

48-05-03.wpd—Keeping in Step with God

Pentecost, journey, fellowship with God, walk, following Jesus
Gal 5:25

The Christian life is walking with God with Christ in the lead.

INTRODUCTION: (Scripture Reading: Galatians 5:16-26)

– **Galatians 5:25**, *Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

–*We’ve all seen military marches*, where the soldiers **keep in step** with each other. That’s the picture in the Greek word translated “*keep in step*” in the NIV: it literally means *to march in line*. But most versions render it “let us *walk* in the Spirit,” and that translation is Scripturally significant too, because it expresses how that the Bible, from the very beginning, speaks about our spiritual relationship with God as *a walk*. **HOM.idea**. –If Genesis was all we had, we’d think God made us just as *caretakers of creation*. But the end of the Bible shows a marriage between God and redeemed humanity. We started out as *His servants*, but we end up as *His beloved Bride*. Marriage requires agreement, and the Bible asks a question in **Amos 3:3** (NKJV), Can two **walk together**, unless they are agreed? God’s has already made known His willingness to walk with us....

I. “Follow Me” Has Always Been God’s Call to Us

A. We usually think of Jesus when we hear the words, “**Follow Me**,” but God has always intended for us to follow His lead:

1. “The Lord is my shepherd” and “all we like sheep have gone astray” are OT phrases that confirm that idea....
2. We also see it in way God sought us out in the Garden of Eden—**Gen 3:8a**. 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... (God didn’t give us the task of ruling creation without the benefit of His personal guidance. Our service was to come out of an intimate fellowship where He would walk with us so that we could walk with Him.)
3. After the Fall, that kind of *guiding relationship* continued:
 - a. God shows us in the life of Enoch where that kind of “*walking*” relationship with God would lead—**Gen 5:24**. Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.
 - b. Noah’s “*walking*” relationship made him God’s choice to build the ark—**Gen 6:9**. This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.

B. God called Abraham to walk away from his land to a place he had never seen—**Gen 12:1**. The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.”

1. God has the same call on our lives. (None of us has seen heaven, but Jesus promises to take us there—**John 14:2b-3**, I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.)
2. [The hero in the Book of Eli movie acts like a man on a mission who is being led by a spiritual voice. Though he seems to have extremely good vision, he wears dark glasses, reads Braille, and he quotes **2Cor 5:7** in the KJV, *for we walk by faith, not by sight.*]

TRANS: I’ve never seen Jesus, but I’ve walked with Him most of my life. That doesn’t mean I’ve walked perfectly. In the “Pastor’s Parcel” of the last *Moving Spirit* newsletter, I wrote: “*God may be calling us to keep up with His pace, while we hesitantly lag behind. Or He may bid us sit still with Him to rest and restore our souls, but we hurriedly run on ahead, losing His comforting presence in the process.*” **The Christian life is walking with God with Christ in the lead**. That’s the meaning of God’s “**Follow Me**”....

II. “Follow Me” Is an Invitation to God’s Personal Guidance

A. Pride often hinders letting God guide our *direction and footsteps* :

1. Those who claim *personal sovereignty* find it hard to submit to the Sovereign reign of God—**Jdg 21:25** (ESV), In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
2. The 1st step in keeping in step with God is humility—**Micah 6:8**. 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**. (Holy *humility* is not to lower yourself but to recognize and acknowledge your lowly status before God.)

B. **Pentecost** was God’s way to establishing an *ongoing relationship* for His personal guidance for our lives:

1. The promise of the indwelling Holy Spirit was given before Christ came—**Eze 36:26-27** (ESV), And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to **walk in my statutes** and be careful to obey my rules.
2. When Jesus came, He explained what the Holy Spirit’s ministry would be—**John 14:26**. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, **will teach you all things** and will **remind you**

of everything I have said to you. (This wasn't just a promise to the Apostles, as some have taught, but to all believers— 1 John 2:27. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, **remain in him.** [*listen to Jesus, obey Jesus, walk with Jesus*])

3. Why is Pentecost the longest season in the Christian year? It's about what's happening right now, both in our *corporate* journey as the Church and in our *individual* journeys as believers on our personal walk with God— Gal 5:25, *Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*
 - a. New birth by the Holy Spirit began our *new life* with God [*we live by the Spirit*] (That's what you need if you haven't yet asked Jesus into your heart, and *it happens the instant you do.*)
 - b. Personal guidance and divine empowerment by the Holy Spirit keeps our spiritual life growing and keeps our spiritual legs walking in step with God. (An that's what every born again Christian needs today, everyday, *for the rest of our lives!*)

CONCLUSION:

—All people are moving in a *direction*, but are they getting to *the right destination*? [A British commuter on a London train told the conductor he wanted to get off at Doncaster. “*We don't stop at Doncaster on Wednesday*,” the conductor said, “*but we slow down through the junction, so you can hop off. Mind you, we'll still be going fast, so hit the ground running.*” The man did as he was told. The train slowed. He jumped off and hit the ground running. He ran so fast he caught up with the car ahead. Another conductor saw him, opened the door, grabbed him, and pulled him in. “You're mighty lucky,” he said. “This train doesn't stop at Doncaster on Wednesdays.”] We can literally wear ourselves out and make no spiritual progress, if we do not keep in step with the Spirit.— Isa 40:31 (TLB), But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they **shall walk and not faint.** Let's make our Christian life a walk with God, with Christ leading us by His Holy Spirit. We will reach the divine destination God planned for us, and we won't wear out in the process.

Galatians 5:16-26 (NIV)

16So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

17For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

19The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;

20idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions

21and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

24Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

25Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

26Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.