

# Walking as children of light. (Quality: very good)

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 02 June 1981

Preacher: Relf, John

[ 0 : 00 ]     The Lord's help will direct you to the word of this morning in Ephesians chapter 4 and verses 1 and 2.

Now read the first three verses by way of connection. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

I had thought to speak from chapter 5 and verse 8, which reads like this, For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

But I venture in this sweet chapter, in chapter 4. Our concern today is about walking.

Walking as children of the light. And I did set forth this morning the beautiful feature of the Apostle being the prisoner of the Lord.

[ 1 : 40 ]     Brought into the sweet captivity of the Gospel. To know nothing else in his desire or purpose than to preach the Gospel of Christ. He was a prisoner in Rome by force, but he was a prisoner of the Lord by the love of Christ.

The constraining love. And I spoke of the vocation wherewith we are called. That it's an inward calling. A spiritual one.

We're not just called to join a society or a church. We are called of God with an inward calling. With light and power of the Holy Ghost.

And we are called to walk as children of the light. And we are called to know these contrasts in our own soul's experience. Sometimes darkness.

Now are ye light in the Lord. What a solemn expression. Sometimes darkness. The very darkness itself.

[ 2 : 43 ]     We read in God's judgment on Pharaoh in Egypt. That there was a darkness that could be felt. Well, it was so dark to them.

By God's judgment. That their eyes were almost closed by the darkness around them. It could be felt. The solemn darkness. That they wanted delivering from by light.

And child of God. You'll know if the Lord work in your heart by his effectual grace. You'll know a darkness that can be felt. Because of the contrast.

Because of a divine illumination in your soul. That such an illumination that will make you feel your darkness. And yet hardly feel the light. Your want of light.

Your want of grace. Your want of help. Of the Lord's favor and mercy. You'll feel that. You won't feel much light. But if you are.

[ 3 : 46 ]     Under these gracious contrasts. Sometimes darkness. But now are ye light. In the Lord. I spoke of a judicial blindness.

God's judgment. Upon the Gentile race. That they should be in darkness. And bondage. And we've read of it here tonight. All those years.

Four thousand years. And you say. Well why? We don't know why. In the sovereignty of God. There is no answer.

But when we ponder these things. We read of the iniquity. Of those people. Were to the full. They were beyond.

Redemption. That sounds solemn. Doesn't it? The cup of iniquity. Was full. And God's only way.

[ 4 : 39 ] Was to destroy them. Disease. Would spread amongst them. Sin. Idolatry. Provoking God. He would destroy them.

And when you ponder. That he brought his people. Into their land. Which was a promised land. When he promised. To cast out their enemies. Before them.

And give them a land. For their inheritance. And he gave to the children of Israel. The twelve tribes. Their inheritance. Amongst the heathen. And he destroyed them utterly.

Now these are solemn things. But. This was judicial. Blindness. And God's judgment in it. And they repented not. They rebelled against God.

And God smote them in his anger. Now these are solemn things. Aren't they? In other words. God left them. He left them to their own wickedness.

[ 5 : 34 ] To commit all manner of wickedness. And to go on and add sin to sin. And God left them. And but for grace. God would leave every one of us.

Now if God should say to a backsliding sinner. Now. My judgments are to leave you. To leave you. To harden your heart.

To grow bold in sin. To be careless with regard to my word. I'll just leave you. Now wouldn't that be a solemn judgment. That every one of us who fear God.

Would fear. And pray that they would never leave us Lord. Never leave us. We want to be restored. We want to be made again as little children.

Teachable. And willing to walk in the ways of the Lord obediently. And to be kept from our evil. And delivered from our unbelief. To be kept from our unbelief. But you see. With many of those.

[ 6 : 32 ] The Lord left them. To perish. In their sin. And for their sin. They were judged. And in the just judgments. God left them. To be reprobates.

God. But. I want to speak. Of this walking. The walking of a child of God. Is a very humble walk. Because God.

