

Take a Walk (With the Unmoved Mover)

Genesis 5:24 & Matthew 24:20

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Along about the 5th century B.C., a Greek fellow named Parmenides said, “*What is*, is, and *what is not*, is not.” So *what is* cannot be divided and cannot move.

What is cannot be divided, for imagine if *what is* could be divided. What would separate *what is*? Either a piece of *what is* or a piece of *what is not*.

- If it is *what is* that separates *what is*, then *what is* is not divided.
- If it is *what is not* that separates *what is*, then *what is not* is separating *what is*, which is to say *what is not... is*.

But we’ve already agreed *what is* is and *what is not* is not.

Therefore, *what is* is undivided.

It is one and cannot move for what if *what is* could move? Where would *what is* move to? To *what is not*? Well, then we’d be saying *what is not* is the place to which *what is* moves. Yet *what is not* cannot be a place that *is*, for as we agreed *what is* is and *what is not* is not. So logically, *what is* cannot move. [Peter freezes.]

Heraclitus, a contemporary of Parmenides, said, “Cut it out, Parmenides. You’re giving me the willies. It’s obvious that the only thing that doesn’t change is the truth. Everything else changes, divides, and moves.”

Many would say it all changes; everything is relative, so *what is* is *what is not*. Yet, in that case, I can’t

say that is *what is*, for *what is* is *what is not*... it is... which is not.

So Bill Clinton was right. We really do have a problem defining what *is* is.

Socrates suggested that neither Parmenides nor Heraclitus were simply blowing smoke. He argued there is a realm of undivided, unmoving, necessary beingness, but we live in change and *what is not*, with a vague idea of *what is* from the shadows cast by *what is*. A shadow is *what is not* produced by *what is*.

You might say *what is* is God and *what is not* is changing, dividing, moving things, emotions, flesh—us.

Well, all of that would have stayed in Greece except 100 years later, a Greek guy named Alexander conquered the known world, including a small nation of wild eyed fanatics who worshipped a God who was one, whose name meant “I am that I am,” or “What is.” Yahweh. I am.

He is omniscient (all knowing),
omnipotent (all powerful),
and omnipresent (all present, everywhere).

If God is everywhere, how could He go anywhere? And what could He want that He doesn't already have? For Jews and Greeks and us, there's something rather attractive about that. There's nothing God could want from me. And even if He did, He couldn't chase me, for He can't move.

Something rather attractive about that... and something rather terrifying, for then God has no heart. He's inhuman.

All brain, logic, logos.

All brain, like Mr. Spock.

(“Jim, these human emotions are fascinating but highly illogical.”)

Well, the New Testament got written in Greek, and the church grew in an ocean of Greek philosophy. The church's greatest theologian was also a scholar in Greek philosophy.

Thomas Aquinas "proved" that God was necessary beingness, the uncreated creator, the unmoved mover.

How would you get to know an unmoved mover?

Well, I suppose the same way you'd get to know a mountain or the Pythagorean theorem. You'd study it.

And in Western society, that's how we've gotten to know God. You think your way there, and faith means, "I understand the idea," so now I'm a Christian, "I believe God exists."

I declared to Susan, "I've thought it through and, good news, I believe you exist. I get the idea." I was wrong even though she does exist.

Yet Biblically ideas, Word, and logic are hugely important. Jesus is the Logos, the Word, the idea, but He's way more than just an idea... more than just omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

He walks.

There's a fascinating little verse in Genesis 5. It's the genealogy of the first generations of man from Adam to Noah. God says, "Let us make man in our own image." He makes Adam (mankind), and Adam fails, and so he dies.

Genesis 5:5,

"Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years,
and he died.

Thus, all the days of Seth were 912 years,
and he died.

Thus, all the days of Enosh were 903 years,
and he died.

Thus, all the days of Kenon were 910 years,
and he died.

Thus, all the days of Mahelalel were 895 years,
and he died.

Thus, all the days of Jared were 962 years,
and he died.”

That’s six generations. The Bible is full of these series of seven’s. Seven is the number of perfection or completion. Enoch is the seventh generation, the seventh day.

Verse 23, “Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years.” (There are 365 days in a year. His years are days, and days are years.)

Verse 24, “Enoch walked with God, and He was not, for God took Him.”

It appears Enoch didn’t die.

Why? All it says, “Enoch walked with God.”

It doesn’t say where,
doesn’t say why,
doesn’t say God asked him to carry something,
learn something,
produce something,
just walk with Him, and he did.

