

WALKING WITH GOD

TEXT: I PETER 1:8-17

Introduction:

1. It is amazing how two people can look at the same thing and yet come to opposite conclusions.
2. Gherman Titov (1935 – 2000) was a Russian astronaut. He was the second man to orbit the Earth (Yuri Gagarin was the first).
3. After his return from outer space, Mr. Titov said, "Some people say there is a God out there...but in my travels around the earth all day long, I looked around and did not see Him. The rocket was made by our people. I don't believe in God. I believe in man, his strength, his possibilities, his reason."
4. Now consider the words of another astronaut, an American named James A. McDivitt (born in 1929).
5. James A. McDivitt is a retired Brigadier General in the USAF and a former NASA astronaut and engineer who commanded the Gemini 4 flight in which Edward H. White performed the first US space walk.
6. Mr. McDivitt orbited the earth 62 times, and said this: "I did not see God looking into my space-cabin window, as I do not see God looking into my car's windshield on earth. But I could recognize His work in the stars as well as when walking among flowers in a garden. If you can be with God on earth, you can be with God in space as well."
7. How did these two astronauts come to see things so differently? The answer is obvious: Mr. McDivitt was looking through the eyes of faith (cf. I Peter 1:8).

I. WALKING BY FAITH

1. Second Corinthians 5:7 says, " For we walk by faith, not by sight" (cf. I Peter 1:8).
2. In John 20:29, our Lord said to Thomas, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."
3. Spurgeon said, "A little faith will bring your soul to heaven; a great faith will bring heaven to your soul."
4. Someone said, "Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible, and receives the impossible."
5. The world says, "Seeing is believing," but the Christian says, "Believing is seeing."

6. Because we walk by faith, we can "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1:8).
7. The word "glory" or "glorify" is found 15 times in this epistle. The theme of the epistle is victory over suffering (1:7, 8, 11, 21, 24; 2:12, 20; 4:11, 13, 14, 16; 5:1, 4, 10, 11).
8. Our salvation has three aspects -- past, present, and future, and all three are in view here in this epistle.
 - Past -- "hath begotten us again unto a lively hope" (1:3)
 - Present -- "kept by the power of God through faith" (1:5)
 - Future -- "Receiving the end (outcome) of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1:9). We were saved from the penalty of sin; we are being saved from the power of sin; and some day we will be saved from the very presence of sin (1:9).

II. WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit is first mentioned in verse 2 -- "through sanctification of the Spirit."
2. The Holy Spirit sanctifies, and the Holy Spirit indwells (I Peter 1:11).
3. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit testifies (1:11). He is called "the Spirit of Christ," signifying the preexistence of Christ, and the deity of Christ.
4. The Holy Spirit testifies (1:11).
5. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus" (Acts 1:16).
6. This work of the Holy Spirit is further explained in II Peter 1:21.
7. It is the same blessed Holy Spirit who endues us with power when we preach the Gospel (I Peter 1:12).
8. This enduement of power was promised by our Lord. He said in Luke 24:49, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
9. And He said in Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all

Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

10. The Holy Spirit is sent down from heaven in a marvelous way when Bible preachers proclaim the glorious Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:12).
11. This is so wonderful that the angels desire to look into it (1:12b).
12. The angels look down from heaven and see sinners convicted by the Holy Spirit. And they see Gospel preachers filled with the Spirit of God. And they see Spirit-filled soulwinners reaching lost souls with the Gospel.
13. Our Lord said in Luke 15:7, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."
14. "Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
The angels rejoicing because it is done;
A child of the Father, joint heir with the Son,
Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!" -- S. J. Henderson.
15. We have certain advantages over the Old Testament prophets. They "searched diligently" (1:10, 11) to discover the time when the Messiah would come (1:11).
16. They could not see the sequence: "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1:11), the first coming of Christ, the church age, the second coming to establish His kingdom, etc.
17. We are on the other side of the cross and now wait for the second coming of Christ (cf. Daniel 12:4, 8, 9; Matthew 13:17).

III. WALKING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD

1. If a Christian is walking by faith, and walking in the Spirit, he is not walking in the flesh. Galatians 5:16 says, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."
2. Romans 8:4 says we "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
3. Here in I Peter 1:17 it says we are to pass the time of our sojourning here "in fear."

4. Psalm 19:9 says, "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever."
5. Psalm 111:10 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."
6. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge."
7. Proverbs 8:13 says, "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil."
8. Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding."
9. Proverbs 10:27 says, "The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened."
10. Describing the wicked condition of fallen mankind, the apostle Paul says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:18; cf. Psalm 36:1).
11. There are many other similar statements in Scripture. The Bible describes believers as "strangers and pilgrims" passing through this wicked world (2:11), and we are to pass the time of our sojourning in the fear of God (I Peter 1:17).
12. Acts 9:31 says the Christians were "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."
13. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind" (1:13) means we are to keep our minds renewed through constant Bible reading.
14. In eastern lands, people wear long, flowing robes. When they walk quickly they tie the robe up around their waist with a belt.
15. A girded mind is a mind that is properly instructed by the Word of God. It is wrapped tight like a girded robe.
16. There is an expression people use -- "he is not wrapped too tight." It means the person is unstable, and irrational and emotional.
17. "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober..." (1:13).
18. "Sober" (1:13) means self-controlled and serious about the things of God. Some people never touch a drop of liquor but they lack self-control. They are not disciplined.
19. "Sober," "obedient" (1:14), and "holy" (1:15, 16) are words that describe godly believers who walk in the fear of God (1:17).
20. "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance" (1:14). When a person is saved the Holy Spirit works in his heart and enables him to cultivate a life of personal holiness (1:15, 16).
21. This does not come automatically. Therefore we are commanded by God: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in

all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1:15, 16).

CONCLUSION:

1. The "judgment" in I Peter 1:17 is a reference to the judgment seat of Christ because these words of exhortation are given to Christians, and Christians will not stand at the great white throne judgment.
2. Writing to Christians, the apostle Paul said, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).
3. God will judge us, not as a stern judge with wicked sinners, but as a "Father" (1:17) with His children.
4. If we are "obedient children" (1:14), we will receive a good reward.