

The Life: Walking as He Walked (I John 2:3-11)

When we "know that we have come to know" something (I Jo 2:3), we should have no problem demonstrating that. If we say we know auto mechanics, we will show that be repairing automobiles. If we say we know dentistry, we will demonstrate that be fixing teeth. Simple right? If we claim personal, experiential, first hand knowledge we should be able to show what we know with our lives, not just our lips (I Jo 2:6). The test of a person who claims to know God, to be abiding in His life, is no test of words, but of daily living. John posits two obvious ways for a professing believer to "walk" all that "talk": 1) the obedience of faith; 2) love for one another.

Life "ala" Christ - in the manner of Christ - does not occur by rule keeping but in a living, abiding relationship with Him. It doesn't happen by trying hard to follow His example, but in trusting Him to be Himself in and through us. John calls that fellowship - sharing life in common. To abide in Christ, to be in fellowship with Him is to see Him as the Source, the Substance, the Supply of our living. Since He is never separated from believers, He is not to be excluded from any facet of life. In fact, what "is true in Him is true in you" (I Jo 2:8 - chew on that for about a week!). Therefore, the believer who keeps saying, "I abide in Him, He abides in me", has no excuse for not living "ala" Christ - "in the same manner as He walked." (I Jo 2:6)

How did He walk? He waked by faith... He walked in love (Aren't all our crises in life crises of faith and/or crises of love?) The directive - "walk as He walked" -implies ability - "that which is true of Him is true in you." Both the directive and the supply are for everyone ("whoever" - I Jo 2:5), not for the specially enlightened few. John's point is twofold: 1) A warning - be careful of those who claim special knowledge of Christ without a consistent expression of His faithful and loving character, and, 2) An invitation - when you say whatever God says and love whomever God loves you will be walking in step with Christ.

"Faithing" is saying what God says - taking Him at His word even in the face of apparent denial. Walking by faith excludes self-determination. The object of our faithing and choosing how we respond moves from the seen to the Unseen, from the temporary to the Eternal, from "I" to "Christ". Before we act, we submit our "story" about the facts to God and listen for His story. We then lay down our story in order to "keep" His story (I Jo 2:5), "I believe You, I trust and obey You." This is how we know we are not speaking pious slogans or repeating "church talk" -the obedience of faith!

And, since our faith is banking on the character of God Who is Love, it should be no surprise that our walk of faith will look like loving others. The Love of God cancels out self-serving options, excludes self-interest as the motive force of our choosing. Faith in God Who is Love will express itself in living as God lives - in the best interest of others. Any Christian profession without loving expression is like beef stew without the beef! Carrot cake without carrots! Thanksgiving without the turkey! In other words, it is a lie.

Have you ever pulled up alongside another car in traffic and the driver is... movin'... groovin'... swayin'? You realize he or she is listening to the radio or a CD or a music app. How do you know? You can tell by the way they move! If someone says they are "tuned into Christ" you ought to be able to tell it... BY THE WAY THEY MOVE!

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G r e e t i n g s

Most of you who attend our NY/PA meetings in the Binghamton area are already aware that our conference for Oct 9-11 has been cancelled. However, we promised to give you final word in this newsletter and this is it! Hopefully we'll meet up in 2021.

I know this pandemic has contributed to hardship, limitation, and distress to so many - none of which is anything new or uncommon to God's people. So, a few words to the faithful at this point in the journey:

1) LEARN TO ACCEPT AND ENDURE IT.

Be realistic- we live in a fallen world. We don't helplessly resign ourselves to that, rather we faithfully accept and endure it as an aspect of our Father's intent - "You have need of endurance." (Heb 10:36) We accept and endure the temporary nature of it in light of the eternal perspective (II Tim 4:18). We accept and endure it because there are some things we get from God only in hardship and trial (Ja 1:2-4).

2) LEARN TO ACCEPT AND EMBRACE IT.

When Paul was in "lockdown" (prison!) he called himself "God's prisoner". He might not have been able to get himself out of jail, but he could change "jailers"! When God is getting the final word in us, we can never be imprisoned by lesser powers. Embrace your "chains", they are never without purpose... for your own sake or for the sake of others. Either way, the Word of God is not hindered or imprisoned. (Acts 28:31)

3) LEARN TO ACCEPT IT AND EXALT GOD IN IT.

We can lift our "chains", our limitations, our hardships to God as "a sacrifice of praise" (Heb 13:15). No need to deny, to pretend, to detach as ways to "cope". With full honesty we own our own "story" about the facts, pour it into His infinite love, and give Him praise. We may laugh the laugh of faith or crown Him Lord with our tears. We may sweat drops of blood alongside Jesus or bow next to Mary and say, "May it be done to me according to Your Word." But we will acknowledge our Sovereign, Loving, Redeeming God at work... and give Him glory and praise!

Praise & Prayer



Renewed sense of the eternal perspective



For life "ala" Christ - walking as He walked



For His Self-disclosure to us



For His Sufficiency in the "all things" of life