

Where are your footsteps leading you?

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Sermon by Pastor Diana J. Perkins

Life is a journey and our days are numbered by the Lord. The gift of life is given to us and with it the responsibility to utilize our talents, our gifts in order to bring honor and glory to God is attached to it. The choices that we make during our lifetime that show love for God and love to his people are what will determine the rewards of our labor . A Quaker missionary named Etienne de Grellet wrote a quote that I have often heard and thought about. It goes like this:

“I shall pass this way but once; any good that I can do or any kindness I can show to any human being; let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it for I shall not pass this way again.”

We walk through life and sometimes the path gets rocky, narrow, and dangerous. We lose our way and need assistance to get back on the right track. God in his mercy sends human (angels) to guide us, bring comfort to us, sometimes doing a small deed such a drink of cold water when we are thirsty, to give relief to the faint.

There are Scriptures that speak about walking and today I would like to share some of them with you and perhaps as you meditate on them, you will understand God’s plan for you a bit clearer.

In Isaiah 30:18- you will find verses concerning the character of God towards his people. The Lord desires to reveal his kindness and pity towards his people. He always does what is right and he blesses those who trust in him. The prophet tells the people that their crying days are over once the Lord hears them for he will answer. The Lord has given them portions of sorrow and trouble to drink, but at this time the Lord will reveal himself to his people and he will guide them. Whether they turn to the right or to the left they will hear a voice saying, “This is the road! Walk in it!” The people will then treat their gold and silver idols as garbage and will throw them away as filthy rags.

Psalms 1 gives a contrast between people who walks with God versus those who reject his counsel. “Blessed are the men that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. Rather the law of the Lord makes them happy and they think about it day and night. They are like trees planted beside a stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves. Those people succeed in everything they do. This is not true of those who choose to do evil for they are like straw blown by the wind. Sinners will have no excuse on judgment day and they will have no place with the people of God. The Lord protects those who walk with him but the wicked follow a road that leads to ruin.

John wrote how happy he was to hear reports that those that he had ministered to and labored with was walking in the truth. 3 John 3-4.

In Colossians 2:6, it reads like this: “You have accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord. Now keep walking with him. Plant your roots in Christ and let him be the foundation for your life. Be strong in your faith, just as you were taught and be grateful. Don’t let anyone fool you by using senseless arguments. These arguments may sound wise, but they are only human teachings. They come from the powers of this world and not from Christ.”

Colossians 2: 20-23: You died with Christ. Now the forces of the universe don’t have any power over you. Why do you live as if you had to obey such rules as “Don’t handle this. Don’t taste that. Don’t touch this.” After these things are used they are no longer good for anything. So why be bothered with the rules that humans have made up. Obeying these rules may seem to be the smart thing to do. They appear to make you love God more and to be more humble and to have control over your body. But they don’t really have any power over our desires.

Jeremiah, the prophet wrote in chapter 6:16, “The LORD told his people that when they stood at the crossroads, to ask for the ancient paths, ask where they were and walk in it and they would find rest for their soul.” But they refused. He also sent prophets to warn his people about the dangers that would come their way and when the alarm was sounded the people paid no attention to the warning. People who ignore God and reject his law will suffer consequences. We must search the Scriptures and examine ourselves to make sure that we are on the right path walking in the right direction.

King David said that he hid the word of God in his heart so he could avoid sinning against God. The Scriptures are the only map that leads to eternal life. No other book has the key to the road to eternal life.

Galatians 5:16 tells us to walk in the spirit and we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the natural desires war against the spirit, but if you are led by the spirit you are not under the law. You will be able to overcome the desires of the natural man.

In Romans 7, Paul spoke about his own struggle to overcome the natural desires of his flesh. He realized that he could not win the battle by himself and he called himself a wretched man (see verse 24). However he thanked God through Jesus Christ our Lord that through his renewed mind he served the law of God but the natural man will succumb to the law of sin. We must have a renewed mind and allow the Holy Spirit to dwell within us in order to gain the victory over sin.

Romans 8:6 tells us to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Minds that are ruled by our desires fight against God because they do not and cannot obey God’s laws. If we follow our desires, we cannot please God.

Those who have God’s spirit are no longer ruled by their desires for his spirit that indwells them will guide them. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.

In 1 John 1:6-8 it tells us that if we say that we have fellowship with God and we walk in darkness, that we are lying and do not tell the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us

from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.

