

# Walking With The King

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Recently someone asked me a practical question on how does one go deeper with God in a more vital walk with him? That's the topic of our message today, friends, because I firmly believe that the most important aspect of the Christian life is our personal walk with God, our walk with the King of kings. Our passage today is found in the book of Psalms. You can turn in your Bibles there now to Psalm 24. I want us to examine the why, who, the what and where of walking with the King and we will apply the how of this as well, the practical how-to of developing a daily regular quiet time with our Lord. I have entitled this message "Walking With The King" and that is seen in our passage today. It's found in Psalm 24. I will read that to us now, here now is the word of God.

1 The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. 3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. 6 This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah. 7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. 8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. 10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.

I want to draw out several aspects from our passage here as they pertain to a close walk with God. Notice first, friends, that this Psalm of David begins with the declarations that the subject of the Psalm is none other than the Creator of the universe. In the first two verses, we are confronted with an exalted view of God, his majesty, his sovereignty, his authority. It says the earth is the Lord's for he has founded it, he established it. We are not dealing with a mortal man here but with an eternal and sovereign King. The question asked, "Who is this King? Who is the King of glory?" Why, it's none other than Lord of hosts. So this first aspect of our walk with God is this: we are entering into the presence of a King; we are not on his level; we're not his equal; we must humble ourselves before him and who does God look upon? Who does he have fellowship with? Our answer is

found in Isaiah 57:15, which declares, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

God dwells with broken people, who are broken over their sins, broken-hearted over the sins of the land, broken and contrite in spirit. God will resist the proud. God will dwell with the humble and contrite. Now let me say this before we proceed friends, there is such a thing as false humility and this is a great danger. I've known men of ministry who possess this false humility and it's obnoxious to me and even more obnoxious to a holy God who demands true contrition through humility before him. Before you can have a close walk with God, you must be stripped of all your spiritual pride. The divine pruning knife in the Master's hand must do its work, friend. You must be willing to submit to that pruning knife if you desire a more abundant life because Jesus declared in John 15, "I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that bears not fruit he taketh away and every branch that beareth fruit, he pruneth it that it may bring forth more fruit." Well, what does that mean? It means this: it is the pruned branch that bears the most fruit.

Let me ask you, friend: do you desire a closer walk with God? Do you? Then you must be willing to submit to the pruning knife in your life. Every every year of your life must be placed under the spotlight of the Holy Spirit and examined. Anything he says to get rid of, you must get rid of it, friend. Anything in your home that is displeasing to God. Anything in your private life that grieves the Holy Spirit must be nailed to the cross in a life of surrender. Do you believe that we live in the day of great antinomianism, which simply means "against the law"? We have today in our churches some of the most lawless individuals who ever claimed the name of Christ. We believe today in the sin in religion, but Jesus Christ never taught the sin of religion. God is holy, God demands holiness from his followers.

Now I have a fight on my hands with that one. Some of you don't like that, you want your ticket to heaven and you still want to hug your sins, but if you believe that friend, you are greatly deceived Amos 3:3 declares, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" Let me ask you another question: can you have a close walk with God and be in rebellion to him? Can you have an intimate love relationship with a marriage partner and be unfaithful to them with another? All spiritual harlotry must be done away with. You cannot walk with God and go your own way as well. This is seen clearly in our next verse which states, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?" This answers the "who" aspect of our passage and the answer is found in the next verse, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." This is a picture of the cross beam. We have the first aspect of this cross, our dealings with others, and this is the horizontal beam in that cross. Are our hands clean in our dealings with men? Do we possess an unforgiven heart towards someone? Do we have bitterness towards another? All this must be dealt with, friends, if you want to go further with God. Have we told a lie to someone? Have we deceived someone? Listen friends, our hands must be clean in our dealings with others if

we want a close walk with the King. You must not harbor any resentment towards someone but bring it all to the cross and nail it there. The crucified life is the only life, friend. The Christian life is lived via the cross, so this horizontal aspect of that crossbeam, to gain access to God and ascend his holy hill.

Now let us examine this other aspect which comprises this vertical beam of the cross, a pure heart. This speaks of our relationship to God and this is where the rubber meets the road, friend. You cannot expect to go one inch further in a walk with God if you have unconfessed sin in your life. If there is an area in your life which is displeasing to God and you refuse to part with it, then you cannot go further with him. For years I have disciplined men in my home. I've done this for at least two decades now and I have seen this time and time again, where a man is willing to only go so far with God and no further and I say this sadly. I've seen some men whom I have disciplined draw back from going deeper with God because they refuse to part with their precious sins and they fell into great apostasy. Two men I'm thinking of right now are both now divorced because of unfaithfulness with other women. Let me say this, friends, and let me say this cautiously, if you don't remember a single word I say from this message other than this, then remember this: God will get serious with those who get serious with him. How bad do you want a close walk with God? That is the question you must deal with, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" God is holy and he will not tolerate sin. Now that may stop some you from going deeper with God, but I hope that there is perhaps even just one person in the sound of my voice, who is willing to forsake all and enter a deep intimate walk with our Lord Jesus. Now I say "Lord Jesus" because he is Lord. If he is not your Lord, friend, then you must examine your position to him because God will have no rebels in his kingdom.

So we have this crossbeam of the vertical and the horizontal of both clean hands in our dealings with men and a pure heart in our walk with God, they form a cross. Let me say this, friends: there are many religions who will gather at the foot of the cross and be content there, but true Christianity gets up on the cross and stays there. We have a crucified Savior and he has crucified followers. Now, some of you don't believe that but it's true. What passes for religion in the West today, friends, is an antithesis of what's found in my Bible.

