

Series: Biblical Heroes and Zeros – week 1

CDOBC – beginning on 10/17/10

Title: **“Enoch – Forever Young”**

Genesis 5 ~ October 17, 2010

OBJECTIVE: To help us imitate the faith of Enoch.

Announcements

- Welcome / guests – communication cards
- Fall Festival – CANDY / Chili cook-off!
- Love & Respect Conference
- Ministry Fair

Opening Prayer

This morning we begin a short series titled “Biblical Heroes & Zeros”.

The Bible is God’s inspired, infallible Word to us. Throughout the Bible, we have the record of hundreds of people. We are told of their life, their families, their victories and their failures. Most of all, we’re told of their faith and of their relationship with God. If you have grown up in the Church, you have probably heard the accounts of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samson, Gideon, Samuel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, Paul, Peter and John. We grew up with the stories of the lives of these great believers, and through them we learned a great deal about God – and about ourselves. These and others like them are the Biblical Heroes.

But not all the people we read about in the Bible lived in a way that was pleasing to God. Some of the people in the pages of Scripture were enemies of God. Some of them lived for themselves and they lived according to the standards of the world – not the standards of the one, true God. These are the Biblical Zeros.

I would submit to you that *all* of the people in Scripture – both heroes and zeros - have been recorded in God’s revealed Word to us – for a reason. They are not there because He needed to take up space on the page. God included these people to help us understand the blessing of a life of faith, and on the flip-side the danger of a life of sin – and to show us in vivid terms what actions and attitudes to avoid.

He has included their story because they are helpful and instructive to us. In some cases, they are examples for us to follow – to imitate. In other cases, they are examples of what not to do – sinful actions and attitudes we should avoid in life.

Today, we begin with one of the Biblical heroes - Enoch. We don’t know much about Enoch, but the little we do know gives us some great insight into what pleases God.

We first hear of Enoch in Genesis 5 (Turn to Genesis 5).

Genesis 5 is a chapter of death. In 2:17 (“...for when you eat of it you will surely die.”) God promised that death would be the result of sin. In Genesis 5, we see that God kept His word.

In Genesis 5, we see that Enoch was rescued by God from death – and if you’re like Kim and me, this past week you watched the Chilean miners get rescued from death. Imagine what each miner thought and felt as the rescue tube emerged from the shaft and their day of rescue had become a reality after being trapped for 69 days! The miners escaped death...for now. But God brought Enoch to heaven without him experiencing death!

Context: In Genesis 4, we are told of Cain’s murder of his brother Abel, and Cain’s ungodly, rebellious line is listed. In Genesis 5, we not only see God’s promise of death becoming a reality, but the

line of Seth becomes the line of blessing (fulfillment of 3:15). In contrast to the ungodly line of Cain in chapter 4, we see in chapter 5 the obedient, righteous line of Seth.

Overview of Chapter 5 – focus on the longevity of those listed.

After reading this chapter, many people will wonder why people lived so long at this time in history? We don't know for sure – Scripture never tells us directly, but these are some possible reasons.

- When God makes something – He makes it right! Humanity was created perfect. No disease, no sin, no disabilities, no deformities. It took many years for sin's effect to limit longevity.
- Longevity allowed God's truth to be passed down more accurately. Adam actually lived 9 generations! This allowed Adam to tell about God, the Garden of Eden, to every one of his descendents listed here – except for Noah! Enoch was born when Adam still had 308 birthdays left! He was 874 years old when Lamech was born. Imagine being Adam, and knowing that you are responsible for bringing sin into the human race, and over your 930 years of life you see the tremendous corruption and sin that has overtaken the world. You have lived in Eden – and you died in a sin-filled world.
- Longevity allowed for rapid, extensive population growth. Lots of kids, very few natural deaths.
- Longevity allowed them to gain a great deal of knowledge – they had 8-9 centuries to learn!
- Longevity allowed them to develop great skill. If you do something for 800 or 900 years, you get pretty good at it! This allowed them to expand their knowledge, discover various inventions and advance their civilization.

A negative to this – which even applies to the line of Seth – is that their longevity also allowed them to advance to greater degrees of sin than we might imagine. As they advanced in all other areas of life over the generations, they were also advancing in their ability to sin. Imagine how deeply you can get caught up in sin over 40-50 years – what if you had 600 or 700 years at your disposal!

