

## **WALKING OUR WAY TO HEAVEN**

### **Rom.8:1,4,12,13**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The N.T. often uses the word “walk” in the figurative and spiritual sense of “live” (to pursue a course of life; to conduct oneself; or to practice).
2. Thus, by “walk” Scripture means our way of living, and acting, and sustaining relations, and meeting obligations. The figure attaches to the familiar way of regarding human life here on earth as a *pilgrimage*. See Rom.8:1,4,12,13; Heb.11:13.
3. In this life we are on a journey. We are traveling from time to eternity; from earth to heaven.
4. In that earthly journey we have access to the Scriptures in which we have directions given to how we should walk or live on our journey from time to eternity, or from earth to heaven; that is, how we should, in fact must, walk that we may be saved eternally. See 2Tim.3:13-4:5; Jas.1:18-25; Jno.8:31,32; Heb.5:8,9.
5. In this lesson we shall examine the matter of walking both from the standpoint of how we should walk and should not walk in order to reach heaven; that is, from the negative and the positive standpoint.
6. Walking our way to heaven involves things we are not to believe and do as well as things we are to believe and do or practice.

#### **II. DISCUSSION**

##### **A. 1<sup>ST</sup> NEGATIVELY: THE WALK THAT WILL KEEP US OUT OF HEAVEN.**

1. Walking in darkness. What does it mean to walk in darkness?
  - a. The term darkness is used of spiritual or moral darkness, emblematic of sin, as a condition of moral or spiritual depravity and unbelief, Jno.3:19,20; 8:12; 12:35,36; Ac.26:18; 1Jno.1:5,6; 2:9-11; Eph.6:11,12; Col.1:13; 1Pet.2:9.
  - b. Darkness, by metonymy, is used of the place of punishment, Mt.8:12; 2Pet.2:17; Jude 13.
  - c. Of evil works, Rom.13:12-14; Eph.5:11.
2. Walking in craftiness, 2Cor.4:1,2.
  - a. To walk in craftiness is to be guilty of unscrupulous conduct.

- b. The word implies all subtle, cunning, underhanded dealing, or paths of cunning deviousness.
  - c. No attribute of character is more common, at the same time more morally ignoble (base, mean) and anti-Christian than this.
  - d. It's a word that is always used in a bad sense in the N.T. associated with deception.
    - (1) Lk.20:19-23; Mt.26:3,4; Eph.4:14.
    - (2) Christians use plainness of speech, and by manifestation of the truth and honesty toward all men commend themselves to the consciences of men.
    - (3) Corrupt teachers use slight and craft, that they may ensnare the simple, decoy the unsuspecting, and thus make proselytes to their party.
    - (3) They promise men liberty and freedom, but are themselves the servants of corruption.
  - e. Craftiness is characteristic of the devil, his children, all who are under his influence, 2Cor.11:3 (Jno.8:44; 1Tim.2:14; Rev.12:9; 20:2); Ac.13:8-10.
3. Walking disorderly, 2Th.3:6,10,11; Cf. Tit.1:6,10; 3:10.
- a. As an adjective it signifies not keeping order; the negative of “to put in order or arrange”; it was a military term, “denoting not keeping rank, insubordinate.”
    - (1) It is used in 1Th.5:14 describing certain church members who manifested an insubordinate spirit.
  - b. As an adverb in 2Th.3:6, it signifies disorderly, with slackness (like soldiers not keeping rank); in V.11 it is said of those in the church who refused to work, and became busybodies. Cf. 1Tim.5:13.
    - (1) Thayer, p.83, on V.6: “out of ranks; irregular; deviating from the prescribed order or rule.”
    - (2) See Tit.3:10.
  - c. Note Vv.7-11 and Paul's own actions while working among them and why he did it.
4. Walking after the lust of the flesh and or the works of the flesh, and the course of this world, Eph.2:1-3.
- a. The word “lust” when used with reference to the lust of the flesh, the works of the flesh, and the course of this world, is always used in a bad sense of evil desires.
  - b. In Rom.6:12 the injunction against letting “sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof,”

refers to those evil desires which are ready to express themselves in bodily activity.

c. These are equally the lusts of the flesh of :

(1) Rom.8:1,4,8,12,13.

(a) To “mind the things of the flesh” denotes what one has in the mind, the thought; the object of one’s thought; in this case to be carnally minded rather than spiritually minded. Cf. Phil.4:8.

(b) To mind, or to live, or to walk after the flesh is to die or be dead spiritually.

(2) Rom.13:14. The only way to avoid this is to “put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

(3) Gal.5:16,17.

(a) The lust of the flesh is contrary to and wars against the spirit of man, and keeps him from doing the things he would.

