

Talk It Over

RHYTHM
(Week 3)
Walking

SMALL TALK

1. Describe a project or endeavor that took you many steps to complete. Was it successful or unsuccessful? Rewarding or disappointing? What kept you going?

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ 1 John 1:5-10; 2:3-11.** Does your translation use “walk” or “live” in verses 1:6; 1:7; 2:6; 2:11? What difference does it make?
3. What “lie” (1:5, 11, 2:4) is exposed in each of these sections? What misrepresentation of grace may be behind this lie? What is the truth about grace?
4. What hope does John give for people who fail to “live in the light”? (1 John 1:9; 2:1-2)
5. **READ 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.** What did these Thessalonians receive from Paul and his associates? (4:1-2) How does he describe their current status and their trajectory, and how does this relate to his use of the word “walk”?

GETTING PERSONAL

6. Based on this study, what counsel would you give someone who says something like, “It doesn’t matter how I live because God will forgive me anyway?”
7. Under what conditions are you most vulnerable to the “lie” when your “talk” doesn’t match your “walk”?

PRACTICE!

8. Can you describe the steps of your “walk” that actually moved you from where you were before to where you are with God now? What were some steps that made a difference?

July 11, 2021

Rhythm: Reclaiming God's design for spiritual vitality.

(Week 3) Walking

There is often tension while presenting God's word. Jesus was full of grace and full of truth. Sometimes the grace message brings comfort, but sometimes the truth message brings discomfort. The same message can bring either result or both challenge and comfort. Today's message is like that.

Today's message may comfort the challenged, but it may challenge the comfortable! Which are you. Are you challenged right now, hurting and broken and need comfort? There is something here for you. Are you comfortable, feel like things are going well, keep your heart open to be prodded along for growth and change. That's a challenge to you.

Are you ready for either?

Now after all that build up. I need to lower your expectations as we begin as we plod through some details that may seem to you at first to be insignificant and picayune!

We begin with what I think is a subtle but important translation issue. The word for our consideration today is the word that is usually translated "walk" but isn't always translated "walk" and this word is *peripatéō*.

peripatéō : literally: "tread around", "walk"; figuratively: "live"

Romans 6:4 (CSB) so we too may **walk (live)** in newness of life.

Romans 8:4 (CSB) ... do not **walk (live)** according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (CSB) For we **walk (live)** by faith, not by sight.

Ephesians 5:2 (CSB) ... **walk (live)** in love, as Christ also loved us...

I. It takes STEPS to walk

The word “Live” by itself doesn’t convey the idea of:
taking steps,
walking on a path,
making persistent progress in a
particular direction,
or the idea of rhythm or pace.

So be aware of your translation when you run into the word “live”, it might be good to do a quick translation comparison (which you can do in YouVersion for free) to see if it is translated “walk” by other translations. If so, aha, it is *peripatéō*. Ok, so now that that detail is out of the way.

Are you ready to be comforted or challenged today? Maybe both?

*1 John 1:5–2:6 (CSB) This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in him. ⁶ If we say, “We have fellowship with him,” and yet we walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth. ⁷ If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say, “We have not sinned,” we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. ²¹ My little children, I am writing you these things so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous one. ² He himself is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world. ³ This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his commands. ⁴ The one who says, “I have come to know him,” and yet doesn’t keep his commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps his word, truly in him the love of God is made complete. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ The one who says he remains in him **should walk just as he walked.***

John used some keywords here that you may not have noticed. The words "*know*" and "*truth*." We usually think of these concepts as something for our heads to grapple with. But John quickly tells us this is an inadequate way of thinking about "knowing" and "truth". You don't really "know" "truth" until you live it."

You don't really "*know*" a "*truth*" until you "*keep*" taking steps in it.

Did you notice how quickly he turned from "comfort" to passionate "challenge"?

† The one who says, "I have come to know him," and yet doesn't keep his commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. (1 John 2:4)

Liars?! That's harsh! There's a challenge. In the old Western movies and novels, "Them's fightin words", and the guns come ablazin!

This challenge is for us, right here, and right now, today! According to the Barna research there is very little difference between the lifestyle of the self proclaimed "born again Christian" and a total "unbeliever". That data is just not very encouraging. We need to be challenged out of our "comfortable" assumptions about grace and forgiveness!

Truth Is Visibly Lived

If you want to know if somebody is a real Christian, don't just ask them what they believe, look at how they live.

II. Keep Your Eyes on "The Way"

The book of Acts repeatedly refers to the movement Jesus started as being called "**The Way**". **The Way** is a particular path marked out for us. **The Way** is also a particular person who marked out that particular path. He said he was "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Peter understood this and wrote, ...

*1 Peter 2:21 (CSB) ...Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you **should follow in his steps.***

In 1896, Charles Sheldon, wrote a novel by the title: IN HIS STEPS. It has sold more than 50 million copies and ranks as **one of the best-selling books of all time.** The full title of the book is **In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do?** You can't intelligently make effective use of this question, if you are not “knowledgeable” about Jesus life, his teachings, and his commands!

What we learn from Jesus, all the apostles is this:

Believing, knowing, and doing go together.

III. The Way is not VAGUE

*1 Thessalonians 4:1–8 (CSB) Additionally then, brothers and sisters, we ask and encourage you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received instruction from us on how you should **live** [ESV: “walk] and please God—as you are doing—do this **even more** [ESV: “do this more and more].² For you know what commands we gave you through the Lord Jesus.³ For this is God’s will, your sanctification: that you keep away from sexual immorality,⁴ that each of you knows how to control his own body in holiness and honor,⁵ not with lustful passions, like the Gentiles, who don’t know God.⁶ This means one must not transgress against and take advantage of a brother or sister in this manner, because the Lord is an avenger of all these offenses, as we also previously told and warned you.⁷ For God has not called us to impurity but to live in holiness.⁸ Consequently, anyone who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.*

Notice our walk is aimed at pleasing God (1 Thes 4:1). That is our life’s purpose now. We live out that purpose of pleasing God with our thoughts and actions.

There is nothing vague about it: we are to “*abstain from sexual immorality*” (1 Thes 4:3)

People who are unfamiliar with the clear teaching about God’s will, as in God’s design for sex will by default redefine the design according to their own selfishly distorted or misinformed desires.

“Sexual Immorality” (*Porneia*) is sex outside of God’s design. *Porneia* includes pornography, prostitution, adultery, and fornication.

People don’t use the word fornication anymore, but that’s English for sex before marriage or outside of marriage.

- Sex is beautiful within God’s design.
- Sex is problematic outside of God’s boundaries.
- Fire is beautiful within the boundaries of the fireplace, but when fire spills out onto your hardwood floor it destroys the house.

“Temptation in its purest form is a lie disguised as a promise of fulfillment.”

Lies don’t deliver what they promise. Lies destroy. Jesus said, “*A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance.*” (John 10:10)

COMFORT:

We have all experienced going astray and walking our own way. Turn to Jesus. He will restore you and walk with you and help you step by step. Walking with Jesus is a better way of life you will never regret.

CHALLENGE:

I. It takes steps to walk. What are some steps you need to take?

II. Keep your eyes on “The Way.” The way is the particular path, set out for us by Jesus who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life”. Follow in his steps.

III. The Way is not Vague. Believing, Knowing, and Doing go together. Learn the way, Believe the Way, Trust the way, walk the way!