**Part A**

If you recall last week we saw how the first human being ever born became the first terrorist. Cain murdered his brother Abel out of jealousy and his own sense of insecurity before God, and was defiant and defensive when confronted about it. He took a wife, had children, and it seems that they were as wicked as he was. Yes, they were impressive innovators. They created new technology, efficiencies in the economy, and beautiful arts, but they also invented polygamy and glorified violence and murder.

This was a new point in human history. Before this point, all mankind was one. But after Cain’s murder and unrepentance, mankind was now divided into believers and unbelievers. Faithful and unfaithful. All mankind was corrupted, but some humans dealt with their corruption by embracing it, while others dealt with this corruption by turning to God.

**This is the written account of Adam’s line. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them “man.” When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.** This verse makes it clear that a dramatic shift has happened in humankind. Mankind was created in God’s image. But mankind fell into sin. They lost their holiness and righteousness. And when Seth was born, he is very clearly in Adam’s image, in Adam’s likeness, not God’s.

It can be painful to see your kids repeating your own mistakes. Sometimes I might catch one my girls picking on their little brother. They might say something and I think, “how could they say something like that? How could they be so irresponsible? Don’t they understand that is their little brother. He’s not as mature as them. He can’t handle their teasing. He gets tired of being picked on all the time…” then I think back to when I was their age. And I remember how I used to pick on my little brother. I remember one time I broke his finger fighting at a door. Another time I played a joke on him that really embarrassed him in front of his friends. And it’s painful. I know where they get it. From me. Mankind was made in the image of God. But we lost that image. Yet in Christ, it is restored. Jesus takes away our sin and clothes us in his righteousness, like Adam and Eve were at the beginning.

The rest o f this chapter is incredibly repetitive, and we will not read the whole thing. One commentator calls it the death bell chapter of the Bible. We see two things. First, we see how death finally comes to the human beings as a delayed result of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Nearly every description in this chapter ends in the words, “And he died.” Death came to this earth.

**After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died. When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh. And after he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.**

Many of us in this congregation are dealing with life-threatening diseases. It is not bad to remember where this comes from. Death is the result of sin in this world. Thanks be to God that he rescues us from sin and death. But even so, this first reading presents a somewhat bleak picture. There will be a bright ray of hope in our second reading, but first let’s read responsively the Psalm of the day.

**Part B**

Ok, now we have skipped several generations forward. Generation comes and goes, and dies. People lived a long time, and no one really knows why. My theory is that their genes were better. Again, my personal theory is that all humans and probably most animals who live today would seem highly inbred compared to the original humans and animals. But that is just my speculation, I could be missing something.

Yet after a few generations, there is a man who stands out. And in so few words God gives us one of the most biographies in the Bible:

**When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.**

This is where I want to spend most of our time this morning. God did something so extraordinary with Enoch we cannot really even describe it. God simply removed him from life on earth and took him to be with himself. It is not clear what this means, but most people assume that something like Elijah later, he was taken up to heaven.

Wow. How in the world do you get to that point? What a guy Enoch must have been! What amazing faith he must have had. He must have done a lot of really impressive things. I bet that there was a lot about his faith that I could learn from. And so you might expect that a person of such high status and dignity would have a lengthy description explaining what he was like and what made his faith so special. But instead we only get a three word description of what was so spectacular about his faith. Enoch “walked with God.” That’s it.

Wow. It is that simple. Don’t we all walk with God? Yeah… God is always with us. I think the good news is that God walks with us. But the truth is, God walks with us even when we forget to walk with him. What is the picture here? In Hebrew, the word for walk is not the normal word. It is a slightly unusual form of the word walk that has more the sense of “walking back and forth.” In other words, wherever he goes, whatever he does, God is with him and he is with God. He draws on God for his strength. He prays to God when he has trouble, he thanks God when things go well. He confesses his sins to God right away and seeks God’s help in fleeing temptation. He looks to God’s counsel for guidance, he puts his only hope in receiving God’s blessing and reward. He walks with God every step of the way.

The good news is, Jesus always walks with you. Jesus is our shepherd. We are like sheep. We often run astray. But the thing that made Enoch such a powerful testimony is that he treated God more like a traveling companion. I’m sure he was sinful like all of us are, but God also brought Enoch to a place of remarkable spiritual maturity.

How can we get there? How can we learn to walk with God?

Well this weekend we had the Men’s Wilderness Survival, and in fact there are still 6 men still out there. And Casey taught us something that I think can help us learn to walk more closely with God. Casey works as an **Air Force Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape Specialists**. They prepare people for if their plane crashes somewhere around the world. They teach them to survive in the wild, to escape the enemy who might be looking for them, and finally to contact the US and get back home. It’s so cool. Do you think that is exciting?

Did you know that is pretty close to the Christian life as well? We are living in enemy territory. Our enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. He wants to kill you. He wants to ruin your faith. He wants to lead you into sin. He wants to mess up your relationships. And he’s got an entire sinful world, and he knows just the kind of things that appeal to our sinful natures that we inherited from Adam and Eve. Remember, he’s been doing this a long time, and we humans are really not so different.

When Casey described the people he is training for wilderness survival, he described them as people in danger of “isolating.” In other words, when they crash, they are all alone. They are isolated. And they need to survive. We are in danger of isolating. We are in danger of being pinned down by the enemy. We need to walk with God every step and draw on God’s strength to avoid being captured or killed. But how can we walk with God like that?

Well, in the SERE program, they say you have **five elements every person needs when they face the danger of isolation.** Here they are (I am going to expand more in the sermon when I preach live. I will just have bullet points written). He says that you need to do a periodic check of all these elements to see if you are doing well and on the path to surviving. I think we can use the as a way to ask, how closely and I walking with God?

