

Where Our Feet Are Taking Us

Text: Romans 10:9-18

An old minister of the Word said, "If you want to know who you are, watch your feet, because where your feet take you, that is who you are." In 1967 I would leave the house in Lakeland, FL in the morning, take a right, heading north and walk down Johnson Avenue, then take a right on Palmetto Street, then another right on Hollingsworth Road and arrive at Lakeland Senior High School, because I was a student. On any given Sunday morning, evening and Wednesday evening now, I walk out the door of the Pastoral Suite, take a right down the hallway, then walk through the double doors leading into our worship center and across the platform to the pulpit, because I am a preacher. After parking the car at our home in Spring, my feet will take me to the kitchen table or a large chair in the den adjacent to my wife's chair where she sits, because I am a husband. I find that my feet often take me to a playground these days because I am a grandfather. It's a simple, yet profound truth, where our feet take us reveals who we are.

It was at this time of the year, fifty-two years ago, God was dealing very strongly with me about preaching the Gospel and spending the rest of my life ministering the Word of God. I was 18 years old. A previous couple of years in my teen-age life I was far from being anchored in my Christian experience. I was tempted on every hand. At my most rebellious moments, I could come home at night and find my dress shoes on my bed. And sometimes they were a wee bit damp. I did not know the rest of the story until after I gave my all to Christ and surrendered to preach. My mom would take my shoes out of my closet and place them on my bed and then pray over my shoes, with tears, asking the Lord to bring me back to Himself and she told the Lord she would be honored if He would place me in the ministry. As she wept over my shoes, she claimed the verse Romans 10:15: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" It was a mystery as to why I would find my shoes on my bed like this. Although I suspected it was something my mother was up to, I never asked her why she was doing this. On the morning after I surrendered to preach, she explained it to me.

The question I have for you this morning is: Where are your feet taking you? In the introduction to *The Shepherd of the Hills*, Harold Bell Wright wrote, "In the hills of life there are two trails. One lies along the higher sunlit fields where those who journey see afar, and the light lingers even when the sun is down; and one leads to the lower ground, where those who travel, as they go, look always over their shoulders with eyes of dread, and gloomy shadows gather long before the day is done." Let's examine some Bible characters and see where their feet took them.

I. THE TRANSCENDENT PATH

Genesis 5:24: "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

Hebrews 11:5: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Few activities in life are more pleasing to God than prayer. A missionary in Africa was blessed to have won most of the men in the village to Christ. The men of the village soon developed a regimen of early morning prayer. The missionary could see the well-worn paths that would lead to their individual places of prayer. When the missionary's pastor visited from The States, he told him, "I can always tell when my men are backsliding, when the well-worn paths begin to show signs of grass growing on their paths."

II. THE FAITH PATH

Genesis 17:1: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."

God told Abraham in Genesis 13:17: "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

Galatians 3:29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Let us therefore be encouraged to "...also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham..." (Romans 4:12b). II Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

III. THE VICTORY PATH

Joshua 6:3-5: "And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him."

After walking around the city of Jericho according to God's designation for six days and seven times on the seventh day, the walls fell and victory was Israel's. This is when faith turns to victory, i.e., after we obey the Lord, no matter how strange it may seem. I John 5:4: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

IV. THE OBEDIENT PATH

Hebrews 5:8: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

Matthew 16:21: "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Peter tried to talk the Lord out of going to Jerusalem and the Lord severely rebuked Peter for even suggesting this. Luke 12:50: "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Peter was told

that to suggest such a thing as avoiding the cross was an alignment with Satan. Later Peter was able to record these words of inspiration in I Peter 2:21: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

Psalm 44:18: "Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way." Psalm 119:133: "Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Psalm 37:31: "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide."

John 16:33: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Even though following Jesus requires temporary tribulation, we become overcomers as we walk in obedience.

Conclusion:

1. We don't have the ability to choose the right path without God's help.

Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

2. Pray for guidance.

Psalm 32:8: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

3. God's love for His children overcompensates our failures.

Psalm 37:23, 24: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand."

Proverbs 16:9: "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps."

-Pastor Pope-