

May 17, 2026 Walk Worthy

Adult Study Guide | Ephesians 4:17-5:14

"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called." -- Ephesians 4:1

The second half of Ephesians calls believers to walk in the worth given to them through Jesus. Paul uses the word walk to describe three ways that life looks in practice. Use the questions below for personal reflection or group discussion.

Walk 1: Walk Not as You Once Did (Ephesians 4:17-32)

Paul calls believers to put off the old self -- marked by futile thinking, hard-heartedness, and self-serving habits -- and put on the new self, created after the likeness of God. He gets specific: put off falsehood / put on truth; put off sinful anger / put on reconciliation; put off tearing others down / put on encouraging words; put off bitterness / put on kindness. Ignoring the Holy Spirit's work in this process is what Paul calls grieving the Spirit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it actually mean to put off the old self and put on the new self? How is this different from just trying harder to behave better? (v. 22-24)
2. Which of Paul's put-off/put-on pairs feels most personally challenging to you right now? Why? (v. 25-32)
3. Paul warns against grieving the Holy Spirit. What does that image tell you about God's relationship with you, and how does it shape how you think about daily choices? (v. 30)

Walk 2: Walk in Love (Ephesians 5:1-6)

Paul holds up Jesus as the model of love -- a love of sacrifice and selflessness. He calls believers to keep love from being distorted: keep sexuality sacred within marriage, avoid degrading talk, and replace the craving for what is not ours with thanksgiving. The underlying logic is striking: sin is what we reach for when we don't think Jesus is enough. Contentment in Christ expels corruption.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

4. What qualities of Christ's love does Paul highlight in v. 1-2? What would it look like to imitate that love in your closest relationships? (v. 1-2)
5. Paul says to replace covetousness and impurity with thanksgiving. How does a grateful heart actually guard against temptation? (v. 4)
6. "Sin is what we do when we don't think Jesus is enough." Do you agree? Where does that idea challenge you most?

Walk 3: Walk as Children of Light (Ephesians 5:7-14)

Paul makes an identity statement: at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Because believers are light, they walk as light. That light produces goodness, righteousness, and truth -- and it naturally exposes the darkness around it, not through confrontation alone, but through simple, attractive holiness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

7. Paul says you are light in the Lord -- not that you try to be light. What is the difference, and why does it matter for how you live? (v. 8)
8. Have you ever experienced your faith raising questions in someone around you simply by how you lived? What happened?
9. Looking at all three walks -- not as you once did, in love, as children of light -- which one is most alive in your life right now, and which one needs the most attention?