**Nourishment**. You need food and water. You need to know what actually nourishes you, what might be easy to pick, but not that good for you, and what looks good but can kill you. And you have to know where to find it and how to get it. Spiritually, we need God’s word. This is how God guides us and communicates with us. God does not communicate with us through our feelings. Since our culture is obsessed with feelings, it is worth repeating. Getting in touch with some inner voice is not the same thing as getting in touch with God. God speaks to us through his Word. He forgives our sin, encourages us to live godly lives, and guides us in the way we should live through his word. And he also feeds us with the Lord’s supper, which gives us the peace we need to keep living in this sinful, hostile world.

**Protection**: You need to be protected from the rain, from the cold, and from enemy attackers. You have to learn to hide yourself. You have to learn to build a shelter. Spiritually, we have to learn to avoid temptation. Stay away from ungodly influences. A lot of this happens when we join together with other Christians. If you a young person, and you are the only Christian going to a non-Christian party, you are wide open for attack. If you are relying on yourself instead of on God for strength, you are going to be overpowered.

**Health**: If you get sick all alone in the woods, you are in deep trouble. You need enough sleep. Proper nourishment helps. You also need to be able to treat illnesses. Spiritually, what are the marks of a healthy Christian? When I read the gospels, the two things that come to mind are humility and faith. If you find yourself doubting or afraid all the time, it is a sign your faith is weak. You need a prescription of reviewing God’s promises. He will take care of you no matter what. You have a home in heaven waiting for you. Humility is another barometer of health.

**Communication**: If you get stuck in the woods, you have to have your radio. It’s the only way you can tell people where you are. If that gets broken, you are in trouble. But there is hope. Even if you fall behind enemy lines, there might be someone who is friendly to the Americans. Perhaps they can communicate through their networks where you are and relay a message that way.

It’s hard to claim you are walking with God if you are only talking to him a few times a week. Talking with God is a constant activity. Hearing his word is important, but so is praying to him as an exercise of your faith and a chance to apply his promises to your specific situation.

**Travel**: If you are in a place with little nourishment or protection, or a place with no communication, or you find your health is at risk, or it will be hard for rescuers to find you: You have to move. Sometimes you needs to move a long ways. That is why you have to have maps with you when you travel of any place that you could accidentally crash land.

We may find that we are not in an ideal situation. Maybe we are in relationships that are leading us away from God. Maybe we find ourselves falling prey to some sinful temptation over and over again. Maybe our current life situation is keeping us away from church or has us too busy to pray and spend time meditating on the Bible. It is possible that we need to travel. To make a change.

I found that list really helpful. It applies to staying spiritually strong and surviving in our walk with God just as much as it applies to physical survival. Are you getting the nourishment you need from God? Are you fleeing to him for protection against sin and temptation? Is he working in you the healthy Christian traits of faith and humility? Are you communicating with him on a regular basis? And if these things are not all clicking, are there some changes you can make in life to make them happen?

This is great for our meditation. Enoch walked with God. May we walk with God every day, confident that even when we fail, our God will walk with us.

Our reading concludes with a prediction about a man named Noah. Enoch’s grandson was a man named Lamech, who seems to have believed in God and held on to his promises. He hoped Noah would bring comfort to him and his family as they lived in a world cursed by sin:

**When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. And after he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.**

**When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. He named him Noah and said, “He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the Lord has cursed.” After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died. After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.**

Enoch walked with God, and God took him away. We will see that Noah walked with God too, but God had a very different task for him. We will look at that next week. For now, let’s sing a hymn and meditate on our own walks with God.

**Part C**

**When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the Lord said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.” The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.**

The godly line, who had began to call on the name of the Lord at the end of chapter 4 ultimately abandoned that worship. These sons of God preferred to marry good looking women instead of women who shared their faith, and soon enough the true faith almost disappeared. They let their bodily desires take precedence over spiritual concerns. So there is no surprise that they divulged into violence and oppression, just like we saw the sons of Cain had done earlier. In fact, some of them because the most famous violent men. And so God decided to do something about it.

**The Lord saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the Lord said, “I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them.” But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.**

This is terrible. But it is good for us to realize: Life on this earth can become so horrible, so wicked, that it is beyond help. Even here in Spokane, how horrible for those families dominated by an abusive parent. It messes everyone up. Now think of what happens with that is multiplied to an entire society. Have you read about the French revolution. Murder led to more murder to even more murder. Even in our own country, the horrors of the civil war made many people callous towards suffering, and let to equally horrible things being done to the native American population.

But there was one difference. At this time, mankind was one. They were united. God had not divided them at the tower of Babel. So today, when one society gets too evil, people can flee, and other societies often step in and force them to reform for one reason for another. But the deeper issue is still the same. Our hearts are inclined towards only evil, all the time. Rage, spite, fury, domination, ruthlessness, power, these things are part of our nature now. It is only by God’s grace that we combat them.

We say it’s a dog eat dog world. My students told me that they don’t say that, they simply say it’s a man eat man world. Each man must do what he can to survive. And God looks down and his heart is filled with pain.

But we have the solution! Only Jesus can teach us to turn away from exalting ourselves, and learn humility from him. He teaches us to see our pride for what it is, evil, and to learn to trust him to take care of us instead of relying on ourselves. And in the forgiveness he provides, he teaches us to forgive others and slowly undo the damage caused by the hurts of others. We have the only message that can save this evil, evil world. And so after church I will tell you about a few evangelism opportunities this summer. But for now let’s be glad that like Noah, we have found God’s grace. Not by being better, but by clinging to God’s promises.