Humbles their souls. To make them walk. I know when I was first called by grace. I looked upon the church of God. As those that were favored. Those that were holy people.

those that love God in sincerity and truth I didn't see the faults in them that I could see now but I didn't want to see the faults in them and I don't want to see faults in the church of God now but I felt they were a holy people that loved the Lord walked in his ways and feared him and I thought they were a blessed people and I wanted to be like them I felt so unworthy but I wanted to know that they are God I wanted to know the blessings of God I wanted to walk with them and to be anything amongst them great no, no I wanted to be in some little place some place following the Lord my Lamb now the apostle speaks of the believers walk as with all lowliness and meekness how do we understand lowliness?

well some could hide behind everything and say well I won't get involved that isn't lowliness that isn't lowliness I must be brief and I must be simple lowliness expresses itself doesn't it in the meanest thoughts of yourself that's the very heart of lowliness before God and in your own heart expressing the meanest thoughts of yourself who am I but a sinner saved by grace who am I but the least amongst the saints who am I not worthy of the Lord's mercy if we don't say these things honestly before the Lord we're not walking in lowliness of spirit lowliness of spirit expresses itself then in this way that we have mean thoughts of ourselves and the highest thoughts of others now there are those whom we meet with in the general world and perhaps sometimes in the church of God whom we haven't got such a high regard for as we would have but we give them a higher regard than we have for ourselves and in our right minds by grace we would esteem all better than ourselves that is true lowliness that is how God would have his children walk in the lowliness of our mind rather than I am someone great

[ 9 : 44 ] I deserve a prominent place I am worthy to be thought a lot of ah my friends that is not lowliness of mine and this meekness that is spoken of here that expresses itself in submission the world in its religions do not want to submit they don't want to submit to authority many are taught to submit to men the proud Pharisees and the scribes who love the praise of men they are taught to submit entirely to them and it's in forced submission in the name of religion in the name of God sometimes a forced submission to their prayer times and their ordinances and rituals well we leave that it's sad but this meekness expresses itself in true submission in the sight of God and before God we are exalted to submit to one another in the fear of God to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake if you are a true believer walking in the fear of God you will want to seek this sweet submission but to know it before God because by nature tempted by Satan and in the old man we are rebellious we say to God what doest there when he lays an afflicting hand upon us when things go wrong we can say

Lord why is this you are unkind meekness and lowliness expresses itself in the sweet submission like Job's it is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good shall we not receive good at the hand of God shall we not receive evil the Lord gave and the Lord take it away blessed be the name of the Lord this is the submission we are exhorted by the apostle to walk in walk as children of the light hasn't the Lord enlightened you by his revelations in his word and by his spirit in the word to realize that God is good that God is just and holy and gracious and perfect in all his will and work and ways so being light in the Lord there is a gracious submission it is the Lord who has a sovereign right to do what he will with mine what if he break my health what if he take away my loved one what if he gives me burdens to bear that I find hard to bear what if he crosses my providences my schemes let him do what seemeth him best that is lowliness of mind that is meekness that God will approve of in his children and honour them as they walk by faith it's a walking isn't it then there is something further here for bear with all long suffering a true believer doesn't have to think of long suffering as it affects them only to consider the long suffering of God toward them oh the long suffering nature of God in his love and patience and faithfulness to us poor sinners why the long suffering of God would afford us many many sermons wouldn't it but in our hearts to preach just one why me why me why such a wretch as me who must forever live in hell we're not salvation free why me surely the will of God is that we should show long suffering to those who need to be long suffered with that try our patience that may be critical may be harmful oh we certainly in our walk have need of patience and of long suffering for bearing one another in love how else can we forbear with one another well we have to put up with them we have to put up with what they do stoic resolution to just put up with them no no that's not love's forbearance is it you know what love forbearance is it's bearing against yourself hurt it's not taking hurt it's not responding to hurt it's a forbearing with one another in love are they are part of the body they are members of

Christ's body they are sinners saved like I am saved and called by grace as I am called they have an old nature as I have they are possessed with sinful infirmities as I am forbearing one another in love knowing that we're in the body we can be tempted the same temptation now these are sweet considerations just briefly put to you go along a little further endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace if you're walking in a light as a child of light as children of the day you'll be endeavouring it'll be a mark of grace you'll be endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace I had a simple illustration that affected me this week a conversation went something like this oh well in some of our chapels they tear out pictures of the bible of Christ why did they do that and I said well it's never recognised in our denomination to have pictures of

