

# Walking Worthy of God

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[ 0 : 00 ] 1 Thessalonians chapter 2 we read at verse 12 that ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

That ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. Now the context of this particular verse 12 obviously it's not just the whole of chapter 2 where we have Paul describing the situation in which they first came to Thessalonica.

Which we'll come to in just a minute as we'll look at it from Acts 17 but also we see in verse 9 onwards for example. Ye remember brethren our labour and travail.

In other words the hard work. Labour implies hardship in bearing. What you are enduring. Travail is hardship in doing. It's been a hard slog breaking through with the gospel in Thessalonica.

For labouring night and day because we would not be chargeable unto any of you. We preached unto you the gospel of God your witnesses and God also how wholly and justly and unglameably we behaved ourselves among you that believed.

[ 1 : 09 ] Now the implication is that in the previous verse verse 9 he's been talking about how they laboured with their own hands. So that nobody could say they were just trying to sort of bludge off the Thessalonian believers.

And just trying to be freeloaders on them. And so they worked earning their own bread. Earning their own money. Night and day they were toiling either in the gospel or in their ordinary profession. As we know Paul was a tent maker by profession. And that was part of their witness to those who were without. Those who were not believers. Who hadn't yet received the gospel. How they endured hardship.

Hardship. It was hardship in bearing. And hardship in doing. Labouring night and day. And we preached unto you the gospel of God. Your witnesses and God also.

You see what happened in the outside. God sees the nature of our hearts. How wholly and justly. There's a distinction here. Wholly implies how we conducted ourselves toward God.

[ 2 : 05 ] Our relationship to the Lord. Our set apartness to Him. Our faithfulness to Him. God is a witness. How wholly. In other words towards God. And justly towards men.

Our walk towards those outside. Whether believers or unbelievers. How wholly and justly. And unblamably. In other words with ourselves. We're not sinless.

But just as if you think of what it says at the beginning of Luke's account of the gospel. Chapter 1 verse 6. Where it says with Zacharias and Elizabeth. How they served the Lord. And kept the commandments of the Lord blameless.

Wasn't it? They were sinless. They never did a thing wrong. But rather they could not be. Pointed the finger at. Nobody could hold them to account. Say oh look you broke that commandment. You broke this one.

They were blameless. In terms of their faithfulness. To the Lord and His commands. So here we are. Your witnesses how wholly and justly. And unblamably. We behaved ourselves among you that believe.

[ 3 : 04 ] You Christians. You Thessalonian believers. Can see the consistency of our walk. Likewise towards those who are without. Verse 9. And those who are believers.

Verse 10. And you know how we exhorted you. And comforted and charged every one of you as a father. Godless children. As the original would imply.

His own children. That he would walk worthy of God. Who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. In other words. They're not only teaching them. Do as I say. Do as I do.

They're living by example. And the Thessalonians themselves. Had suffered much. For the gospel's sake. We know they'd suffered. They'd suffered a great deal.

On account of. Of all the persecution they endured. But the apostles themselves. Had suffered a lot. If we're. You know. To go back to Acts 14.

[ 3 : 59 ] If we see how. Verse 22. You know. They went from Lystra. And Iconium. And Antioch. Confirming the souls of the disciples. And exhorting them to continue in the faith.

That we must through much tribulation. Enter into the kingdom of God. Okay. That's fine. Great words. But what was the context of that? That was after Paul just having been stoned half to death. In Lystra and Derby. In verse 19 of Acts 14. There came further certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium. Who persuaded the people. Having stoned Paul. Drew him out of the city.

Supposing he had been dead. Howbeit as the disciples stood round about him. He rose up and came into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas the Derby.

It was in Lystra that he was stoned. And when they had preached the gospel. To that city. And had taught many. They returned again to Lystra. Where they had tried to stone to death. And to Iconium. And Antioch.

[ 4 : 55 ] Confirming the souls of the disciples. And exhorting them. To continue in the faith. And that we must through much tribulation. Enter into the kingdom of God. So the apostles themselves had endured a great deal.

You know. Being stoned half to death. In the case of Paul. All that they had endured. When bringing the gospel. To these parts of what is now Turkey. And so they. The Thessalonians.

Because they know what it is to be suffering like this. They stand in need of both comfort. And encouragement. Because we know from 1 Thessalonians.

