and he was not for this is the negative. Then it says he walked with God and was not for God took him and that is the positive. For 300 plus years Enoch walks with God, prophesying and preaching in a culture that is going into apostasy amidst the covenant people and depravity for those in rebellion yet he keeps walking with God every day. One day in the intimacy of walking with God by faith, following and drawing near to God, could it be possible that God says 'This is wonderful, come on home' and He took him?

I know God had a sovereign plan that didn't just happen off the cuff or arbitrarily, but He translated Enoch into the presence of God and there is a passage that kind of tells us how to translate that word 'translate' in that passage. It is in Acts 7 where we see Stephen's sermon. Acts 7:15–16 says [15] *And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers,*

[16] and they were **carried back** to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem. You probably think why this passage. The words 'carried back' is the same word as translated, where Enoch by the sovereign hand of God, bypassing death and a resurrected body, had a translated body and was carried into the presence of God.

I have a couple of closing thoughts on this. Enoch does point us to Christ. How? He lives, he walks with God and God was pleased with him. Who else walked with God besides Enoch and Elijah? It was Jesus and two times it is recorded that God says 'This is My Son in whom I am well pleased.' Then His Son was resurrected and taken to glory so Enoch begins to be a pre-incarnate prophet pointing to Christ – Prophet, Priest and King – in His triumphant atonement resurrection and ascension. He is the One who pleased God for us to save us from our sins.

There is something else I want you to see. Enoch is also an encouragement to you. Enoch walked with God, God's pleasure was upon him as it is upon you if you are in Christ and Christ is in you and if we're living when Jesus comes back well be like Enoch and skip death. But if we're not and unless God decides to add to the number of Enoch and Elijah then you will die, but God has given us Enoch to remind us that we're walking with Him by faith and when I die I don't just die, I go through the valley of the shadow of death and Jesus says 'I'll be with you (everyday)' just as He was with Enoch and brought him into His presence. All of us will meet God in a resurrected body.

Are you ready to go and be with the Lord? If you are, now be a witness for Him. To be a witness for Him means you need to walk with Him. These three are inseparable. It's when we walk with Him that we have the courage and compassion to be a witness for Him, then when we do that we will go to be with Him, just like Enoch went to be with Him. Then we don't change vocation we only change location.

Romans 8:29–31 says [29] *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.* [30] *And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

[31] *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?*
Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You so much for the opportunity to take these three texts of Scripture of one man and begin to learn of this portrait of the work of grace from Jesus in him, how he points us to Jesus as the foundation and the pinnacle of our life and how we are to walk with You because of Jesus in Your Spirit guided by Your Word with personal intimacy. Then we embrace our calling to bear witness to Jesus in this world and we look forward to that glorious day when we will be with our Jesus. Father, as I pray this to You I pray this to those who are reading this and invite them to come to Christ if they have not yet done so for today is the day of salvation – by faith, saved through grace and then to walk by faith in the Spirit guided by the Word to walk with You. Father, if there are those reading this who have not come to Christ would You this day bring them? For all who know Christ would You give us lives that delight in You for there is no greater joy than to walk with You in this world on the way to be with You forever. So as we're walking to You by walking with You help us to be a witness for You. Give us the courage and conviction even as Enoch was in a desperate time, so desperate it would lead You to a personal

judgment. Help us be ready to say the hard things just like Enoch did in his sermon that ungodliness will be judged but you can believe and repent. There is a God who sent His Son to take that judgment for you. Help us to be faithful to take that Good News to this world and as we walk with You as witnesses for You we look forward to the day to be with You. Lord, we are not afraid of death but for many there is anxiety about dying so may Enoch be a comfort as he walked with You, witnessed for You and went to be with You and You will be with us to bring us to Your presence because You are our life. I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.