Well, Enoch’s great grandson (third generation, like the third day) is a fellow named Noah. In Genesis 6:5

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry [What is was sorry, like He was

divided and ready to move.] *that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.* [Yahweh has a heart, and His heart is filled with pain.] *So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found favor [grace] in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation.* [What does that mean? "Blameless?" For the Law had not yet been given.] *Noah walked with God.*

Enoch walked with God, and God took Him.

Noah walked with God and was saved.

Noah walked with God.

Doesn't say where.

Noah walked with God,

like really *with* Him.

God instructs Noah in building the ark.

God even shuts the door once Noah is inside.

God remembers Noah in the boat and saves him.

Noah offers a sacrifice. God smells it and likes it.

Noah (Mr. Blameless) then gets drunk, passes out naked.

Then naked and ashamed (like Adam and Eve), he curses his descendents, and the whole sin thing starts over again.

Parmenedes, Mr. Spock, says, "Couldn't Yahweh see that one coming?" And you've got to wonder, "What's

with God... so angry and so gracious?" Walking around, moving and divided, it seems.

My cousin Patty, the cop, used to tell me that disputes between parents and children, husbands and wives—domestic calls—were the worst. You might cuff the husband (who'd just beat his wife), and then the wife would attack you with a knife for cuffing her husband. The emotions were so divided and so moving.

Yahweh seems like that.

He says, "The day you eat, you shall surely die..."

Kind of... well, not Enoch."

"I'll kill 'em all, drown 'em all..."

Well, except Noah."

"I'll curse 'em and crucify 'em..."

Well, no, I'll curse and crucify me."

It's the agony of a spurned lover.

It's the agony of a distraught Father.

It's the divided, confused pain of being stood up at the altar, stood up for a date.

Which reminds us, Yahweh was stood up for a date, just three chapters ago. He went walking in a garden in the cool of the day and called for Adam, mankind, "Where are you?"

What did God want? Well, it seems He wanted to go for a walk. It doesn't say where (they're already in paradise). It doesn't say why, but He wanted to go for a walk with Adam. But Adam hid; they hid, for they were ashamed.

Maybe God is not divided.

We're divided, so He seems divided to us.

Maybe God hasn't moved.

We've moved, and yet He won't leave us alone.

God hates sin, so we say, “God won’t tolerate sin, so He won’t walk with us.” Maybe it’s more like when we sin, we won’t tolerate God, and so we won’t walk with Him.

In Genesis three, God shows up for the walk, and it’s Adam that’s hiding, not God.

Maybe God seems to change and appears to be divided because He won’t leave us alone, even when we’re hiding. Maybe He moves to save us... He moves relative to us. He moves somehow in space and even more in heart to us.

But now, how could *what is*, Yahweh, move? How could He want, grieve, be sorry, shut doors on arks, and walk with people like Adam, Eve, Enoch, Noah, or you?

“Perhaps we don’t realize the problem,” writes C.S. Lewis (he understood Parmenides). “Perhaps we don’t realize the problem with enabling free will to co-exist [walk] with omnipotence. It seems to involve at almost every moment a sort of divine abdication.” That is, *what is* somehow choosing to be *what is not*.

How could Yahweh walk with us, move with us, cry with us, laugh with us, eat fish with us, take bread and wine with us, know the joy of emptiness filled and hunger satisfied?

How could He feel the pain of rejection, the sting of a whip, the sensation of nails driven into warm flesh?

And how could He know our deepest pain... the pain of hiding, the pain of sin, our naked shame?

How could He know the terror of crying out from the deepest, darkest pit, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?!”

How could Yahweh walk with us in the land of *what is not*?

Paul writes,

Though he was in the form of God, He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing [what is not], taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Enoch and Noah are the last people said to have “walked with God” in scripture... Well, at least until a carpenter named Joseph walked next to his pregnant wife, riding a donkey... until *what is* somehow becomes *what is not*... until God empties Himself in Jesus and walks with us in flesh.

You see, He’s so much more than omni-everything. For you, it’s like He even makes Himself omni-nothing. He dies... on a cross.

“Let the atheists themselves choose a god,” wrote G.K. Chesterton. “They will find only one divinity that ever uttered their isolation; only one religion in which God seemed for an instant to be an atheist.”

God cried, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?!” in order to walk with you absolutely everywhere (even if that somewhere was nowhere).