Now let us proceed with our exposition of Psalm 24. Our next first declares the "what" aspect of our passage. What does the person receive who ascends the hill of the Lord? Our text says he shall receive a blessing from the Lord. The benefit of a close walk with God is blessing that your life will be transformed, friend. When Jesus was here in his earthly ministry, when he passed into towns and villages, those who encountered him experienced change. Do you want change? Do you? Then there is a sacrifice involved and that sacrifice is you. God wants you, all of you. He gave you all of him when he shared his precious blood on that bloody cross for you, friend. He held nothing back on Calvary. How can you claim to be his follower and still hold something back from him? Christ surrendered himself to that cross, you must surrender, friend, to him. Of all the men and women in the history of the church who have done great things for God and whom God did great things through them, all of them lived lives of surrender. Now some

of you don't want to come up to that lick-log, it's just too much for you, you'll pull back, but if you want to go deeper with God in a close walk with a King, then you must lose your life, friend, you can't hang onto it, not one skinny inch, for he who loses his life shall find it.

We have seen the "who" and the "what" aspect of the daily quiet time, now let's look at the "why" and "where" aspect and we will wrap things up with the "how-to" aspect as well. The "why" aspect is this: why should we desire a deeper walk with God? I will give you two reasons: number one, a greater usefulness to him. We will be more greatly used in our generation to reach the lost for Christ. Do you desire greater usefulness? Then go deeper with God, friend. And number two, when we live in a close walk with God and he is using us and we are bearing fruit for him, we bring him glory. John 15 declares, "Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit." When we are walking in a close intimate relationship with God, then he will receive glory from that and what is the chief end of man? To glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

Now let's get to the "how-to" aspect of the daily quiet time. My late mentor, Dr. Stephen F. Olford, was the one who taught me how to have a daily effective quiet time. He demonstrated the importance of it by his holy life and his power in the pulpit and Dr. Olford wrote a little booklet called "Man in the Morning" and if you can obtain it, I promise you it will be most beneficial to you because it shows you how to set up a daily quiet time in your life. Let me share a story with you from my personal life. I'd been in a conference where God was there and I was on a mountaintop the whole week and when it ended a few days later, I went back to my office and what usually comes after a mountaintop experience, a valley. I hit a valley of despair because I sinned. I felt terrible that I had sinned after spending such a lofty time with God all week and as I drove home, I was brokenhearted and I asked God how could that have happened? How could I have fallen into sin so quickly after such an experience with him? This is what he said to me in that small still voice, it was as if he said, "You've been living on past portions of me. You must come to me each day for a fresh portion." Then I pictured the Israelites in the wilderness and the manna. When they tried to store it for the next day, it bred worms and and stank. The manna was for that day only. God was showing me that I was living even for a short time on past experiences of him and I fell because of that. I needed to come to him every day in a fresh encounter in a vital quiet time with him, experiencing a fresh portion of him.

That leads us into the "how-to" aspect of a regular daily quiet time. What counts costs and what costs counts, friend. There must be a sacrifice if you want to go deeper with God,. You must be willing to turn off your TV, to spend less time on your sports and entertainments if you truly want to get serious with him. If you have a best friend, how did you get to know you that best friend? Well, by spending time with that person. Well, how can you get to know God without spending quality time with him in a vital love relationship to him, through Bible study and prayer? Let me ask you another question: what is one way you can have more time with him? Early rising. We have examples from Scripture. Psalm 5:3, declares, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." King David had a close

walk with God because he was an early riser and he gave God the first part of his day and so it is true with our Lord as well as seen from Mark's gospel in Mark 1:35, which reveals a peek into the prayer life of Jesus, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."

Let me ask you, friends: if Jesus didn't sleep in, how can you get up when you want to and still expect to do great things for God? Some men I know pray in the wee small hours of the morning, between midnight and two or between two and three. Leonard Ravenhill who was greatly used of God, used to have his quiet time with God between 2 and 4 AM and then he'd take a brief nap before he got up for the day. He did this even as an old man, but the point is this, if we desire a closer walk with God, then we must die to flesh and spend more time with him. Oh and regarding Leonard Ravenhill, my good friend, Al W. used to be his close aide. Al shared with me the following story, he said he was walking Ravenhill to the car and it was when Leonard Ravenhill was old and frail and he was holding onto his arm as he walked him to the car. Al told me that as he was holding onto Ravenhill's arm, it was like holding onto a volcano.

Do you desire power from on high? Then get on your knees and get your Bible. Give up your entertainments. Crucify your flesh and get serious with God, friend, and he will get serious with you. I got rid of my TV. Now, you might think I'm odd that I don't watch TV. I wouldn't be a very charming dinner companion because I couldn't talk with you about "Dancing with the Stars" or any of that other nonsense. I used to like watching the cooking channel and I liked playing golf, both of them went to the wayside when I decided to go deeper with God. Now how bad do you want God? How bad do you desire a greater usefulness to God in your generation? Then get serious with God and he will get serious with you. Are you serious? Then seek him. John Wesley and George Whitefield shook Great Britain for God, then Whitfield came to America and God shook America under his mighty preaching. Both Wesley and Whitefield rose at 4 AM every day of their lives until they died. E. M. Bounds was a master in prayer. If you read his books on prayer, they still have a heavenly fragrance to them. E. M. Bounds rose at 4 AM and prayed three hours, even when he was a frail old man.

How about you, what costs count and what counts costs. How bad do you want a close walk with God? It's up to you, friend, but let me close this message with this: if you don't pursue him as you should, what will you say to him on that day when he reviews your life? How will you answer him then? I will leave you with the following surging passage of Scripture as you contemplate walking with the King. "And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"