Christ the sacred person of Christ I don't see what's wrong with it and so several others joined in and it was don't see anything wrong with it and then they went on to criticise those that did do that those that held sacredly to that position that it's not honouring to God to have a picture that could be made an idolatrous affection in worship when we worship God in spirit a little criticism but it led to a greater criticism of some of the chapels that do this when it's generally their bibles have no pictures it's never even mentioned never even known that we do that but here was a criticism brought up that was enlarged and brought forth expressions which were far from unity of the spirit and I thought what a sadness that we can criticise and we are not walking in the light of the children of the light we should be endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and the unity of the spirit are in those things that we abound in in love we abound take it a little farther says the apostle there is one body and one spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling one Lord one faith one baptism one God and father of all who is above all and through all and in you all now what a reason to endeavour in your hearts and mine to keep the unity of the spirit the spirit of wrought in us by his power grace humility love to Christ love to the Lord's people love to his word of truth love to his ways there is the unity of the spirit there is but one lord and one faith and one baptism there should be an endeavour amongst every assembly to keep the unity of the spirit for the spirit will bless the unity that he creates and maintains in every one of us individually all different in our personalities but he works in you and me to endeavour to keep that unity to love one another to have patience one with another to bear with one another but above all to love one another what to love them look at all their thoughts now to love them and overlook their thoughts

I once had a deep lesson a very deep lesson before I went out to preach as a deacon I was sitting in the back of the chapel and I criticised that one and that one and that one and I finished up by criticising every one of them and I was in darkness and I thought wretched man this is where the trouble is and I went out and I had a week of darkness I couldn't read the scriptures I couldn't pray I was sad I couldn't feel to have the Lord's face but his frown on the coming Sunday was first Sunday and I was to pass the emblems round a large congregation and I looked at them and I thought they were all fair my love there is no spot in them I looked at the ones I criticised last week and they were lovely in God's sight and in my sight and I was very humbled and restored and blessed this is true lowliness of mind and meekness long suffering forbearing one another in love this is the spirit's work and it's an endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and so pray avoid criticising one another criticising sacred things even the things that perhaps we don't always agree with avoid criticising them they don't it doesn't profit it doesn't help you it doesn't make for unity find find what you can of the

[ 20 : 24 ] Lord's blessing on the people to rejoice in to encourage them in their circumstances encourage them to pray and to press on this is endeavouring to keep the unity for Satan will break it if he can and destroy it with his venom but oh endeavour to keep the unity in the bond of peace and this beautiful truth there's one body and one spirit even as you're called in one hope of your calling your calling is to be a member of Christ's mystical body to be a member of his church on earth and to be brought into the fellowship of that body there's one body one faith and one baptism there's only one till we're all brought says the apostle in this latter part of the chapter into the unity of the body of Christ if I can just put my mind upon it no I can't but till we're all brought into the unity of the faith into one body many make different understandings of that but there's no misunderstanding is there till we're all brought into the unity of the faith believing in Christ worshipping

God in Christ blessing God for the redemption that is in Christ one body one spirit even as we are called in one hope of our calling and the hope of our calling is that we've been called to see our sinful state we've been called out of darkness into his marvelous light we've been called from Satan's power to the power of God we've been called to receive the forgiveness of sins and to know an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified think of it the unity of the faith think of the exercise of faith think of the principle of faith that God has given to us that has an object not a wishy washy not a aimless but living principle of faith that has for its object the Lord himself God through our

Lord Jesus Christ who has made peace by the blood of his cross oh but some might say these are deep things I don't understand them but go back to your calling that inward calling when you saw your darkness and long to be made light and to know God's mercy how did the Lord deal with you why he took the sacred page to you it wasn't sacred to you it didn't mean much you heard it read it perhaps never meant much but now through the principle of faith in divine calling it is the sacred page what it reveals it reveals to your soul what it teaches it teaches you what it condemns it condemns you what it confirms it confirms you and so faith has an object in looking unto Jesus he is the author of our faith he is the perfecter of it and the finisher of it and a child of God in their walking from darkness to light being transformed by the spirit will ever be looking unto