That they are suffering. First of all persecution. We see at verse 14. Ye brethren became followers of the churches of God. Which in Judea. And in Christ Jesus. For ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen.

Even as they have of the Jews. Who both killed the Lord Jesus. And their own prophets. And have persecuted us. And they please not God in our country to all men. Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles.

[ 5 : 56 ] So that's what the Jews did to Paul. And Barnabas and others. And this is what the Thessalonian unbelievers. Are seeking to do to the Thessalonian Christians. So they are suffering persecution.

They have also suffered the deaths of friends. Possibly by martyrdom. Chapter 4 verse 13. I would not have you to be ignorant brethren.

Concerning them which are asleep. That you sorrow not. Even as others which have no hope. So he is right into a situation. Where clearly there is some anxiety.

Amongst the Thessalonian believers. Who think what happens about those who are dead. You know if the Lord comes back. And they have already died. Have they missed the boat. Is it too late for them. Is it only us who remain.

And this is where we get this wonderful passage. At the end of 1 Thessalonians 4. And then on into chapter 5. And so on. Because they are concerned. Because some of their number have died.

[ 6 : 49 ] They might have died of natural causes. But the implication. The context implied. That at least some of them. Have been martyred. So they are in need of exhortation.

And comfort. Verse 11. Now the sense here of having exhorted them. In that sense. Is that you know. Encouraging them to do something willingly.

Exhorting them to walk this way of righteousness. And to comfort them implies. Encouraging them to do it joyfully. And we charge you solemnly. That's the implication of having charge.

If there's a seriousness about it. Every one of you is a father with his children. That you would walk worthy of God. And there's a need for this. Their walk has to be consistent.

It has to be faithful. They can't afford to let their guard down for a moment. Why? Because they are constantly under the pressure. Which began almost the moment the gospel came to Thessalonica.

[ 7 : 48 ] Let's turn back for a moment. To Acts chapter 17. Where we find the gospel first coming there. Remember as Paul said. How they were shamefully intrigued at Philippi. That's in Acts 16.

Where they were scourged. Despite being Roman citizens. Then you've got the conversion of the Philippian jailer. And so on. Then in Acts 17. When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia.

They came to Thessalonica. Where was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul as his manner was. Went in unto them on three Sabbath days. Reasoned with them out of the scriptures.

Notice he's not just trying to tell them his own opinions. He's using the Old Testament scriptures to point to Christ. This is what the Old Testament scriptures do. They point to the Lord Jesus Christ. The fulfilment of the scriptures. He reasoned with them out of the scriptures. Opening. And alleging. That Christ must needs have suffered. And risen again from the dead.

[ 8 : 43 ] And that this Jesus whom I preach unto you. Is Christ. You see this is the point he's seeking to get across. He doesn't have to convince the Jews. That the scriptures point to the Messiah. What he is having to convince them all.

Is to show that all these things. Are now being fulfilled. And that Christ the Messiah. Had to suffer these things. In the way that Jesus of Nazareth did. And that this Jesus.

Whom I preach unto you. Is Christ. That's the thing he has to get across. And it's like he's showing them. Look the scripture says this. And this is what happened with Jesus. The scripture says that. And this is what Jesus fulfilled. Scripture says this. And this is what Jesus is. Each time he shows. The gaps are being plugged. And the prophecies fulfilled. And everything is coming together.

In the person of Jesus of Nazareth. That's the point he has to get across. Not that there's going to be a Messiah. Someday. Sometime in the future. The Jews technically accepted that.

[ 9 : 39 ] Their scriptures pointed to that. But to show that the scriptures. Were now fulfilled. In Jesus. The son of God. That is the point he's making. That this Jesus. Whom I preach unto you.

Is Christ. And some of them believed. And consorted with Paul and Silas. And of the devout Greeks. A great multitude. And of the chief women. Not a few. But the Jews. Which believed not. Moved with envy. Took unto them. Certain viewed fellows. Of the base of sort. And gathered a company. And said all the city. In an uproar. And assaulted the house of Jason. Presumably where the apostles were saved.

And sought to bring them out. To the people. And when they found them not. They drew Jason. And certain brethren. Unto the rulers of the city. Crying. His famous phrase. These that have turned the world.