There are times that troubles come our way and the hardships of events cause our hearts to break. Plans get interrupted, the things that we had faith in fall through and we are tempted to give up on people, life and even in God.

In Luke 24:13 there is a story of two disciples that were in that situation. They had believed that Jesus was the Messiah and that he had come to set up his kingdom. Yet at the height of his ministry, Judas had betrayed him and he had been tried illegally and sentenced to be crucified. It had been three days since the terrible tragedy and the disciples were walking home the seven miles from Jerusalem back home to Emmaus. They were talking and thinking about the events of the past week and all of a sudden a man came near and began to walk with them. It was Jesus but they didn't recognize him and he asked them what they were talking about as they walked along.

The two of them stood there looking sad and downhearted. Then one named Cleopas asked Jesus, "Are you the only person from Jerusalem who didn't know what was happening these last few days?"

"What do you mean?" Jesus asked.

They answered, "Those things that happened to Jesus of Nazareth. He showed by what he said and did that he was a powerful prophet who pleased God and all the people. Then the chief priests and our leaders had him arrested and sentenced to die on a cross. We had hoped that he would be the one to set Israel free! But it has been 3 days since all of this happened. They continued by telling Jesus about the women who surprised them by the news that Jesus had risen from the dead and was alive. They had told stories of seeing an empty tomb and angels giving them instructions to tell the disciples that Jesus was alive. They finished their story by saying that some disciples went to the tomb, and didn't find Jesus' body there either.

Then Jesus asked the two men why they didn't understand and how come they were so slow to believe all that the Old Testament prophets foretold about the coming Messiah. Jesus went on to explain the Scriptures beginning with Moses and the Books of the Prophets. When the three of them came near to the village where the men would enter their house, Jesus seemed to be leaving them and going farther on. They begged him to stay with them for it was already late and the sun was going down. Jesus went into the house with them. After Jesus sat down to eat he took some bread, blessed it and broke it. Then he gave it to them and they knew who he was but he disappeared from their presence. They said to each other, "When he walked and talked with us along the road, explaining the Scriptures didn't it warm our hearts?" They then arose and hurried back to Jerusalem and found the 11 disciples and others gathered together. They learned from them that the Lord was indeed alive and had appeared to Peter. The two men told the story of how they recognized Jesus when he blessed and broke the bread at their table.

**There is a song that says, “Standing somewhere in the shadows you’ll find Jesus. He’s the only one who cares and understands.” Stay on the right path and He will walk with you!
How Beautiful to Walk in the Steps of our Savior (Hymn)**

- 1. Trying to walk in the steps of the Savior
Trying to follow our Savior and King;
Shaping our lives by His blessed example,
Happy, how happy, the songs that we bring.**
 - ***Refrain:***
**How beautiful to walk in the steps of the Savior,
Stepping in the light, stepping in the light,
How beautiful to walk in the steps of the Savior,
Led in paths of light.**
- 2. Pressing more closely to Him Who is leading,
When we are tempted to turn from the way;
Trusting the arm that is strong to defend us,
Happy, how happy, our praises each day.**
- 3. Walking in footsteps of gentle forbearance,
Footsteps of faithfulness, mercy, and love,
Looking to Him for the grace freely promised,
Happy, how happy, our journey above.**
- 4. Trying to walk in the steps of the Savior,
Upward, still upward, we follow our Guide;
When we shall see Him, “the King in His beauty,”
Happy, how happy, our place at His side.**

There is a beautiful old song that we have sung at this church. Bonnie Madore use to sing it with her grandfather. It is called “Trust and Obey.”

**When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way;
While we do His good will,
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.**

**Trust and obey,
For there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus,
But to trust and obey.**

**Not a shadow can rise,
Not a cloud in the skies,
But His smile quickly drives it away;
Not a doubt or a fear,
Not a sigh or a tear,
Can abide while we trust and obey.**

**3 Not a burden we bear,
Not a sorrow we share,
But our toil He doth richly repay;
Not a grief or a loss,
Not a frown or a cross,
But is blest if we trust and obey.**

**4 But we never can prove
The delights of His love,
Until all on the altar we lay;
For the favor He shows,
And the joy He bestows,
Are for them who will trust and obey.**

**5 Then in fellowship sweet
We will sit at His feet,
Or we'll walk by His side in the way;
What He says we will do;
Where He sends, we will go,
Never fear, only trust and obey.**

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