The last thing that the resurrected Christ says in the Gospel of Matthew is, “Behold, I AM with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Several years ago my son, Coleman, brought home a Mother’s Day card he made here at church, the kind where the teacher gives the first line, and the child tells the

teacher what to write on the second line. Coleman's card read,

“My mommy's favorite thing is
cleaning me up.”

It may seem that way to Coleman, but it's not true. I know her favorite thing is hugging Coleman. Cleaning him up is just part of getting there.

If you hang around religious types, it's easy to think the point is our sin, and it's not. Sin is just the thing that gets in the way of the point and makes us run and hide from The Point when He comes walking.

Sometimes when Susan really missed Coleman, she wouldn't even clean him up. She'd just chase him down, grab him, and hug him (ketchup, ravioli, boogers, dirt, and all). She'd clean him up on herself... that's what she'd do,

and especially when,
mostly when,
he was most hurt,
most frightened,
or most ashamed.

When we were most hurt,
most frightened,
and most ashamed
God didn't wait for us to get cleaned up.
He came to us in Jesus
in order to grab us, hold us
(ravioli, boogers, dirt, sin, hell, and all).

He's chasing us down, and
He cleans us up on Himself.
He cleans us with the blood of His broken heart.
He turns his wrath on Himself.

“Shall I curse them? No, I’ll curse me. I’ll take their sin on Myself, and I’ll hang my bleeding heart (Jesus, from the bosom of the Father)... I’ll hang my bleeding heart on a cross outside Jerusalem, outside the garden, so my Adam, my Eve, my children will see just what it is I want.”

Well, I bet He knew that day that He went walking in the garden that things would get messy. It was His plan, for then He could show His children just how much He wants, what He wants.

Well, He at least wants to go for a walk... What does it mean when someone says to you, “Hey, let’s go for a walk.”?

I thought of a few things. When someone says, “Let’s take a walk...”

- 1) It doesn’t matter where you’re going as much as who you’re going with.

Yahweh reminds me of my dad when he used to come visit me in California. I’d say, “Dad, what do you want to do?” He’d say, “Well, I just want to be with you.

Oh, you’re brushing your teeth,

I’ll brush my teeth, too.

Oh, you’re reading a magazine,

I’ll read one with you.

Oh, you’re going for a walk,

I’ll walk with you. Aren’t walks great? Isn’t this just great, just being with you?”

Sometimes I'd go sit on the toilet just to be with me. Sometimes we *live* on the toilet, just to hide from God. Sin is hiding from God, our Father, who is Love.

Well, I really look forward to walking with my dad once again. I began to understand him more when I became a father.

“Hey, Coleman, you're playin' trains.
Can I play, too?
Hey, Becky, you're playin' dolls,
Can I play, too?”

I'd get small. And now that they're teenagers I have to really get small...

“You feel shame?
Well, I feel shame, too.
Don't hide. If you're going to hide,
hide in me. I want to walk with you.

I miss you. I want you, wherever
you are.”

It's why you get married, to take a long walk (called a life) together. It doesn't matter where you're going, but who you are going with. You can't know where you're going, just that your covenant partner will always go with you.

Jesus is your covenant partner.

He called Himself the “paracletos.” It means “the called alongside,” the one you walk with, your helper, your spouse.

He said He'd send another paracletos, His very Spirit. He didn't say exactly where we'd be walking, but that He'd always walk with us.

We so often say we want to know God's will, and we think that means knowing where we are supposed to walk... Cleveland or Detroit? Get the Ford or the Dodge?

Should I be a missionary or a dentist? We want direction.
Where is the road I am to walk?

Kierkegaard wrote,

The traveler who in truth walks life's road does not ask, "Where is the road?" but asks how one ought to walk along the road. Yet, because impatience does not mind being deceived it merely asks where the road is, as if that decided everything as when the traveler finally has found the highway. Worldly wisdom is very willing to deceive by answering correctly the question, "Where is the road?" while life's true task is omitted, that spiritually understood the road is: how it is walked.

"The road is: how it is walked." It's who you're walking with.

Thomas said to Jesus, "We don't know the way," and Jesus said, "I AM the way." We say, "We don't know the way, we don't know the path."

Proverbs 3:6, "In all your ways [whatever way] acknowledge Him, and He will make your path straight."

The One you're walking with is the way and He speaks all things into existence. Trust Him. He will move the path under your feet. That's not hard for him, but getting you to trust Him, acknowledge Him, walk with Him is as hard as... a cross.

So when you go for a walk,

- 1) It doesn't matter *where* you are going as much as *who* you are going with,
- 2) because you "go for a walk," not to get to a place, but to get to a person.