Jesus the author and finisher of our faith we will be looking with different eyes we will be looking to him as the savior we will be looking to him as the lord and king of grace we will be looking to him as god sees him as god reveals him as he is the son of god and what a blessed light from time to time in our early days is shed upon the sacred page now you believe it now when you question it you pray in that question and pray to have that question put out of question out of question Jesus said to his disciple ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free children of the light you are called to a freedom not to do as you wish not a freedom to sin or live carelessly but you are called from bondage to liberty do you know the contrast the soul in bondage to sin's guilt to satan's power to the law that condemns to sinai that condemns do you know the bondage of guilt upon your soul guilt unforgiven the fear that you may not be a child of

God that your poor faith may not be the right faith that you may not be accepted of God nor accepted in the beloved oh the many aspects of the bondage which we are unto by the Satan and by the law and when we read that the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ the law that seems so holy and just so right so condemning that law is leading us by the blessed spirit to look to Christ and here's the fulfilling end of the law for he has fulfilled it for his people and suffered its death and curse faith looks to an object and as the scriptures are open and your understanding is open why then you see things in a different light you see by faith and that increases your hope in God and in eternal life you know we read in this chapter if I can turn my eye upon it yes I can we read of those and the apostle exhorts them and testify in the

[ 26 : 44 ] Lord that she henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk here's the contrast in the vanity of their minds you say oh I don't want to walk that way in the vanity of their mind I did but I don't now I don't want to be some great one I don't want to be praised for what I am I don't want to walk in the vanity of my own mind it's imagination where it takes me I don't want to walk in the vanity others can but we pray for them oh we pray God will bring them down as he's brought us but child of God you don't want to walk in the vanity of your minds do you as other Gentiles feel free to walk and seem to walk at large and seem to get away with everything no says the apostle they have the understanding darkened they are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts and such were some of us and go on who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness well that's the world isn't it that's the world in us if we were left to ourselves but ye have not so learned

Christ beautiful expression the contrast isn't it that you can sit there and say no I've not learned Christ like that Jesus Christ is a holy way Jesus Christ is a humble way Jesus Christ is the only way the true way I've not learned Christ like that to allow me to sin and carelessly forsake God I've so learned Christ to sit at his dear feet to become as a little child and childlike in my way and manner being converted to become as a little child that's how we've learned Christ haven't we we've learned that Christ is gracious Christ is loving is full of compassion that Christ demands that we follow him obey him and witness for him who bore so much for us he constrains us by his love to follow him in love that's how we've learned

Christ haven't we if so be that you've heard him oh but through the sacred scriptures we've heard him through the preaching of the gospel when ministers are made the ministers of God to us we've heard him and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus believer you know that the truth is in Jesus God has revealed him to be the truth God revealed in the truth in the flesh God manifests the contrast between the children of the day and the children of the night the contrast of their portion to be with the Lord or forever apart where God can never come but unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ part of the meekness of a child of

God is not to envy others I have many brethren that I esteem highly for the Lord's sake and I am not ashamed to commend them to others in the fellowship I am not ashamed to praise them for the love I feel for them it doesn't make them proud because they are humble in God's sight but the natural mind says I don't want to praise anybody it's belittling me to praise somebody else it's putting them above me let's be quiet about it let's not let's rather envy them rather than esteem them no my friend that isn't right that isn't right that's a mark of pride isn't it the mark of this lowliness and meekness walking in Christ is to esteem others where we can esteem them as a right esteem of those that love the Lord and serve the Lord in any office in the church of God that are worthy of that esteem woe be to them if they take it and become proud and lords over God's heritage that's sad but oh how happy when men that fear the Lord are held in the right regard and their word is regarded their example is regarded and God is blessed for them and for their example as they follow the Lord and some you know follow the

Lord far better than you and I do some are found more at the throne of grace than we are some are more spiritually minded more than we are some love the Lord more than we do some follow him more closely some live more nearly to him there's plenty of room for envy if we've got an envious spirit but love us brethren never be afraid to rightly esteem those that God esteems that are esteemed in the church for there's always a Judas there's always one who is a hypocrite who loves to pray like the Pharisee to see it be seen of men says Jesus oh they have their reward they have it now they're satisfied with the praise of men even though God frowns upon them they're hypocrites but oh the happiness when we can dwell in one another this unity of the spirit we have gifts differing but oh to feel that what gifts the