(b) Cf. Gal.5:24 – one can crucify the flesh through Christ.

(4) Consider Eph.2:1-3 and note the obvious connection between the expressions found therein.

(a) “Who were dead in trespasses and sins,” V.1.

(b) “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world,” V.2a.

(c) “According to the prince of the power of the air,” V.2b.

(d) “the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience,” V.2c.

(e) “all had our conversation (conduct, manner of life)...in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,” V.3a.

(f) “and were by nature (by habitual practice) the children of wrath,” V.3b.

(5) 2Pet.2:9,10,14,19.

(a) V.9 tells us the Lord reserves “the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”

(b) Vv.10,14,19 further identify the “unjust” as to who they are and what they do.

(1) V.10, they “walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness...Presumptuous are they, selfwilled...”

- (2) V.14, “Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin...Cursed children (i.e., children of cursing, an Hebrew ediom expressing character through sonship, Jno.17:12; Eph.2:2; Mk.3:17).
    - (3) V.19, “...servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” Cf. Jno.8:34; Rom.6:16.
  - (6) Both Peter and Jude warned such would be the case, 2Pet.3:3ff; Jude 17-19.
- 5. Walking as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, Eph. 4:17-19.
  - a. When we do this:
    - (1) Their spiritual “understanding is darkened,” V.18a.
    - (2) They are “alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, V.18b.
    - (3) Their heart is blinded, V.18c. Cf. Ac.26:17,18;Col.1:13; Eph.6:12.
    - (4) They are “past feeling,” V.19a.
    - (5) “Have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness,” V.19b.
  - b. Cf. 1Pet.4:3, which also describes what it means to walk according to the will of the Gentiles.
    - (1) “Walk in lasciviousness.”
    - (2) “lusts”
    - (3) “excess of wine”
    - (4) “revellings”
    - (5) “banquetings”
    - (6) “and abominable idolatries”
  - c. Cf. Rom.1:19-32 which describes in detail how the Gentiles as a whole had walked.
  - d. “Lasciviousness” is one of the sins mentioned in Eph.4:17-19; 1Pet.4:3, and is identified in Gal.5:19-21 as a work of the flesh, which will keep one from inheriting the kingdom of God, or from entering the heavenly kingdom, or heaven itself.
    - (1) That which is lewd or lustful is lascivious.
    - (2) That which produces or tends to produce lewd or lustful thoughts or emotions is also lascivious.
    - (3) It denotes absence of restraint, indecency, wantonness. It is sometimes translated “wantonness”, such as Rom. 13:13.

- (4) The prominent idea is shameless conduct; sensual, evil, inordinate behavior.
- (5) Thayer, p.79 defines it as “Wanton (acts or ) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females.”
  - (a) According to definition, how about dancing?
    - (1) How about the slow kind where the dance partners are closely embracing? Would you consider your wife chastely embraced if another man were the one embracing her? What about such embracing if the music stopped? Does the fact that music is playing make such embracing right? No music playing make it wrong?
    - (2) How about the more modern kind where they don't necessarily embrace each other, but take the floor, stand before each other and see which one can wiggle the other, with all kinds of indecent bodily movements? Does music playing make that right? No music playing make it wrong?
    - (3) How about some of the marching, dancing bands at school function and the outrageous bodily, sexy, gyrations of the band members and cheer-leaders?
- (6) This sin would certainly include much of the modern dress of the short, skimpy, see-through, tight-fitting, sensual looking, skin exposing kind, as well as filthy jokes and suggestive language!

## B. 2<sup>ND</sup> POSITIVELY: THE WALK THAT WILL TAKE US TO HEAVEN.

(Remember: By “walk” Scripture means our way of living, and acting, and sustaining relations, and meeting obligations. The figure attaches to the familiar way of regarding human life here on earth as a *pilgrimage*.

1. It's walking “by faith,” in order to be saved by faith, 2Cor.5:7.
  - a. What does it mean to walk by faith?
    - (1) Rom.10:17.
      - (a) In context Rom.10:17 is connected with the gospel of Christ, the gospel or the faith which the apostles, the original messengers of Christ preached, and need to obey that gospel in order to call upon the name of the Lord to be saved. (Note Vv.10-16)
    - (2) Thus to walk “by faith” means to walk by the One faith, the faith of Jesus, the faith that the apostles preached, believing and obeying the gospel of Christ, Gal.1:23; (1Cor.15:1-4; 2:2; Mk.16:15,16); Gal.1:6-12; 1Cor.1:10; Phil.3:16-18; 2Th.1:6-10.
    - (3) It means to walk as Jesus walked, 1Jno.2:6; Cf. 1Jno.7:a; 1:5; Col.2:6,7.
    - (4) It means to walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, Rom.4:12; Jas.2:14-24.
      - (a) In the case of Abraham in Rom.4 and Jas.2 we have the best illustration of what it means to walk by faith, of the obedience of faith and of justification by that faith apart from the works of the law known to man. For the principle of justification through faith finds a wonderful application in the life of this one who is called “the faith of us all” (Rom.4:16) and “the father of all them that believe” (Rom.4:11).
      - (b) His state of justification was obtained through his faith (an obedient faith), not by meritorious works, Rom.4:1-8.
      - (c) His justification had no dependence upon circumcision, for he was declared just before his circumcision. This was done in order “that he might indeed be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the faith of