Brennan Manning tells about a priest from Detroit named Ed Farrell. He took a two week summer vacation to Ireland.

His one living uncle was about to celebrate his eightieth birthday. On the great day, the priest and his uncle got up before dawn and dressed in silence. They took a walk along the shores of Lake Killarney and stopped to watch the sunrise. Standing side by side with not a word exchanged and staring straight at the rising sun. Suddenly the uncle turned and went skipping down the road. He was radiant, beaming, smiling from ear to ear. His nephew said, "Uncle Seamus, you really look happy." "I am, lad." "Want to tell me why?" His eighty-year-old uncle replied, "Yes, you see, the Father of Jesus is very fond of me."

What does God want? You!

God walks with you because He's so fond of you, and He's using all of creation to get through to you. You go for a walk to get to a person, not a place or a thing.

He walks with you. Do you walk with Him? Your whole life is a walk.

Last week I did this book thing at the Christian bookseller's association. This one young man approached me and said, "What did you learn in your devotional this morning?"

I said, "I, uh, didn't have one."

He said, “How about last night?”
 I fumbled around. I couldn’t remember.
 He said, “What’ve you been reading?”
 I said, “Well, I’ve been reading Isaiah some.”
 He said, “Okay,” and left.

He left, and I felt ashamed. I felt slimed. I certainly should be more devoted, but I think Jesus felt slimed, too, because He’s not a *thing* I study every morning for thirty minutes in order to learn some new insight that I can report on when tested.

He’s not a place, thing, insight, or deep thought. He’s my spouse who feels every pain, weeps every tear, knows every sorrow. He walks with me, and talks with me, and He tells me I am His own.

I’m not to *have* devotions; I am to *be* devoted.

Like John Ortberg says, “God is not concerned with your spiritual life, He’s concerned with your life.”

And don’t get me wrong, it’s really good to make regular time for focused Bible study, meditation, and prayer... really good. Just like it’s good to make time for dates with your wife, but unless you walk your life with her, the dates are a mockery.

And if you were to ask me, “What did you learn from your date with your wife last night? What did you get out of it? What did you get?” Well, I’d think you were joking, or I’d be offended, like you were sliming me, or even more, her, as if she were a thing that I used... a *what is*, not a *who is* with me. Emanu-Susan, like Emanu-El—God with us.

- 2) You “go for a walk,” not to get to a place, but to get to a person.
- 3) The things you encounter on your walk are the raw material of relationship (your shared experience).

Have you ever sat down to study, pray, and think deep thoughts about God, and it just feels dead and dry? I have thousands of times, especially trying to write sermons. So I give up, go work out, ride my bike, go for a drive, go for a walk, and I think about Him, almost by accident, just acknowledge Him, and I can't shut up or He won't shut up in me. Ideas, thoughts, images all over the place.

He's no longer my spiritual project;
He's my traveling companion.

He speaks to me through the mountains and trees.

He weeps in me as I feel my wounds.
They're our wounds.

He calls me to battle as I lift weights
and listen to Led Zeppelin.

He sings to me over the stereo as I drive in my car,
songs through U2, Johnny Cash,
even George Thorogood.

[Peter sings...]

"Come on take a little walk with me child, and tell me who do you love."

"I keep a close watch on this heart of mine, I keep my eyes wide open all the time. I keep the ends out for the tie that binds because your mine, I walk the line."

And I find myself driving down the road with the unmoved mover as He sings over me,

"And all I want is you."

Sometimes I think He even wakes me up at night because He wants to talk about our day because maybe I didn't take the time to. You could call that devotions, or lack thereof.

Well, the things you encounter on a walk are the raw material to build a relationship, a marriage...

joy and sorrows,
victories and failures,
crowns and crosses,
...can't build a marriage without them.

4) No two walks are just the same.

We each walk with the same Jesus, yet we each walk a different path. So God must desire a unique relationship with each of us. He's with you where you walk, and where you walk is His gift, the best form love can take at any given moment for you.

The unmoved mover was moved all the way to the cross to walk with you, and He moves all things to walk with you now.

"All things work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose," wrote Paul. If you're His, you're called according to His purpose. If you're not loving Him right now, well, He'll arrange all creation to get you in line.

I believe He's walking with you now, Adam,
but are you walking with Him
or hiding in the trees?

Do you acknowledge Him?

Do you even look for Him?

Are you walking with Him, for...

5) who you walk with changes the way you walk.

So acknowledge Him in all your ways.