[ 32 : 50 ] Lord gives us we can rightly use ah but says one this sister might say well I can't do much now I'm so old and so weak but oh but can't she pray she says perhaps I can't pray but pray you must and pray you will pray as best you can and the poor broken prayers of the aged and the Lord's people are very dear in his sight but you that have grace oh these gracious gifts in measure they're given by God for you to glorify him in his church gifts are differing gifts according to the measure of the gift of Christ but oh that we should be slovenly oh that we should pray against these things that we should not bury these talents in the earth that we should not say Lord hear thine take them I was afraid oh that we might hear those words well done good and faithful servant this is the true walk but if I walk in that way shan't

I earn salvation no no we're not looking for salvation in a humble and God honoring walk are we that's the fruit of salvation sovereign blessings to our souls that's the fruit of righteousness and true holiness walk as children of the light said Jesus walk while you have the light with you can the bridegroom fast children of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them the day cometh when he would be taken away now my friends I think I've said enough on these things to give you some thoughts but these are the fundamental truths of the gospel they're not just my meditations or thoughts we are fundamentalists we cleave to the scriptures and here in this chapter we are found in today are the principles of godliness god manifest in the flesh descending from heaven and ascending to heaven and the argument here that he that descended is also ascended up into heaven we've read these things and there is the foundation of our faith not our faith as our interpretation of it but the scriptural understanding of god given faith now I'm going to close with this last swap if you can think of these contrasts and say well I can bless god like that the pharisee said I bless god that I'm not as other men are or even as this publican

I give these things I fast now that man was praying with himself but if you know these contrasts can you bless god take comfort today that you once were in darkness and how great was that darkness of ignorance of sin and unbelief and how great did it appear when the eyes of your understanding were opened to see the light in his light to see the truth as it is in Jesus how you received it how it humbled you how it refreshed you how it drew you and drew you to the lord in prayer and in faith to believe what god has revealed and what god has spoken to sinners for your encouragement to encourage you to pray on and to hope in his mercy and to rejoice in his salvation oh the blessedness of these contra I hope that by these things you may know your election of god for says the apostle seek to know your election of god for if you do these things you shall never fall and we won't do these things for salvation but in salvation we shall want to walk humbly with their god and humbly in the church and endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit and may the lord be honoured in these contrast

I pondered this morning I've had to leave it I almost brought that as a text before you one thing I know that whereas I was blind now I see can you say it bless god if you can say it there's one thing if I know more than anything else I know one thing whereas I was spiritually blind and in death and darkness now I see I see god I see the lord I see his dear son I see the savior and by grace I am looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of my faith who for the joy set before him and let us rejoice in this humbled himself became obedient even to the death of the cross whereby god has highly exalted him given him a name that is above every name believer rejoice in this god has given him a name above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow they will they will bless god that you are called to bow the knee humbly to own humbly to obey and follow and serve the lord Jesus Christ this table is for sinners this table is for those who love the lord who are loved by the lord of whom the lord said this do in remembrance of me as often as you do it you show my death you discern its nature and you show my death you honour me this is a remembrance ah but it's more than that in the remembrance is a repentance and in the repentance is a renewing and who doesn't want renewing we all do we want the renewing of our mind we want the renewing of our faith and hope and love we want the renewing of that resolve to take unto us the whole armour of god the apostle speaks of that we've been singing of tonight and having done all not only to walk because in walking you come against opposition sometimes don't you obstacles in the spiritual walk you'll come against Satan you'll come against worldly minded men but having done all the armour of god to stand fast there's no armour for the back there is no turning for the back unless you want to be wounded and wounded to death the lord gives that armour and gives that grace so that we don't turn back knowing that all our armour is god given armour the sword of the spirit the helmet of salvation the shield of faith the lord give us to know these things more amen god wide oh yeah remove the to do this treasure of ■■■■■■ ■■■ised fear a tribute do son even a