

Walking in the Ways of the Lord

Graham Nelson – LMC – 18/01/2026

- Good morning and a belated happy new year.
- Over the break I've read several books; one of them left me with an interesting challenge for the year which I would like to now pass onto you.
- The challenge sounds simple, but in reality, it isn't, as it goes against our default, which is, self on the throne.
- **The** challenge is **"Walking in the Ways of the Lord"**
- Matt 6:33 says:

Matthew 6:33 ... seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

- And Isaiah 55:6 says:

Isaiah 55:6 Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near.

- Obviously, we all know that God wants us to seek Him first so that we might know what He wants us to do.
- It sounds easy when it's said, however it's one thing to "know God's ways", and a very different thing to "walk in His ways".
- There are two levels of knowing God.
 - We can know Him from past experiences, acts He has done, and "the way" He has already worked in our life, or we can know Him by being aware of, and understanding His nature and ways,
 - If we walk according to past experiences, we often end up creating "Ishmaels" (explain) however the second way reveals what work or activity He wants us to do now, which is often very different to the last time we enquired.
- God being who He is has given us a choice. We can either live life without any reference to Him, or as Jeremiah 6:16 puts it:

Jeremiah 6:16 *"Stand by the roads, and look, and ask ... where the good way is; and walk in it and find rest for your souls.*

- Isaiah 55:8-9 says:

Isaiah 55:8-9 *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

- A way leads to a destination and as Deuteronomy 30:19 says we have a choice regarding "the way" or the destination we choose.

Deuteronomy 30:19 *.... I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life, that you and your children may live.*

- To enjoy this promise for both us and our children, requires us having an intimate understanding of the nature and character of God, and then wanting to live our lives, on a daily basis, in obedience to "the way" He shows us.
- Jeremiah 7:23 tells us how we can ensure the outcome of our choices.

Jeremiah 7:23 *But this command I gave them: 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.*

- John the Baptist fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3 by being the voice of the new things to come and by preparing "the way" for the Lord.
- Then Jesus Himself taught and modelled for us how to walk in "the way" of the Lord".

Mark 12:14 *"They came to Him and said, 'Teacher, we know You are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because You pay no attention to who they are; but You teach "the way" of God in accordance with the truth..."*

- That is why the early followers of Jesus were known as "The Way" (or "the road")

- “The way”, Jesus followers, pointed to the new lifestyle and paths to God as initiated and modelled by Jesus, they were seen by outsiders as a Jewish sect, which often led to persecution.
- “The way” signified a way of life centered on following Jesus' teachings, distinct from a mere law driven, works based religion,

John 14:6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

- “The ways” of God are far more than the acts of God.
- The “ways” of God are much deeper and are much more impacting than resting on or trying to replicate the previous deeds of God.
- “The ways” of God are intimately connected with His nature - His character - His behavior - all of which are on His terms and in His way, often resulting in new experiences.
- That was the point being made by Isaiah when he said God’s ways and thoughts are much higher than ours.
- We may not fully understand His ways; however, He really does want us to walk in them.
- We are not to limit Him to the thoughts and ways we think He should act.
- Instead, we should be enquiring/seeking Him for His perspective and “the ways” He wants us to walk.

Psalms 81:13-16 *Oh, that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways! I would soon subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes. Those who hate the Lord would cringe toward him, and their fate would last forever. But he would feed you with the finest of the wheat, and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.”*

- These are extraordinary promises, but, as with most of God’s promises, they are all dependent or conditional on us adopting and learning to trust in God and walk in His ways.

- I repeat again what I said at the start, God’s children in the Old Testament had intimate knowledge of the “acts of God” and yet were still told to walk in all “the ways” which the Lord had commanded them.
- God really wants us to know Him and His ways, which can only come by having an intimate relationship with Him, and seeking Him with an undivided heart.
- God is inviting us to a different or higher way of thinking.
- As Paul says in Romans 12:2

Romans 12:2 *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

- We are to determine our priorities and then make our decisions and judgments through knowing His Ways, which we will find in both His Word and by seeking Him.
- This is why we need to be constantly seeking God or enquiring of God first in all things before we act.
- Walking in “the ways” of the Lord on a daily basis:
 - Removes anxiety
 - Releases Divine strategy
 - Releases His direction
 - Releases His protection
 - Releases His provision – on His terms and in His timing
 - Releases His overcoming in our lives
 - Releases New Ways, ways that we have never gone before.
- There are literally hundreds of references to “the ways” of the Lord throughout Scripture, I have chosen a few to look so that we will appreciate how important it is for us to seek God’s ways in our daily walk.

- Remember God's Ways are intimately connected to His Nature and His Character, and that is what we are to be pursuing.

Deuteronomy 32:4 *"He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He".*

Psalms 25:4-5 *"Show me Your ways, O Lord, teach me Your paths (ways); guide me in Your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in You all day long".*

Psalms 25:9-10 *"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way. All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of the covenant".*

Psalms 37:34 *"Wait for the Lord and keep His way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you will see it".*

Psalms 128:1 *"Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in His ways" (fruitfulness, blessings and prosperity will be the result).*

Proverbs 3:5-7 *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil".*

Proverbs 10:29 *"The way of the Lord is a refuge for the righteous, but it is the ruin of those who do evil" (this is because it violates His character).*

Isaiah 2:3 *"Many peoples will come and say, "Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths".*

Hosea 14:9 *"Who is wise? He will realize these things. Who is discerning? He will understand them. The ways of the Lord are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them".*

Hebrews 3:10 *"That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, "Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known My ways".*

- As I have already stated, there is a huge difference between observing God's past actions and understanding His ways going forward.
- Remember, "God's ways aren't ours, and His thoughts are so much higher.
- As they were about to cross over Jordon into the promised land God told Joshua, that they had not been this way before and that "the way" it worked in the wilderness was finished and they had to do it differently, so it is with us.
- If we are going to see "greater works" than Jesus performed, we have to seek God to find out what He wants us to do now.
- One of the things God wants us to learn to do is to enquire of Him before acting.
- This ensures that we do not simply return to the 'old comfortable ways' which may no longer be relevant.
- Inquiring of God requires our spending time in His Word, becoming sensitive to His voice rather than the voice of opinion and human reason and approval.

Psalms 20:7 *Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.*

- If our trust is in the Lord, then we need to know that He has the knowledge of the direction and information that we require.
- We are not to default to our own strength or alternative sources.
- Knowing and understanding "the ways" of the Lord determines His paths and direction for us – and often it will not be what we might have chosen ourselves.
- So, the challenge I want to leave you with this morning is:
- Are you willing to seek and inquire of God for "His way" which I am sure will open up "new things" that He wants to do in and through you this year.

- The key for the Early Church and still for us today, is seeking God and as we do the promises in Matthew 7:7-8 become ours.

Matthew 7:7-8 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened".

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