

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



Are You Walking With God?

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 5:21-24 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Genesis 6:5-7 | Proverbs 3:5-6
John 14:6 | Hebrews 11:5 | 1 John 1:9 | Jude 1:14

► SUMMARY

When you come to the end of your life, what do you want people to remember about you?

Perhaps you'd like to be known for admirable qualities like kindness, love, generosity, knowledge, or wisdom. Or maybe your skills and abilities, or the way you related to others, are what you want people to recall. If you're a believer, the greatest compliment you could receive is the recognition that you walked with God.

► SERMON POINTS

To walk with God means to keep Him at the center of our lives—in everything we do, say, and think in our relationships, finances, plans, and every other area of life. Genesis 5:21-24 says Enoch was a man who walked with God until the Lord took him to heaven. He is also mentioned in Hebrews 11:5 and Jude 1:14-15 as a righteous man who didn't die because he was pleasing to God. Noah, Enoch's descendant, also walked with God. He lived at a time when "the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). Conditions were so bad that the Lord was sorry He had made man, and as a result, He eventually sent a worldwide flood to destroy everyone except Noah and his family.

Today, we too live in a very sinful world in which many people are lost and living in darkness. Their path is so spiritually dark that they can't see where they are going or what dangers or obstacles are ahead. Yet many of them claim they don't need help and want nothing to do with the only source of light, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Criteria for Walking With God

In contrast, those of us who have placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ as our Savior desire God's help because we want to live in a manner that pleases and honors Him, and results in the best possible life for us as well. In order to walk with God as Enoch and Noah did, we should pursue the following criteria:

- **We must accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.** This is the first and most essential requirement because the only way to come to God is through His Son Jesus (John 14:6). Once we have believed in Him and received the forgiveness of our sins, our walk with God can begin.
- **We need to learn to listen to God.** The time we spend alone with Him, reading and meditating on His Word and talking to Him in prayer, is essential. This is how we receive instructions and guidance for the day ahead. Then throughout the day, we are reminded of His ways and can ask the Lord for wisdom or direction whenever we need it.
- **We have to trust Him.** Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." If we don't trust the Lord, we won't follow Him but will prefer to rely on our own judgment. This is especially true when His path makes no sense to us or the timing doesn't seem right. What we must remember is that we cannot fully understand God's ways this side of heaven, but we can trust Him to always lead us on the right path.

■ **We should agree with God.** When we disagree with His direction and think we know a better way, we foolishly or ignorantly try to make everything work out right. But God's Word tells us to follow the Lord, not our own limited understanding. He alone is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. We ought to align ourselves with Him instead of expecting Him to line up with us.

■ **We must obey the Lord.** If we claim to agree with God and His Word but are not obeying Him, we are not walking with Him. The Lord requires that we do what He says, when He says, and how He says, even if we don't fully understand or like it. Without obedience, we cannot truly be followers of Christ. It must become our lifestyle. Every morning we should wake up with the intention to surrender our will to Him, trust His guidance, and follow His leadership throughout the day ahead.

■ **We have to walk in the same direction God walks.** He has a uniquely designed will for each of us. This is why it's so important to seek His guidance every day and be committed to doing whatever He desires by the power of His Holy Spirit, who always leads us to make wise and godly decisions. Although another direction may seem shorter, faster, and less costly, only God's way is the right one. Sometimes we may have to lay down our own desires and pursuits or separate from people who are going the opposite direction.

■ **We must stay in step with the Lord.** The idea is to walk together in the same direction and at the same pace. Oftentimes, we either lag behind or become impatient and get ahead of God because we don't want to wait. That's why it's so important to make the Scripture a daily part of our lives. God's Word is our compass that shows us whether we're walking in the right direction and at the right pace. As we read the Word and listen to the Lord, we'll become receptive

and sensitive to His leadership so we can obey Him. Since He's omniscient and knows the future, we can be certain that His timing for our lives is always best.

■ **We ought to love God.** If we truly love the Lord, we will do what He says because our desire will be to please and obey Him. We'll keep our ears open to hear His directions and wait for His timing.

■ **We must forsake sin.** To walk with God we need a clean heart. Whenever we sin in thought or action, we must deal with it immediately and turn from it. Furthermore, we should ask the Lord to reveal any sins in our lives that are causing us to stumble, so we can forsake them and continue walking with Him and enjoying the blessings of obedience.

■ **We also have to pursue a life of holiness.** This isn't a perfect life but one that is surrendered and committed to the will of almighty God. When we pursue holiness we will be quick to confess and turn from sin so we can be forgiven and cleansed (1 John 1:9).

► RESPONSE

- In light of all these criteria, can you say that you are walking with God? Which ones are true of you? Which ones could use some improvement?
- What can you do to be more consistent in walking with God? What inspires you to persevere in your walk with Him?

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