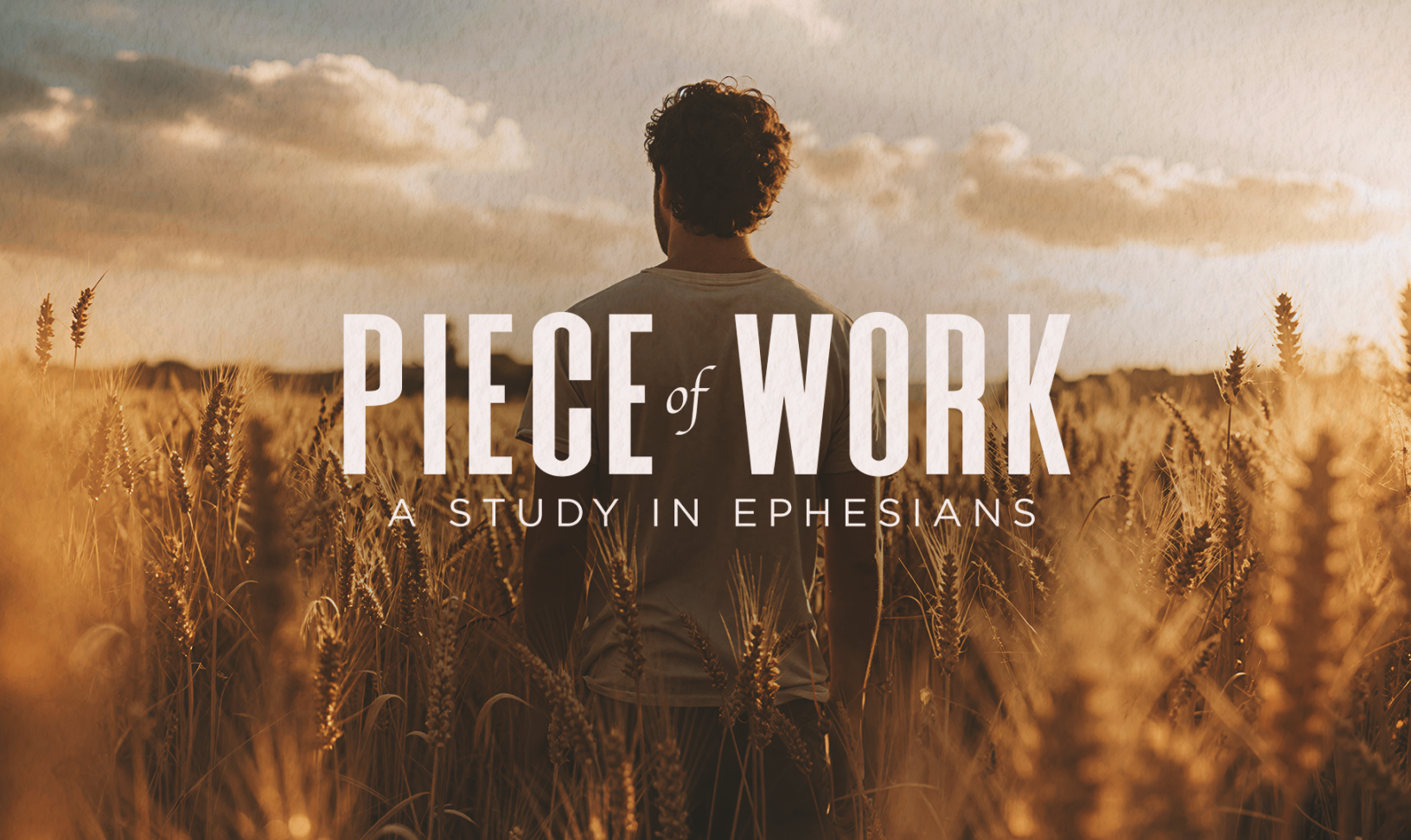




PIECE *of* WORK

A STUDY IN EPHESIANS

WEEK SEVEN

How to Walk

Ephesians 4:17-5:22

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL • SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Learning to Walk

DAY 1

Renewed Minds, Transformed Lives

READING · ROMANS 12:1–2; EPHESIANS 4:17–24

Before sin changes our behavior, it changes what we're willing to believe. The Ephesians had burned their magic books worth millions—they knew transformation was costly. Paul doesn't begin with external behaviors but with the mind. Wrong thinking darkens understanding, darkened understanding hardens the heart, and a hardened heart eventually changes the walk. You cannot feed your mind on everything the world offers and expect to walk in Jesus' ways. Transformation happens through renewing your mind. What voices are programming your internal GPS? Is God's Word renewing you, or are your feeds, friends, and entertainment shaping you? Today, identify one area where worldly thinking has taken root. Replace it with Scripture. Memorize one verse that speaks truth to that lie. Renewal begins in your thought life.

REFLECTION

What voices are programming your thinking right now—Scripture, or your feeds, friends, and entertainment? What is one lie you can replace with God's truth this week?