circumcision of them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised,” Vv.9-12

- (d) The promise made to Abraham of inheriting the world was a promise of faith, not of meritorious works, Vv.13-25.
  - (1) This was true in order to include “all the nations” in the promise, Vv.13-16.
  - (2) The inheritance of the world was to come through Abraham’s seed (who was Isaac and finally Jesus Christ, Gal.3:16). Abraham, knowing this, believed in the power of God in spite of the discouraging circumstances, Vv. 17-21.
  - (3) This faith of father Abraham was what God considered in declaring Abraham righteous, and it is a type of the faith that will secure justification for us today, Vv.22-25.
  - (4) It must be in God through Jesus Christ, his death, his resurrection, and his ascension to heaven to God’s right hand, Vv.24,25.
- (e) Yet Abraham is cited as an example of being justified by works in Jas.2:14-24, and there is no contradiction between this and Rom.4. (Explain why)
- (5) Cf. Heb.11 for inspired commentary on the meaning of the expression “by faith”
  - (a) V.4: “by faith Abel offered...”
  - (b) V.5: “by faith Enoch...”
  - (c) V.7: “by faith Noah...prepared...”
  - (d) V.8: “by faith Abraham...obeyed...”
  - (e) V.17: “by faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac...”
  - (f) V.20: “by faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau...”
  - (g) Vv.24-28: “by faith Moses...refused...choosing rather...Esteeming the reproach of...forsook Egypt ... kept the Passover...”
  - (h) V.30: “by faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.”

- (6) It means to walk in or according to truth, 2Jno.1-4; Cf. Gal.2:14; Jno.8:32; 4:24.
  - (a) Denotes not only action, but habitual action, and progress toward a goal. Cf. Phil.3:13,14.
  - (b) The following ideas may be included in the term “walking in truth”
    - (1) Walking straight; cutting it straight, 2:Ti.2:15.
    - (2) Walking steadily – the idea of uprightness with steadfastness, 1Cor.15:58; 1Jno.3:7,9.
    - (3) Walking with a purpose; one’s conduct depends upon his aim, his goal, Josh.24:15; 1Jno.5:18,21.
    - (4) Walking according to divine directions, divine utterance, adding nothing, subtracting nothing substituting nothing, 1Cor.4:6; 1Pet.4:11; 1Jno.2:24,25; 2Jno.9,10; See Psa.119:9,11.
- 2. It’s by walking “in newness of life,” as mentioned in Rom.6:4 and further described in the entire chapter, which reveals:
  - a. Why we should walk in newness of life, Vv.1,2.
  - b. When and how that newness of life begins, Vv.3-8.
  - c. That in view of being dead to sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, sin is therefore not to be allowed to reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof, Vv.11-14.
  - d. That having been made free from sin by having obeyed the gospel you have thereby become servants of righteousness, Vv.16-18.
  - e. That whereas in times past you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; now you must yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness, V.19.
  - f. that the end of the fruit yielded as servants of unrighteousness, whereof you are now ashamed, was unto death; for the wages of sin is death; but the end of the fruit you now yield while walking in newness of life as servants of God is everlasting life, or eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, Vv.21-23.
- 3. It’s by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, Eph.4:1-3.
  - a. That is, “live lives worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called,” V.1.
  - b. What kind of walk is that? It’s one which requires walking:

- (1) “With all lowliness,” V.2; that is, lowliness of mind or humbleness. Cf. Rom.12:3; Phil.2:3,4; 1Pet.5:5.
- (2) With “meekness,” V.2 – which is not weakness, as some seem to think, but is:
  - (a) “An inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God
  - (b) “that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting
  - (c) “closely linked with the word humility, and follows directly upon it,” W.E. Vine, III, 55,56.
  - (d) Further, “...it is only the humble heart which is also the meek, and which, as such, does not fight against God and more or less struggle and contend with him
  - (e) “this meekness, however, being first of all a meekness before God, is also such in the fact of men, even of evil men, out of a sense that these, with the insults and injuries which they may inflict, are permitted and employed by Him for the chastening and purifying of His elect,
  - (f) “In Gal.5:23 it is associated with self-control,” Vine, III, 56.
- (3) “With longsuffering,” V.2.
  - (a) Longsuffering is a characteristic associated with forbearance and patience.
  - (b) As a verb it means “to be patient, to bear with, lit., to be long-tempered,” Vine, III, 12.
  - (c) Note: “Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger, and is associated with mercy, and is associated with God, Rom.2:4; 1Pet.3:20, Vine, III, 12. (As well as with men, Eph.4:2.)
  - (d) The note continues: “Patience (longsuffering) is the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial; it is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope, 1Th.1:3.” Vine, III, 12, From Notes on Thessalonians by Hogg and Vine, pp.183,184.

- (4) “forbearing one another in love,” (V.2), signifying to bear with, endure; denotes patiently forbearing evil.” 2Tim.2:24,25a.
  - (5) “Endeavoring (giving diligence, eager) to keep the unity (oneness) of the Spirit in (bound together with) the bond of peace,” (V.3). Cf. Col.3:13-15.
4. It’s by walking honestly as in the day, as well as walking honestly toward them that are without.
- a. Rom.13:13,14.
    - (1) Do not do things under cover of darkness or in secret.
    - (2) Those who “walk honestly as in the day” are “pilgrims of the dawn” who tolerate nothing in themselves and their lives that the light of day would rebuke.
    - (3) Hence it is the counterpart of this that they make no provision for the flesh or to satisfy the flesh over the spirit.
    - (4) Whatever provision they take for their heavenly journey, the flesh has no share in it.
    - (5) Then V.14 reveals the supreme preparation, uniting all others in one, which is, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, in making no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.
  - b. 1Th.4:11,12.
    - (1) We must have consideration to the opinion of those without.
    - (2) We must not repel them by our inconsistencies of conduct.
    - (3) We must give “none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully,” 1Tim.5:14.
    - (4) Vv.11,12 are unseparably related in connection with the truths taught in the two verses.
    - (5) On the basis of V.11, V.12 teaches that industry such as “doing your own business” and “working with your own hands as commanded” is no small part of honesty.
    - (6) This says a lazy man can never be an honest one.
    - (7) A restless, lazy, trifling busybody does unspeakable damage to the faith of Christ.
    - (8) On the other hand, the honest, industrious, hard working servant of God and man is one who provides for himself and others who are his obligation, one who does not look to others for his necessities; he is not a burden on society!
  - c. 2Cor.8:21; Phil.4:8; Col.3:9; 1Tim.2:12; Heb.13:18; 1Pet.2:12.

5. It's a circumspect walk in wisdom understanding what the will of the Lord is, Eph.5:15-17.
  - a. RV: "Look then carefully how ye walk."
  - b. The way of life must be one of exactitude; and that it may be so the steps must not be haphazard, but carefully taken.
  - c. The Christian needs not only spiritual fervor and enthusiasm, but also prudence.
  - d. Walk circumspectly that you may escape the snares in your way; that you may do every duty in its time and place; and that your good may not be evil spoken of.
  - e. "Redeeming the time" (buying up for one's self; buying up the opportunity). Seizing for yourselves, like bargains in the market, each opportunity.
  - f. Cf. Col.4:5,6.
    - (1) There is no excuse for a Christian's conversation becoming rude and churlish.
    - (2) It's often necessary to speak plainly and boldly; but doing even that graciously ought to characterize the Christian.
    - (3) "Salt" in the N.T. is the opposite of corruption – in this case "corrupt" speech. Cf. 1Pet.3:15; Eph.4:29.
6. It's a walk in "good works," Eph.2:8-10; Cf. 2Tim.3:16,17

### **III. CONCLUSION**

1. In our study of walking our way to heaven, we have approached it from both the negative and the positive viewpoint.
  - a. The walk that will keep us out of heaven.
  - b. The walk that will take us to heaven.
2. Thus we suggested, even necessarily implied that there are only two ways to walk, with only one of those leading to heaven.
3. This, of course, is in harmony with the Lord's teaching in Mt.7:13,14.
4. Thus he taught there are only two ways to follow – the broad and the narrow, but only the narrow way leads to heaven.
5. In our study we have capitalized on the same idea by making use of the word "walk" so often mentioned in the N.T. to specifically apply to those who are said to be "walking" in one of these ways, and to urge them to walk the walk that leads to life, rather than the one that leads to destruction.
6. Question: Which way are you presently walking? What is your walk? The one leading to life, or to destruction?
7. You can do something about it! But you and you only can do it! And you can to it only in this life!