Now – let’s look at Enoch’s life – and what we can learn and apply for our life today.

Enoch walked with God.

Genesis 5:21-24

When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah.²² And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters.²³ Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years.²⁴ Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.”

In the midst of a chapter that emphasized death, Enoch not only escaped death, but he “walked with God.”

What does it mean to “walk with God”?

Enoch had faith in God.

Walking with God means you have faith in God and seek Him always. It means you strive to please God in all you do.

Heb. 11:5-6

“By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”

Our faith should cause us to please God.

We please God first by placing our faith in Him. We also please Him through living by His truth - and by seeking Him each day.

Proverbs 8:17

“I love those who love Me, and those who seek Me find Me.”

Part of pleasing God is including Him in your life every day – not just on Sundays or during certain ‘*religious*’ times. Every minute of every day is a ‘*religious*’ time in the eyes of God. Nothing in our life should be separate from God’s presence, influence and direction.

Enoch pleased God – walked with God – before the Law. Many people think that the way people in the Old Testament would be saved is by obeying all the commands and rituals of the Mosaic Law. The Law was important, but it was not the way of salvation. Faith in God was – and always has been the only way to God. We see this clearly in Abraham’s life. Genesis 15:6 “Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.”

So “walking with God” is not primarily an issue of obeying laws and performing rituals. It’s an issue of faith – an issue of belief. Obedience is part of that – but it doesn’t start with obedience – it starts with faith in Christ.

Enoch was blessed by a short life.

The title of today’s sermon is “Enoch – Forever Young” It jumped out to me as I read Genesis 5, that the ages at the time of death range from 777 years old to 969 years old. Enoch was taken away at the young age of 365! He was just starting out!

As we often measure things, we might think that Enoch missed out on life. We might think that he was taken in his prime. He

missed the many blessings of having more kids and seeing his many descendants. From our perspective, sometimes God's way of doing things – what He allows to happen in our life – is seen as a negative for us. We see what we don't have or what we miss out on. I wonder why God didn't allow Enoch to live longer! He was a great influence – he was a prophet and a preacher who warned of God's coming judgment. Why did God take him to Heaven when his life wasn't even half over? I can't answer 'why' God did this. But it's helpful for us to focus on where God took Enoch – instead of on what Enoch left. Enoch went to Heaven – he went into the presence of God! This only happened to one other person in Scripture – the prophet Elijah.

2 Kings 2:1, 11

“When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal...As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.”

Right in the middle of this vibrant ministry – God takes Elijah to heaven. *“But Lord, he was so good – so effective in his ministry!”* True – but God had another plan – and no doubt a better plan than we would create.

God blessed Enoch by taking him to heaven.

God blessed Enoch by taking him from earth.

Enoch spoke about Christ.

Jude 14-15

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of His holy ones ¹⁵ to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Jude is speaking about false teachers (“these men”). While Enoch was alive, Cain’s line was actively opposing God – and living in unrighteous. Even the line of Seth was embracing sin – we know this because the only righteous people left at the time of the flood is Noah and his family. So Jude tells us that Enoch was a prophet who spoke of the coming judgment of God upon sin. The prophecy recorded in Jude had a near fulfillment in the flood – and will have an ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ – when He returns to judge sinners!

Jesus’ first advent was to save – not judge.

John 3:17

“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

Jesus’ second advent – His second coming will be to judge – not save.

Revelation 19:11

“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.”

Enoch’s words were fulfilled by the flood, but they were also prophetic in regards to the return of Christ.

Application

Are you walking with God?

Is your life pleasing to God? If there is an area of your life that you know is not pleasing to God, confess / repent - thank Him that He loves you unconditionally.

Admit your sins to the Lord.

Believe in Jesus – that He died for your sins.

Choose to follow Him – walk with Him each day.

Trust God’s blessings in your life

Some of His blessings don’t seem like blessings at first.

Focus on Christ – Enoch had to anticipate Jesus and God’s promises...we have Jesus! We have His blessings right now!

Focus on Christ

Enoch prophesied about things he didn’t know – he didn’t know about Christ – He knew about sin and he trusted God to forgive him. But we know about Jesus. We have an advantage over Enoch – that advantage is Jesus!

Close in prayer