Upside down. Are come hither also. Whom Jason hath received. And these all do. Contrary to the decrees of Caesar. Saying that there's another king. One Jesus.

[ 10 : 36 ] To that extent. They're right. That Jesus requires to be the highest loyalty. That we have. Higher than Caesar. Higher than the queen. In our own country. Or the parliaments. Or anything like that.

Our first loyalty. Is to the Lord Jesus Christ. The king and head of the church. The king and head of our lives. There is another king. One Jesus. These that have turned the world upside down.

This was the effect of the gospel. Whenever it came. It challenged. It challenged. The powers that be. It challenged. The forces of the establishment. It brought. A new way.

A completely new kind of kingdom. As Paul wrote to the Romans. You know. Chapter 1. Verse 16. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God. Unto salvation.

To everyone that believeth. To the Jew first. And also to the Greek. It is explosive. In other words. It is these that have turned the world upside down. I'll come hither also.

[ 11 : 32 ] That's the power with which the gospel exploded. Into Thessalonica. And because of that. There was a reaction against it. And so all those who were believers in Thessalonica.

Were from day one. Under the pressure. Of this reaction. And this is why he's saying. You know how we exhort it. Exhorting. It's encouraging someone to do something.

Willingly. And comfort it. In other words. Encouraging them to do it. Joyfully. And charged.

Solemnly. Every one of you. As a father doth his children.

What is the thing they're being exhorted. And comforted. And charged to do. That you would walk. Worthy of God. Who hath called you. Unto his kingdom.

And glory. In other words. This is a life changing. New life. To which you've been born. Born again. As it were. It's described as a life.

[ 12 : 27 ] If we think in terms of the. The acts of the apostles. If we go back to. I think it's chapter 5. At verse 20. Where after the apostles. Are released from prison. The angel of the Lord.

By night. Opened the prison doors. Brought them forth. And said. Go stand. And speak in the temple. To the people. All the words. Of this life. It is a new life.

In such a way. As all that went before. Wasn't really life. We begin our life. When we begin it in Christ. That's one reason. It's called. Being born again. That you would walk.



and as it began to walk maybe you needed to hold its arms to begin with to help it along maybe it went unaided maybe it surprised you would have like a toddler by itself but it begins to walk but obviously a toddler that is just beginning to walk is not going to be able to walk the same as somebody who's been walking around with their own two legs for 20 years so it's a progress it's an ongoing thing it is a pleasant kingdom into which we enter as we walk worthy of god or strive to walk worthy of god but also it is a future kingdom to which he calls us its consummation lying beyond the ramparts of of this world we see that it is this kind of kingdom to which the lord calls his people second thessalonians if we turn a couple of pages chapter one verse five which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of god that he may be counted worthy of the kingdom of god for which he also suffer it's not just your relationship with christ here but it is also the kingdom of god which is yet to be consummated yet to be fulfilled turn a couple more pages second um chapter four verse 18 paul again looking towards his fulfillment of the kingdom of god the lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom to whom be glory forever and ever the glory is god's and because it is his kingdom and he fills it it is a kingdom filled with glory to which we are called and if we are going to be in the presence of

