

11/11/11

A GOD FOR WALKING HOURS ISA. 30-31

Here Isaiah is distilling into one glorious refrain what the power and truth of a living God can do in the lives of men. Through the chapter he has sung of the strength of God and how available it is to those who take God seriously.

He reminds here that life will weary any one down. Even though you now feel that your strength is inexhaustible in time it will wear down and you will fail. But those who come to grips with our great God may have renewal.

They will be enabled to soar again as eagles, to run unwearied, and to walk and not faint. Now we would not write it in this order...rather we would say walk and not faint, run and not be weary, and soar like eagles.

Our usual way of looking at just plodding along in a walk is not challenging enough for faith. We would have religion to apply only to the sprints and flights of life. We are a little disappointed when at the climax of this heroic anthem it slows down to a walk. And if that is our reaction when we look at faith and life we are simply being very human and very wrong. Very human because you and I are always inclined to save religion for life's crises.

(BLUE-MT-STORM)

We tend to keep faith like an old fashioned parlor which is opened and dusted only for special occasions, the so called red-letter days or hours. Maybe you have noticed the nominal Christian..name on the book pledge on the ledger Christians who have the stated occasion complex about the church. They demand that the church marry them, baptize their children, bury their dead. And if you look a bit surprised at them they will look at you and say, "what else is the church for?" Others of us might be about the same but maybe on another level...we want the church when we become seriously ill, in deep trouble, and so on. We have a way of concluding that religion concerns only the unusual in life.

Have you noticed in how many plays and novels when the play reaches a crisis and the storm strikes and all is raging beyond control, some character announces that ~~this is a desperate time and that~~ prayer should be made. There

is that moment in King Lear, in his last~~y~~ illness when he begins, as you remember, to talk about God.

How often have you heard quoted from Lincoln " I have been brought to my knees often before God simply because things were so bad there was no other place to go." Using God in the trying hour.

It was Willard Sperry who said that if a directors meeting were to open with prayer before the amen was pronounced it would be on the streets that the institution was on the rocks.

This ending is not an anticlimax in the second place because we do not live in crises. We do not exist for emergencies only. Count the hours of your life and you will find that the most of it is spent in what we choose to call the routine. We arise about the same time every A.M. Eat about the same amount of breakfast, go to our jobs in the same way as the day before. There is the schedule of the home for the housewife. There is the school schedule every morning. Of course some are so slow in the schedule that they have to run some to get to school. SO THE SIMPLE ARITHMETIC OF IT IS THAT LIFE'S BATTLES ARE WON OR LOST IN A WALK. Of course we need a God who will walk with us and willing and able to help us when we need to sprint or soar. We need a God for the routine. *walking hours*

But do not get the idea that it is impossible to fail in the walk. In one of Bene't's radio dramas a maid servant cries, "Life is not lost by dying. Life is lost minute by minute, day by day in all our thousand uncaring ways."

We preachers so often proclaim that the time of our fall is when great temptations explode around us and in one blast or burst of anger, lust, or avarice he destroys himself. But the brutal fact is that the most traveled roads to hell are the undramatic gentle slopes. Through the years without our noticing it, little personal resentments grow into large hatreds. The slender twine of self seeking we wrap around ourselves each day, here a little and there a little, never much, but just enough so that some day we awake, like Gulliver, bound shackled, helpless in the selfishness which is the truest death, which finally holds us powerless. SO IT COMES TO PASS THAT OUR GREATEST TRAGEDIES ARE WRITTEN IN OUR WALKING HOURS.

Have we found, in our walking, the wayfarer's wealth, the Pilgrim's peace, the Marcher's renewal? Have we found that Christ can fuse in to the common day power for the day's work? Have we found that He can give us wisdom for performing the same old task? Have we found that He can shed increasing light on the familiar paths?

Now if Christianity is going to do much for tomorrow it must have a faith blazing its way through darkness, a hope outreaching despair, love out maneuvering hatred, and bringing God into the walking hours. What we have lost in a walk we must win back in a walk. "Take Time To Be Holy, Speak Oft With Thy Lord."

Thinking of life as a week you have passed the first day Sunday. Tomorrow is Monday. But think it over...can you before tomorrow seize a moment facing the open window of tomorrow to ask God to bless your experiences of this day...the rest of it any way. You will enter the second day in the morning..when the snags and the jolts turn up, as they will tomorrow, can't you practice seeing them against the backdrop of all the wonder and truth and love that is ours even in a cold cruel world? Live in that tomorrow so that at the end of that day the two of you..God and You..having WALKED the road together may sit down and evaluate what you have meant to a world blistered by sin, limp in sparrow, starving for the Bread of LIFE?

^{will}
 "When, walk with the Lord in the light of His word
 What a glory He sheds on our way."

"And He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me I am His Own."

"Oh for a closer walk with God a calm and heavenly frame
 A Light to shine upon the road that leads me to the Lamb."

"Walk in the Light so shalt thou know that fellowship of love."

"He appeared in another form unto two of them as they walked and went into the country."

"He went unto them Walking on the water"

T. DAY

" I walked [^] where Jesus walked and felt HIS presence there"

you will not read the Bible much as you run - you will read it there in the routine - Even as you walk you will need periods when you sit down as the two men going out as Emans sat down at the Table - as they sat Jesus sat with them, as they sat with Jesus they discerned who He was.

These Bibles are yours - you may lay them up and let the dust of neglect settle on them all you may make it your guide book, as all our road maps, to show us the road to take that leads to our eternal home - It will give you daily bread on your journey -

on behalf of your church and with love and prayer grows your church I give you these precious volumes -

