

"We Walk By Faith"

"Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord - for we walk by faith, not by sight"; (2 Cor 5:6-7).

The Bible often uses "walk" as a metaphor for one's manner of conduct. Life is a journey; we are merely "sojourners and pilgrims" here. An old hymn says, "this world is not my home; I'm just a passing through..." In the body we are "absent from the Lord," but like Paul, we "walk by faith..." and "make it our aim to always be well-pleasing" to God (2 Cor. 5:2-9). Our choices are made with respect to things, which are unseen, rather than to those which are seen (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16-18).

Although we cannot see God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and Heaven with our eyes, we have complete confidence that they are real, and we act accordingly.

Whether we see or do not see does not alter their nature or importance, nor does it make it improper to act with reference to them.

Faith enables us to see when the eye cannot. It makes easy the most self-sacrificial service required of us (cf. Abraham, Gen. 22). It enables us to endure sore trials without murmuring. When dangers arise, it lights our path and gives us courage. It enables us to overcome doubt and temptations for we believe that "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world!"

We do not "walk by sight." One walks by sight when he is motivated only by the approval of other people. He walks by sight when he makes mammon his god...when he lives for getting and hoarding, or spending and squandering...when he estimates worth by wealth, or property. A man walks by sight when he cannot control his appetite or passion; when he cannot put aside things "good for food and pleasant to the eyes" for the sake of tomorrow's sickness, or a life of disgrace; when he finds himself again and again yielding to the same temptation from which he has suffered. Weakly lives and miserably dies the one who is a slave of what his better nature condemns and despises, but to which his fleshly appetite, long made a tyrant by yielding to it, ties and binds him.

- by James E. Cooper

A Forgotten Word: Duty

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

We need to think about the word "duty." A more important word (for Christians) can scarcely be thought of, yet rarely does one hear it spoken. Do you ever ask yourself "What is my duty here?" Is anybody doing his or her duty anymore, or is this just an outmoded, forgotten word?

The Oxford American Dictionary tells us that duty is, "a moral or legal obligation, a task that must be done, action required from a particular person" (p. 200). Can I shorten that down some? Duty is "doing despite." Doing what you are supposed to do (that "moral or legal obligation") despite hardship, despite fear, despite opposition, despite anything or anyone. Duty is doing despite it all.

Duty is the recognition that the obligation is more important than anything else and so the obligation must be fulfilled.

Noah serves as a fine example of this idea. He was tasked to build an ark. He did this duty, despite opposition and despite a lack of perfect understanding on his part. He performed this duty despite its inconvenience. Over and over the text emphasizes that Noah obeyed God exactly (see Gen. 6:22; 7:5). He did his duty.

What does any of this have to do with our walk with God? Simply put, God has given His people certain "moral obligations" and "tasks that must be done." Those tasks must now be accomplished despite the times and environment we live in. We must do our duty.

Christians are obliged to be morally pure, to read their Bibles, to worship, to teach others the Gospel and more. Do you take those obligations seriously? Do you stop to consider "What does God want me to do? What is my duty to Him?"

Duty is oft forgotten in our me-first society. Rarely do we see people who bravely struggle on doing their "moral and legal obligations" despite so many other factors. Dare we allow such to be said of our spiritual lives? Remember, Solomon came to understand that serving God was the

"whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13). Are you doing your duty to God? Are you doing what God commands you despite every reason not to? Let's remember our duty!

- by **Mark Roberts**

Did Christ Die In Vain?

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7). Isaiah described the events leading up to the death of Christ. In obedience to the Father, Jesus willingly stretched out his hands and died on the cross for our sins. But was his death in vain?

For those who refuse to obey the gospel, they are saying, "Lord, we don't care what you did." "Jesus, so what if you loved me and gave your life for me?" Those who stubbornly reject the gospel of Christ are saying by their actions that the death of Christ was in vain.

If this is true of you, then consider that one day the Lord will return "in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thes. 1:8). Appreciate what the Lord has done for you. Recognize your need for the blood of Christ. Obey the gospel! Don't let Christ's death be in vain.

- by **David McPherson**

Tell The Truth!

Lying is epidemic in our society. In [The Day America Told The Truth](#), authors Peter Kim and James Patterson report that as many as 90% of all Americans lie regularly. We frequently hear allegations of lying at the highest levels of our government. How does God regard all of this lying?

"There are six things which the Lord hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers." (Proverbs 6:16-19) "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight." (Proverbs 12:22)

And, God has plainly told us the result of all such lying: "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape." (Proverbs 19:5)

But, someone objects, my lies are not so serious as those told by high government officials. Mine are not as bad as those of others who are reported in the news, etc. Theirs are "big" and "black," while mine are "little" and "white." Sorry, that's not how God sees it: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and **all** liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

We must be committed to telling the truth - at all times and in all circumstances. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." (Ephesians 4:25) "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds." (Colossians 3:9)

If the previously mentioned report is anywhere close to accurate (90% of Americans lie regularly), it means you can scarcely trust anyone. Can others trust you? Think!

- by **Greg Gwin**