the lord we can't bring all our baggage and all our old pet sins with us we have to choose we have to decide are we going to hold on to our favorite sins are we going to let them go and go to this glorious new kingdom because if we're going to enter this kingdom of god and we're going to begin this walk with and continuing it then purity is going to be called for in this kingdom of god if we turn back a little ephesians chapter 5 verse 5 this ye know that no whoremonger nor unclean person nor covetous man who is an idolater have any inheritance in the kingdom of christ and of god you can't go on in these things and still inherit god's kingdom turn back a couple more pages galatians chapter 5 verse 21 talking about the works of the flesh envies murders drunkenness revelings and such like all the which i tell you before as i have also told you in time past that they which do that is persist in such things shall not inherit the kingdom of god inherit the kingdom of god the kingdom of god is incompatible with ongoing sin but it is not incompatible with those who are themselves sinners with a pass of such things first corinthians chapter 6 verses 9 and 10 know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of god be not deceived neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor effeminates nor abusers of themselves with mankind nor thieves nor covenants nor drunkards nor revilers nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of god and such were some of you but ye are washed but ye are sanctified but ye are justified in the name of the lord jesus and by the spirit of our god you see the distinction here in ephesians and galatians and so on he's talking about the ongoing practice of such things in corinthians he's talking about yes all these things it'll keep you out of the kingdom of god and this is what you guys were like or many of you or some of you were like but you've turned from these sins you've repented of these sins you've been washed in the blood of christ you've been cleansed and washed of all these sins there is nothing there is no sin no crime no atrocity that cannot be washed clean by the blood of christ it doesn't matter what somebody has done the blood of christ potentially if we put our trust in him cleanseth us from all sin and that goes as well for some of the most appalling war criminals we can imagine some of the greatest atrocities that have been committed against civilians or whatever and whether in time of war or simply times of persecution those who have conducted such things those who are delighted in such things if they turn and repent in the name of jesus christ their sins their past their their atrocities can all be washed away no matter what may be our levels of depravity there is nothing that the blood of christ cannot atone for such were some of you says paul and corinth remember was an absolute sin bin and there there would be the worst kinds of depravity and perversion and many of the corinthian christians used to be involved in such were some of you but you are washed but you are cleansed but you're renewed so you put it behind you he has called you unto his kingdom and glory and he's called you knowing what a sinner you are knowing what kind of things that you have done but it is precisely such sinners who glorify god by being turned from their sin by the power of christ and washed in the blood of christ and made new in the spirit of christ that ye would walk worthy of god who have called you unto his kingdom and glory that kingdom begins now just as the walk of the little toddler begins now but it will go on all the way through their life and likewise the kingdom of god begins now as we embrace it but it is a future consummation we are then called upon to walk worthy of the god who hath called you now notice of course as in walk now some translations put you know live uh are worthy of god and that's what it means yes you you live uh and one day at a time you you walk uh this way in this

this manner of life well that's what it means but i think walk is a good translation because it implies progress day by day by day we progress through life we are not static and even if we try to remain static let's say you said right i'm going to sit in my armchair and i'm going to sit there when the sun comes up i'm going to stay there i'm not going to move and the whole day is the light gets light outside and then it gets dark again i'm still staying rooted to this armchair i'm not going out i'm not moving i'm not doing a thing i was letting the day pass me by well you might think okay so i haven't actually made any progress i've stayed still but you have because another day on the calendar has passed and another day in your life has been luke that may be how you chose to live that day but it has been luke it is as though somebody has plomped your armchair on one of these like moving conveyor belts you've got at the airports and some of these big places glasgow edinburgh and so on where you stand and then the little conveyor belt moves and it takes you along so far along these massive long wings of the uh the airport and so on you stand still and then the floor moves with you you can try and walk backwards or you can even try and walk in the same direction and go a little bit faster but even if you stand still it will move with or without you and even if you stay rooted to your armchair and draw the curtains and shut the windows and say i'm just going to stay here all day i'm not going to move and when i make time stand still it's not going to stand still we are going to progress day by day however we choose to live it whatever we choose to do so this idea of walking is i would suggest to you a good and worthy translation here because it is progress we are to live one day at a time but we're not to stay static we are to move we have to walk and notice it's walk not run you know if we say oh you're not and walk before you can run you can only walk one day at a time you only live one day at a time and we all know of course you know if they all run but you won't get there any faster because you'll get out of breath more soon we we all know the equivalent of course in in terms of motoring you know there's always people have kind of way up the store and when they come screaming past you on the streets around bends that you wouldn't dare overtake on on and then you think oh they'll be miles ahead and yet sure enough when you reach the cab of fray there you are still black and craft and there you are just two cars ahead of you and they haven't got any faster by all this overtaking or all this screaming ahead and so on and even if you happen to be the one who's overtaking car after car after car you'll find just as you're stuck and drunk there they are trumbling up your back and they arrive at just exactly the same time pretty much as you do we can't make ourselves get to the kingdom faster we shouldn't concentrate rather on gotta get there oh gotta get out i want to get to heaven quicker you won't get to heaven any quicker by running for this we would walk worthy of god what we should concentrate on is the manner of our walk walk worthy of the god who has called you