When you're bored, acknowledge Him.

When you're thrilled, acknowledge Him.

When you're terrified, acknowledge Him.

When your boss ridicules you one more time,
acknowledge Jesus.

When your children rebel, and your wife is mean,
acknowledge Jesus.

He's there, and it will change the way you walk.

When the last and the least ask you for spare
change, when the bar tender says, "Would you like
another?" acknowledge Jesus. He's there.

"As often as you drink this cup, do it in
remembrance of me."

It'll change the way you walk,
even the way you drink.

"Acknowledge Him in all your ways,
and He will make your path straight."

If you like practical application points, here's a
good one. Get a digital watch and set it to beep every five
or ten minutes, and when it does wherever you are and
whatever you're doing say, "Hey, Jesus," or "Hi, Jesus," or
"How's it goin' Jesus?" Just acknowledge Jesus and it will
change the way you walk.

It's not just a mental exercise. He is really there,
and He really does uphold all things by His Word of power.

If you don't have the right watch, here's an even
better practical application point, 1 Thessalonians 5:17,
"Pray constantly."

Tony Campolo, our retreat speaker last year, tells
about visiting a jam-packed Catholic church in the slums of
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The community was
slated for demolition in order to make room for an upscale
marina.

The priest had fought tirelessly for the rights of these poor squatters, living in shacks, and now he gave a report concluding that his talks had failed.

One young man stood and cried, “What will we do when the bulldozers come?”

Another man stood and yelled, “We will fight them! We will fight them to the death! Are you with me? Are you with me?!”

The congregation began to chant, “Yes, yes, we are with you!”

Then all at once, the priest raised his arms and yelled over the crowd, “Silence!” He went to the altar and lifted the wine and the bread, and turning to his people, he said, “When they come with the bulldozers to destroy our homes, and we go out to fight them, He will be with us, too!”

I don’t know exactly what that meant to them, but it changes the way you fight. Jesus fights with some strange, holy weapons.

“Acknowledge Him and
He will make straight your path.”

Who you’re walking with changes the way you walk. He is the way.

I suppose coming to the table is like having a devotion. You have a devotion in order that your whole life might be devoted. You come to the table to receive His body, and His blood, and we become His body and His blood.

The two became one flesh, as *what is* fills *what is not*, and we walk with God. We are His hands and feet, His body walking in the land of *what is not*.

Jean Guyon writes,

Perhaps you have heard that you should think on the different experiences of Jesus Christ. But it is far better for you to bear, to carry, these experiences of Jesus Christ within yourself. This is the way it was in the life of Paul. He did not ponder the sufferings of Christ; he did not consider the marks of suffering on the Lord's body. Instead, Paul bore in his own body the experiences of his Lord. He even said, "I bear in my body the marks of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 6:17) Did he do so by considering such marks? No. Jesus Christ had personally imprinted Himself upon Paul. [Of course, Paul was actually His body.]

Scribes and Pharisees walk to get to a place they call heaven. Christians walk to get to a person named Jesus... who is walking with them.

It turns out paradise is and always was, a walk *with* God.

6) When you take a walk the one you're walking with *is* your destination.

You are God's destination—His covenant partner, His bride, His body, His children, His temple, His house. He's walking home to you. You are His destination, and He is your destination.

What is became like *what is not* that *what is not* would become *what is*. He came to walk us home to Him.

He is the Truth, the Life, the Love, the Light, the Grace, the Meaning in every situation on your walk. He's here in veiled glory so we won't hide from His unveiled

glory, our home. Acknowledge Him here, and you're on your way home.

There's an old story about an old man. He didn't know theology. He didn't know philosophy. He couldn't read Aquinas, Socrates, Parmenides, or Hericletus, but every day he would take a long walk with the Lord.

On these walks he and the Lord God would talk about all kinds of things. . . when he met his wife, the birth of his children, special holidays. One day while they were out walking for an especially long time, the Lord looked at the old man and said, "We are closer to my house than we are to yours. Why don't you just come home with me?" And that is what he did!

Maybe his name was Enoch, or your name.

Well, Jesus stands in your path. Will you acknowledge Him?

He took bread, and He broke it saying, "This is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me. Take and eat." And in the same way, He took the cup and He said, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you in remembrance of me. As often as you drink of this cup, do it in remembrance of me."

And so, if you want Him, we invite you to come forward, tear off a piece of the bread, dip it in the cups. The black cups are wine, the purple cups are juice. They're both blood, and this is body.

