

Chapter 6

Do You Know You Are to Walk With God?

“By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death: and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.” Hebrews 11:5

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

Welcome back. Make yourself comfortable while I explain what I want to do during our next few discussions (chapters, for those of you whose circumstances do not allow an imagined personal conversation). If you’re keeping track, this is the “middle section” in our series of conversations that I mentioned in our very first session together. This is the point where I want to transition to a discussion about having a deeper, more intimate, more intense relationship with God.

I know I’m setting aside the opportunity to have any further, fruitful discussion of the basics

of a Covenant Grace-Faith Relationship with God. I’m quickly brushing past several crucial areas that we would explore—if that was our purpose. Instead, I’m trying to stay on task, to “leav[e] behind the elemental teachings about the Christ, [to] let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation” of the plan of salvation (Hebrews 2:1).

Understand that this “middle section” discussion is not just for Seventh-day Adventists, although it’s my self-assigned task to speak to you as a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. Please be aware that many Christians of other denomina-

tions also desire a deeper relationship with God. These people are also God's people; He is drawing them, as well as drawing you, closer to Himself.

Most importantly, this conversation is not parenthetical, but absolutely essential. We—you and I—cannot mature in our relationship with God unless we have this particular conversation, receive this particular understanding, and act on the conclusions that we will discover. We cannot go on in our conversations—until we have this one. To be perfectly honest with you, twice I've moved this conversation from later on in our series to this crucial spot. Quite frankly, if what we are about to discuss *does not happen* in the Christian life, the rest of what we have to discuss *will not happen* in the Christian life.

This is especially true for Seventh-day Adventists. Unless and until Seventh-day Adventist Christians allow God (pay particular attention to how I say this)—*unless and until* Seventh-day Adventist Christians *allow God* to make this concept operative in their lives, individually and corporately, they will not be able to participate in and carry out the special assignment given them by God. It won't happen. It's just that crucial.

Now that I have your attention, stay with me for just a little more introduction.

As Seventh-day Adventists we've adopted several metaphors and code words to refer to ourselves—and to Christians in general—without really knowing what they mean. At times, because we don't truly understand them, our use of the metaphors only serves to add another layer of murkiness to our understanding of who we are. Remember the curiously hard question that we are attempting to answer: "Seventh-day Adventist Christian, do you know who you are?"

The code words or metaphors, among others, include: Witness, Remnant, Laodicea, and Priest. I want to explore these concepts and clarify them so

that you and I, as Seventh-day Adventists, will have a clearer idea of their contextual meaning. To say it another way, the discussions we are about to have

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concerning these concepts is critically important in preparing us to discuss the unique role and work that God's People, and Seventh-day Adventists in particular, are to carry out during the Time of the End.

But before we can consider these metaphorical concepts, we must have the conversation that I had asked you to allow me to put off until later: "How does it actually work?" Later has now come. So if you're settled in and comfortable, let's begin.

My grandson Braeden had continuing difficulties at his Seventh-day Adventist grade school, the Gulf Coast School in St. Petersburg, Florida. He was a "boy," enthusiastically and totally committed to whatever he was doing, including little pranks and play. Grabbing, pushing, tackling, hugging—they were all the same to him—a display of genuine affection. So it was with great difficulty that he was learning socially appropriate behavior. In the process he was getting into trouble.

His teacher adopted a clever mechanism for letting each student know—on an hourly basis—where they were in this process. Excessively inappropriate behavior earned you a "red card" (yes,