

The WALK

2 of 4 | Walk in his WAY

SLIDE 1 Introduction

We are in a four-part series this month covering our walk with the Lord. Last Sunday I shared our need to walk in his WORD. Today I will share about walking in his WAY. Next Sunday we will cover walking in his WISDOM. On our final Sunday I will share about walking in his WEALTH.

Let's dig into today's message about walking in his WAY.

SLIDE 2 Walk in his WAY

Like I mentioned last Sunday, the early church was called The Way. This comes from Paul's testimony in the book of Acts before Felix after he was arrested in the Temple.

Paul said:

SLIDE 3 Acts 24:14-16 (NIV) *"However, I admit that I worship the God of our ancestors as a follower of **The Way**, which they [the religious leaders] call a sect."*

So we can see that even in the beginning of the church, before it became separated from Judaism, the church was known as *The Way*. They lived differently. Acts chapter 2 speaks of some of the ways of the early disciples of *The Way*.

Verse 42 speaks of the devotion to discipleship and their intense fellowship. Verse 43 speaks of mighty signs and wonders being done among them. Verse 44 speaks of them sharing all they had together. Verse 46 and 47 tells us they met together everyday and in their homes as their community grew daily. *The Way* had a powerful effect on the city.

SLIDE 4 The WAY of the LORD

So what is the WAY that the early church walked in? Why is it important for us to do the same? Let's look briefly at what the Bible tells us about the way of the Lord.

The first time the way of the Lord is mentioned in the Bible is when God refers to the father of our faith, Abraham, in the book of Genesis.

It's the account of when Abraham notices the three angels walking towards Sodom and Gomorrah. As they got up from lunch, Abraham walked with them. Then the Lord said this to the messengers:

SLIDE 5 Genesis 18:17-19 (KJV) *"¹⁷ Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; ¹⁸ Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the*

nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?"

SLIDE 6 *"¹⁹ For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall **keep the way of the Lord**, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."*

They told Abraham what they were going to do to Sodom and Gomorrah. So Abraham engaged them as they walked and discussed the righteousness of God, in that he would not destroy the righteous with the wicked.

We are told that Abraham would teach his descendants to *"keep the way of the Lord."* So even in the very beginning of our covenant relationship with God it was recognized that God has certain ways [manners of living] that his followers should *"keep"* [live by].

This way of life is what Paul was referring to before Governor Felix. Each of us also needs to recognize the expectations God has placed on us about how we should live in fellowship with him, with one another, and with those in this world.

SIDE NOTE: One reason we fail to recognize this is because we have not fully separated ourselves in our identity from those who are saved and those who are not. We are not of this world. Our heritage is of God who has given us birth through the gospel.

SLIDE 7 God Needs to See Proof

The next occurrence of this phrase is in the book of Judges. Here we are shown how even the enemies of the Lord are used to further his ways. God left some enemies in the Promised Land to prove whether the Israelites would *"keep"* his ways or not. In Judges chapter 2 we read the purpose of enemies in our lives:

SLIDE 8 Judges 2:22 (KJV) *"That through them [the enemies of the Lord] I may prove Israel, whether they will **keep the way of the Lord** to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not."*

If you have been born of God, if you have been delivered by God, if God has fought for you, then will you not live as he has called you to live? As our Sunday School Theme states:

SLIDE 9 *Learning to Live the Life.*

If you are sincere in your efforts to live in a way that pleases God, then you will get into his Word and learn what is expected of you. The great things about this is that you will become what you are and not cling to what you once were. You will be made

new.

Paul said this to the church at Ephesus:

SLIDE 10 Ephesians 4:22, 23 (NIV) *"²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to **put off your old self**, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to **be made new in the attitude of your minds**; ²⁴ and to **put on the new self**, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."*

Adopting the proper identity in your mind is a crucial part of living the new life we have in Christ. Don't identify with the old person you were. Study the Word and learn about the new person you are created to be.

It would be like getting a new operating system for your computer then complaining that it didn't operate like the old one. Of course not. You have to learn the new one! You have to renew your mind to the ways of God.

Chapter 4 of Ephesians is a great instruction manual for living the new life that is in Christ. In it Paul urges you to *"live a life worthy of the calling you have received."*

There are over a dozen more times the Bible refers to *"the way of the Lord."* I'll only have time for a few, but they will not be directed as much as to what they are, as to how living in them are not can affect us.

SLIDE 11 Forsaking the WAY

In 2nd Kings it speaks of a king named Amon, the son of Manasseh, an evil king. In chapter 21 it says this about him:

SLIDE 12 2nd Kings 21:21, 22 (KJV) *"²¹ And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them: ²² And he forsook the Lord God of his fathers, **and walked not in the way of the Lord.**"*

We can do immeasurable harm to ourselves by choosing the way of those around us, rather than the way of the Lord. Therefore it is imperative that we maintain the fellowship we have with others who are walking in the ways of the Lord. That's what church is all about. It's not just about a couple of hours on Sunday, but its about sharing our lives and holding ourselves accountable to one another. We need teaching, discipleship, and correction. Sometimes we even need a rebuke. It tests your humility.

SLIDE 13 Proverbs 10:29 (KJV) ***"The way of the Lord is strength to the upright: But destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity."***

Again this is a *larger-than-you-know* topic in the Bible. It would do you well to study it. I could do several teaching series on it. Two of the prophets that dive into it are Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Jeremiah accused the poor and foolish of not knowing the ways of the Lord, until he couldn't find it among the wise and learned either. Ezekiel had to deal with the fact that his modern society was saying that the ways of the Lord were not "equal." Meaning that God was not just and that his ways were cruel.

We too deal with the fact that many who profess to believe in Jesus have not known the ways of the Lord nor walked in them. God needs us to set the example of his ways in our society today. And yes, even in the church.

Finally, in the New Testament, right before the unveiling of the Messiah, there was a man named John who had a purpose declared on him by the prophet Isaiah many years before (Isaiah 40:3). He was called:

SLIDE 14 Mark 1:3 (KJV) *"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye **the way of the Lord**, make his paths straight."*

SLIDE 15 Altar Time

Again, I have not covered a list of the ways of the Lord. I have just stated two things: 1) They are the way we are to live as children of God and 2) they have an affect on all we do in this life (not to mention our relationship with the Lord).

If you want to get on the fast track in learning God's way, it has a name: *The Way of Love*. The Bible teaches us to walk in love. This is only stated one place in the entire Bible:

SLIDE 16 Ephesians 5:2 (KJV) *"**Walk in love**, as Christ also hath loved us, and has given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."*

And this way of love is outlined in 1st Corinthians 13.

Next Sunday I will be speaking about walking in his WISDOM.

Until Then:

SLIDE 17 Psalm 37:34 (NIV) *"**Hope in the Lord and keep his way**. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are destroyed, you will see it."*