

Obedience in Obscurity

“By faith Enoch...” – Hebrews 11

What is your attitude when you do something good?

- I keep it to myself and ponder what a really great person I am.
- Tell someone else so that they can ponder that fact, as well.
- Quietly remind God of my acts so that He can reward me accordingly.
- Other _____

Enoch's story can hardly even be considered a story—he is only mentioned briefly in the Bible. Basically all we know about him is that he lived a life on earth that was pleasing to God, that ended by being taken up by God rather than dying. For such a remarkable event, we are really told very little about what preceded or triggered this unique occurrence. This man's story is so unique that it is remarkable that not more is said about it in Scripture.

The fact that Enoch's story is clouded by obscurity implies something about his heart motivation. Enoch's life can be seen as setting an example about living a life to please God rather than men. Our purpose in living is solely to please God and to be considered faithful in His sight. It seems that Enoch lived this kind of life. We are told nothing of his wealth, fame, accomplishments, or even good deeds. However, in Hebrews 11, we are told that Enoch “was pleasing to God.” What an incredible comment to have said about oneself!

Even if your only reward is God's pleasure with you, will you still be happy? Or do you insist on having your story told to other people? Are you motivated more by what God thinks or what the people around you think?

Is your primary motivation the opinion of:

- God
- Your spouse
- Your in-laws
- Your coworkers
- Your friends
- Members of your church
- Your pastor
- Your neighbors

The scripture reminds us in Matthew 6:1-2 that if we are seeking our reward here on earth, that that will be the only reward that we receive.

We don't really know why God chose to take him up; his story is somewhat shrouded in mystery. This story also gives us an example of the truth that we find in Isaiah 55:9, where we learn that God's thoughts are higher than ours. Although His perspective may not always make

“By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would 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

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.”

Matthew 6:1-2

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.”
Isaiah 55:9

“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”
Hebrews 11:6

sense to us, or be what we would have decided ourselves, we can know that it is always trustworthy and right.

In what area do you need to trust God’s perspective rather than your own?

In God’s higher wisdom (and unique sense of humor), He seems to delight in using the unlikely. We see Him choosing to use the prostitute Rahab to protect the lives of not only her family, but the lives of God’s own people and an old and barren woman, Sarah, to mother the lineage of Christ. He used the angry and stuttering Moses to lead the nation of Israel out of bondage, and the adulterous David to be called the man after God’s own heart. Even looking at the stories of the disciples in the New Testament reveals a motley set of flawed men that Jesus chose to begin the spread of the all-important message of the Gospel. Perhaps Enoch’s life was uneventful. Perhaps his was a quiet and seemingly ordinary existence, with nothing to make him stand out in the eyes of man. What we do know about him is that God was pleased with his life.

How does the knowledge that God delights to use the unlikely make you feel in light of your failures and weaknesses?

Contrary to what we may believe at times in our limited perspective, God does not ever overlook us. Maybe you are going through a time right now that you feel that you are invisible.

What is your reaction when you feel overlooked?

- Anger
- I find a way to put myself in the limelight
- I feel sorry for myself

Are you content to live in obedient and faithful obscurity if that is what God asks of you?

Hebrews 11:6 reminds us that we cannot please God if we do not have faith. What area do you need to quietly have faith in God’s wisdom?

Be encouraged to live faithfully, even if it seems that no one is noticing, because God is the rewarder of those who seek Him.

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?
