

The Walk of Faith

Lesson 9: The Fuel of Obedience

*What a privilege it is to walk with God as our Father! Adam knew something of it in his innocence; but what Enoch knew of it was so heavenly that he simply walked right out of life into glory!

*God has appointed the way, promised to be with us in it, and at every moment and step of it, to be doing us good, Jer 32.40-41. There can be no happiness superior to this on earth, because it's what we were made for, WSC 1. Walking with God is heaven begun and will surely lead to heaven eternal.

- I. And if God has appointed the way for us to walk then our walk is to be ordered according it, walking in sincere obedience to His revealed will. *But we must remember three things:*
 - A. Our walk with God in the way of obedience is not to fulfill the law as a covenant of works.
 1. We're not required to do that. We can't do that. Christ took that upon Himself as our Surety and is therefore the end of the law for righteousness to all those who believe, Rom 10.4.
 2. We're not under the law as a covenant with God anymore but are now under grace as a covenant with God—which means we're not bound to keep its precepts in order to have the life promised to obedience, nor are we bound to suffer its penalties in order to be spared the curse promised to disobedience. Whatever is required, whatever is threatened, was perfectly fulfilled in the Person of our Saviour. By faith in Him, we now have nothing to do with the law as a covenant of works with God. In fact, we're forbidden to keep the Law of God in hopes that we might live by it, Gal 2.16. Every child of God can plead by faith a perfect fulfilling of all the Law's precepts and a perfect suffering of all the Law's penalties in the person of our Surety. Christ honored its precepts by His infinite obedience and He magnified its penalties by His inestimable sacrifice. *And this* is our justifying righteousness. *This* is our freedom from guilt and condemnation and our title to life and glory—not what we've done, but what He's done for us and graciously imputed to us that we might be a partaker of His work in our place.
 3. His law is now on our side. It's our friend. It profits us. It blesses us. It will give us the good promised to obedience. We're to receive the Law from the mouth of our Saviour and to obey Him—not from any legalistic hopes of heaven, or from any slavish fear of hell; but from a heart of grateful love for His grace.
 4. Being under grace and not under law, we're not bound to keep the law perfectly in our own person, but are to be ever resting upon Christ's keeping it for us and looking to Christ for the grace to walk in sincere, believing obedience. When we strive to obey *for* life, we trudge on heavily and miserably; but when we strive to obey *from* life, we go on freely and joyfully, resting in the forgiveness of sins and the hope of sanctification.
 - B. Our walk with God is therefore by faith and not by sight.
 1. Faith is the great spring of all gospel obedience (Heb 11.6) because God looks at the heart before looking at the work. Works done through faith in Christ's mediation, out of a love for God as Father, and a desire for Him to be glorified by it, are counted as good and acceptable, regardless of their many stains.
 2. And so we walk in entire dependence on what God says in His Word about our being pardoned and justified by grace through faith in Jesus, regardless of our feelings of unworthiness or imperfect obedience. This is the obedience which is the fruit of faith in Christ and not of a desire to justify ourselves, Rom 1.5. This is true faith which is an emptying, self-humbling grace. It's only foundation is the Word of God, and nothing in our own selves.

- C. Our walk with God in faith arises from our love for Him.
1. The fuel of our faith and trust in God is a love for Him which was graciously poured into our hearts by His Spirit at our regeneration. When we're brought to see ourselves as the *objects* of divine love, our hearts rebound in love to Him, 1Jn 4.19; Ps 8.4
 2. And it's this love for God that fuels the walk of faith, causing us to be neither barren nor unfruitful, Jn 14.15, 21, 23-24; 2Cor 5.14-15; Ps 116.12
 3. Obedience flowing out of this love is not only sweet, but freely and abundantly offered. Love for God has a powerful influence upon us so that we count no duty too small and no suffering too great when called to it by our God.
 4. When we know that we're not called to obey to be saved, but are called to obey because we've been saved, our obedience flows freely and affectionately. And when our obedience flows from love, it's then that our service is perfect freedom. When we obey from life and not for life, because we live and not that we may live, it's then that we understand and enjoy the privilege of walking by faith, according to the will of God, out of love for God.
 5. Christ reconciles us to the Law (writing it on our heart) so that we neither fear it nor hate it, but, with the psalmist in Ps 119, love it and seek by grace to live by it. Engaging the affections of our heart and inclining the inner man, the Law ceases to be a yoke and a burden, but that which we love, and the compass by which we walk with God, Ps 119.32
 6. When we've been delivered from legal hopes and from guilty fears, obedience becomes delightful and fueled by love. Hard things become easier. Rough ways are made smooth. Painful things become delightful. The labor of love is sweet love because the heart is in it. The feet run, the hands work, all the faculties are ready to exert themselves when love commands. (We know this by sad experience because of the way we've seen our "all" run after sin once we've set our hearts on it and fallen in love with it.)

II. O for more love to God!!

- A. Take heart that:
1. whatever sin is in you has been pardoned by the Son's atonement. Therefore pray to the Lord to subdue it and mortify it. He's undertaken to deal with it; He's covenanted to overcome it.
 2. and whatever grace is in you has been given in order to keep up and promote your communion with God. Therefore pray to the Lord to increase your faith and enflame your love. He's covenanted to conform you to His image and bring you safely home.
- B. And however feeble your love for God, put it to work in a sincere walk with God. Don't be so overwhelmed by your faults that you stand idle. God knows your spots. But He also knows the grace He's put within you and the surest way to get more is to be grateful for and make good use of what you already have, 2Pet 1.3-8