unto his kingdom and glory walking and going in the hebrew of the old testament of course the word for going is the same as the word for walking it implies movement it implies progress it implies that there is an ongoing progression that he would walk worthy of god who has called you or is calling you unto his kingdom and glory there is an ongoing progress we are to walk worthy and we are to be like him how in the world can you be like god well if you think in terms of course of um we talked in galatians in chapter 5 here about the the works of the flesh and all the things that that will keep you out of the kingdom of god paul as you know then goes on to talk in chapter 5 verse 22 galatians the fruit of the spirit the fruit of the spirit is love joy peace long-suffering gentleness goodness faith meekness temperance against such there is no law but these things rather than expression their fulfillment of god's law of love if we would be like him then we must spend more time with him in his company in his word in his house with his people the more we immerse ourselves in certain kinds of company the more we become like them if for example let's say in your younger days of working life or whatever you happen to be around work colleagues who were punctuating every sentence with profane or foul language then the likelihood is that you would begin to do so as well if you're in a part of the country where people spoke with a particular accent then it is likely that if you spent a long time immersed in their accent and manner of speaking when you came home again you would sign to the people in your own home like your accent reflected or you don't think it does but it would begin to do so because we begin to reflect those with whom we spend time and in whose company we immerse ourselves if we would become more like god more like christ then it follows we must spend time in his company and this is why we say you cannot rush the kingdom of god you cannot run into the kingdom of god but rather that you would walk worthy of god how will we know that we are worthy of god we'll never in a sense in ourselves be worthy of god but christ is worthy and if we as it were plugged into him connected to him one with him united to him by faith then we will gradually become more like him paul used the analogy remember of the the wild olive plant that had

been as it were grafted into the natural olive branch and bound you know the branch bound in together what happens when you begin to do that well the sap from the one will begin to flow into the other and it will naturally bind itself in with a little additional help to begin with it will bind itself in it will feed from the root of the ordinary the initial olive plant as we are bound into christ it becomes his spirit that begins to flow in us his standards his teaching his commands which begin to become normative for us the more closely we are bound with christ the more time we spend in his company the more deeply we immerse ourselves in the word in the things of christ in the company of his people the more we will become like him it is a natural rather i should say a supernatural progress as you progress in the things of the

lord as you progress toward his kingdom and glory you become more like him as you go further along the road as you see more of it opening up before you you become more acquainted with it you become more as it were naturalized to it if somebody um let's say i was to try immigrate to france and i i took out french citizenship doesn't mean i'll be able to speak french or anything like that or be good at it let's say i went through all the progress uh and filled in all the forms and so on and became brother stamp french citizen i would be a very different kind of french citizen from somebody who had been uh naturalized since 50 years previously they would be very naturalized they'd have imbibed all the culture their language they would speak like a native somebody who had been born there would be even more naturalized now of course we are not the children of god by nature we are the children of god by adoption and by grace our citizenship although it is in heaven it is that we are immigrants in a sense to heaven we are not by nature we're not naturally born our citizenship is there we're only in the sense born there when we're born again but we become more like the lord and masters of that kingdom as we progress toward it first john chapter 3 verse 2 as you know beloved now are we the sons of god and it does not yet appear what we shall be but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is in second corinthians chapter 3 verse 18 we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the lord it is a gradual day by day process how many days have you lived in your life well you could calculate it of course you could remember the date of your birth you could calculate how many days a year how many years you've lived how many thousands of days have so far passed you could speculate as to how many you might be left with but the greatest and best and noblest use and most profitable use to which you could apply any days that are left to you is to walk worthy of god who have called you he has done it in the past and is calling you present tense into his kingdom and glory he doesn't just want you to claw along and continue as though it was all like this fallen earth it's a glory to which he calls us and he desires us to walk worthy of that glory and you won't get there in a rush you can't speed ahead you can't run you walk worthy of god gradually day by day as you spend your time with the lord in his presence in his word with his people you will become more like him you will become more acclimatized to the kingdom of god you will take on as it were the accent and language of the kingdom of god you will become more like him we shall see him as he is we shall be like him we shall be changed as we behold him with the eye of faith from glory into glory that ye would walk and keep on walking until he says your journey here is over because you are ripened for glory and ready to be brought into my kingdom that

[ 36 : 25 ] ye would walk until that day worthy of god who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory it is the sad of day it is that in which the lord did so much of his healing if ever there was a time for those who have been sick or lame or unable to make progress finally to take up our bed and walk it is now let us pray