

LET'S GO FOR A WALK!

Joe Slater

Walking takes you from point A to point B, and it's good exercise. Good lighting helps to keep us safe as we walk. A walk in darkness invites injury or death!

Scripture depicts our manner of life as a walk and encourages us to walk in the light. Jesus said, *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life"* (John 8:12). As we conduct ourselves according to Jesus' teachings, we have confidence we will reach our eternal destination safely. By contrast, *"he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going"* (John 12:35).

Since Jesus said He is the light of the world, we are not surprised to read in 1 John 1:5 that *"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."* God's very nature is infinite righteousness and knowledge; He has not the faintest hint of the darkness of ignorance and sin. To have fellowship with our Heavenly Father and with Jesus Christ, His Son, we must live by the words of Christ.

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth" (1 John 1:6). Yes, it takes more than an empty claim! *"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin"* (1:7).

One crucial aspect "walking in the light" is our love for each other. *"He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes"* (1 John 2:10-11).

Are you walking in the light?

Be Still

I did not see much of the recent World Cup soccer tournament, but one play that I did see really impressed me. One of the teams had been awarded a free kick from a few yards outside the penalty area. The player who took the kick aimed it perfectly and an important goal was scored.

His kick was impressive, but something else impressed me more. Two of his teammates stood perfectly still while this was happening. That was their job; and they did it. These two players, who were not given any credit by the announcers, were performing an important role. They were blocking the view of the goalie, and delaying his reaction, by standing still.

Normally, when the ball is kicked, everyone goes into motion. Thus the goalie knows that the ball has been kicked, even if he cannot see the ball right away. Normally, the goalie can tell the general direction of the ball by the way everyone reacts. But these two stood perfectly still, and I think that this had an effect on the outcome. It is not often that a soccer player contributes to his team by standing still; but it does happen.

The game is not all about shooting goals and making passes. Once in a while, it is about standing still. The ones who stood still were not named in the newspaper accounts, but they helped their team.

There are all kinds of jobs that need to be done in the church as well. Some of them are very noticeable. Others are hardly ever noticed. But all of them are important to the success of our efforts. Preaching and song leading are generally noticed. Speaking a kind and friendly word to a visitor may not be noticed. Cleaning the building may not be noticed. Preparing the communion may not be noticed. Setting an example of faith by continuing without complaint in the midst of trials may not be noticed. But all of these contribute to the Lord's glory.

Whatever your task, be it one that will be noticed or one that will not be noticed, do it *"heartily, as for the Lord and not for men"* (Col 3:23). *"Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices"* (Psalm 37:7, ESV) *"Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!"* (Psalm 46:10, ESV).

--Thayer Silasbury (Toledo, OH)

Things Aren't Always What They Seem

"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24NASB).

When I was a very small child I thought I saw my grandpa crossing the street. Since grandpa almost always gave me a nickel, I ran up and grabbed his coat tail and asked him for a nickel. After all, the ice cream parlor was just a few doors away. Oops! It wasn't grandpa.

When I was young, my father-in-law told my wife (his daughter) that he saw me driving in Nashville and that I had another woman in the car. All was well when I explained that I had not even been in Nashville.

After going through the cafeteria line at the AFB in Sembach, Germany, I sat down at my table and took a big swallow of good cold milk. Oops again. I hate buttermilk!

These are just a few of the many times, in my life, where things were not as they seemed. But I'm not alone. We have all been there. And, there are some biblical accounts as well.

Jacob mourned for many years because it seemed that his son, Joseph, was dead. Hanna was accused of drunkenness, by Eli, as she prayed in the temple. In my case, it was due to mistakes. With Jacob it was because of a lie. Eli's judgment was based on mere appearance.

All of the above illustrations were false ideas which "seemed to be," but were not, in fact, truth.

Things are not always what they seem

**"When you're forming your opinions,
Do it carefully - go slow;
Hasty judgments oft are followed
By regretting - that I know."** - Anonymous.

As Christians we should make every possible effort, even giving the benefit of the doubt, to insure that we are correct in what we think we know to be truth.

--Roy Allen Crutcher (Mt. Carmel, IL)