And as you come forward, you are confessing to Him, you are calling to Him to fill you and to walk in you.

Lord Jesus, we do that right now. We confess that we are nothing without you. We call on you to forgive us and cleanse us. We call on you to live in us and walk us home. Amen.

And so, come to the table and take *what is* into *what is not* and then take a walk. In Jesus' name, Amen.

[Worship band plays Just a Closer Walk with Thee. . .]

I am weak, but thou art strong
 Jesus keep me from all wrong
 I'll be satisfied as long
 As I walk, let me walk close to thee

Through this world of toil and snares
 If I follow Lord who cares
 Who with me my burden shares
 None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee

When my feeble life is over
 Time for me will be no more
 Guide me gently safely over
 To thy kingdom shore, to thy shore

Refrain:
 Just a closer walk with thee
 Grant it, Jesus, is my plea
 Daily walking close to thee
 Let it be, dear Lord, let it be

I want to say, if you came forward and you took the bread and took the wine, you're what we loosely call a Christian. And people want to know, "Okay pastor... [It's really hard when you're a pastor because everyone thinks

you have, like, a map. You know what I mean?] What's going to happen next, what do I do here, what do I do there? What path am I going on? You tell me where to go."

I don't know where you're going. I don't know what's going to happen in your life next. I don't know whether it's going to be a crown or a cross, a joy or a sorrow. I don't know where you're going, but I know who is traveling with you. He can handle anything. He's already handled everything. So trust Him and take a walk. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Relevant Texts and Quotations (from bulletin)

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

Genesis 3: 8, 9

Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.
 Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.
 Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.
 Altogether, Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.
 Altogether, Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.
 Altogether, Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.
 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Genesis 5: 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 24

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground, man and

beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground, man and beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God.

Genesis 6: 5-9

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

Matthew 4:18, 19

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emma'us, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What is this conversation which you are holding with each other as you walk?"

Luke 24: 13-17(a)

. . . for we walk by faith, not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16

. . . pray constantly.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

“When we know God Almighty as a presence on the paths of our lives, when we have entered into a personal, particular relationship with him, then and only then does he become our Father in heaven. What we’re talking about here is a relationship so personal and intimate that it can’t be described in words . . .”

Abraham Kuyper

God is not interested in your “spiritual life.” God is just interested in your life.

John Ortberg, The Life You’ve Always Wanted

There are many people who arrive at conclusions in life much the way schoolboys do; they cheat their teachers by copying the answer book without having worked the problem themselves.

Soren Kierkegaard, Provocations

In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:6

The traveler who in truth walks life’s road does not ask, “Where is the road?” But asks how one ought to walk along the road. Yet, because impatience does not mind being deceived it merely asks where the road is, as if that decided everything as when the traveler finally has found the highway. Worldly wisdom is very willing to deceive by answering correctly the question, “Where is the road?” while life’s true task is omitted, that spiritually understood the road is: how it is walked. Worldly sagacity teaches that the road goes over Gerizim, or over Moriah, or that it goes through some science or other, or that the road is certain doctrines, or certain behaviors. But all this is a deception, because the road is how it is walked. It is indeed as Scripture says – two people can be sleeping in the same bed – the one is saved, the other is lost. Two people can go up to the same house of worship – the one goes home saved, the other is lost. Two people can recite the same creed – the one can be saved, the other is lost. How does this happen except for the fact that spiritually speaking, it is a deception to know where the road is, because the road is: how it is walked?

Soren Kierkegaard

You must utterly believe that the circumstances of your life, that is, every minute of your life, as well as the whole course of your life – anything, yes, everything that happens – have all come to you by His

will and by His permission. You must utterly believe that everything that has happened to you is from God and is exactly what you need . . . Perhaps you have heard that you should *think* on the different experiences of Jesus Christ. But it is far better for you to bear, to carry, these experiences of Jesus Christ *within* yourself. This is the way it was in the life of Paul. He did not ponder the sufferings of Christ; he did not consider the marks of suffering on the Lord's body. Instead, Paul bore in his own body the experiences of his Lord. He even said, "I bear in my body the marks of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 6:17) Did he do so by considering such marks? No. Jesus Christ had personally imprinted Himself upon Paul.

Jeanne Guyon, Experiencing the Depths of Jesus

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

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

O that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways!

Psalms 8:13

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. "

John 14:5, 6(a)

. . . and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Matthew 28:20(b)

In August and early September we will preach from a variety of tests and topics, resuming our expository series from Matthew in mid-September.

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