DAY 2

Changing Your Clothes

READING · EPHESIANS 4:25–32; COLOSSIANS 3:8–14

Grace brings us into the family and teaches us what no longer belongs. When you come home dirty from work, your spouse doesn't say you're no longer family—just that certain things can't come inside. Similarly, God doesn't reject you, but His love teaches you what must be shed. Paul gives specific contrasts: take off falsehood, put on truth; take off sinful anger, put on quick reconciliation; take off rotten words, put on grace-giving speech. You don't change clothes to become His child—you change because you already are. The gospel isn't “get clean and come.” It's “Jesus has made you new; now take off what no longer belongs.” What old garment is the Holy Spirit asking you to remove today? Bitterness? Gossip? Unforgiveness? Name it specifically. Then ask: what characteristic of Christ should replace it? Make one practical change today that reflects your new identity.

REFLECTION

What old garment is the Holy Spirit asking you to take off—bitterness, gossip, unforgiveness? What characteristic of Christ will you put on in its place?

DAY 3

Walking in Love

READING · EPHESIANS 5:1–7; 1 JOHN 4:7–12

“Be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love.” Paul doesn’t leave love undefined—it looks like Jesus giving Himself up for us. Biblical love is not simply approving everything someone wants. It’s holy, truthful, sacrificial, and shaped like the cross. We live in a culture that calls many things love that are actually counterfeits. Paul immediately names sexual immorality, impurity, and greed—things that often present themselves as love or freedom today. But he calls them what they are: incompatible with God’s holy people. You imitate the Father because you are His child. Love is not a vague feeling but a concrete pattern modeled by Christ. Where are you tempted to call something “love” that God calls compromise? Who in your life needs you to love them with truth and sacrifice rather than mere approval? Take one step today toward Christlike love in a specific relationship.

REFLECTION

Where are you tempted to call something “love” that God calls compromise? Who needs you to love them with truth and sacrifice rather than mere approval?

DAY 4

Walking in Light

READING · EPHESIANS 5:8–14; 1 JOHN 1:5–10

“You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.” Not once in darkness—you were darkness. Now you are light. This is identity, not just location. Light is supposed to be seen, not because we’re self-righteous, but because the life of Jesus should make us different enough that darkness cannot explain us. The church cannot be light to the world while copying the darkness of the world. As a young hockey player, Pastor Josh was nicknamed “Sister Joshua” because his teammates saw something different. There was a cost—but light was noticed. Paul never told the Ephesian church to blend in. He told them to shine. Your life should expose darkness simply by being what it is—filled with goodness, righteousness, and truth. Where have you been hiding your light to fit in? What relationship or environment is calling you to compromise? Be light today. Let one person see Jesus in you through an act of genuine goodness.

REFLECTION

Where have you been dimming your light to fit in? What is one way you can let someone see Jesus in you today through genuine goodness?

DAY 5

Walking in Wisdom

READING · EPHESIANS 5:15–20; JAMES 1:5–8

“Be very careful how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.” A wise walk doesn't happen accidentally. We don't drift into wisdom. Every small decision matters and needs direction. What is filling you? What controls how you think, react, speak, and decide? Paul says don't be drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit. The issue isn't merely alcohol—it's influence and control. Fear, anger, approval, politics, money, success, social media—all these can fill every space inside you. Show me your bank account and calendar, and I'll tell you what you love. A Spirit-filled life isn't just a Sunday feeling—it's daily surrender. What is filling the gaps in your life? What controls your attention? Today, make one deliberate decision about how you'll spend your time and attention. Surrender one area of influence to the Holy Spirit. Sing, give thanks, and let Christ's presence fill what once held you captive.

REFLECTION

What is filling the gaps in your life and controlling your attention? What one area of influence will you surrender to the Holy Spirit this week?

CLOSING REFLECTION

Walking worthy isn't about perfection—it's about direction. Like a toddler learning to walk, you will fall. But falling doesn't change whose child you are. Grace isn't permission to stay on the floor; it's the Father's hand lifting you back to your feet. Get back up. Draw near. Walk with Him again.

How to Walk

OPENING PRAYER & ICE BREAKER

Ice Breaker: Share a funny or memorable story about learning to walk—your own, or watching a child learn. What made it challenging? What made it successful?

SERMON OVERVIEW

This week Pastor Josh continues the series in Ephesians 4:17–5:22, focusing on the practical commands Paul gives believers. The key message: you don't learn to walk to become part of God's family—you learn to walk because you already belong. Paul gives three movements: renew your mind (transformation starts with how we think), change your clothes (put off the old self, put on the new), and walk in love, light, and wisdom (live differently because we are different).

KEY SCRIPTURE · EPHESIANS 4:22–24

...to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Opening Up (choose 1–2)

- 1 What stood out to you most from this message? Was there a particular verse, illustration, or point that resonated with you?
- 2 Ephesus was a city filled with idolatry, magic, and spiritual darkness—not a quiet Christian town. How does our modern culture compare? What are the “idols” of our day?

Renew Your Mind (4:17–24)

- 1 Read Ephesians 4:17–19. Paul describes the Gentile lifestyle as “futility of thinking,” “darkened understanding,” and “hardened hearts.” How does wrong thinking lead to wrong living? Can you share an example (without naming names)?
- 2 “Before sin changes our behavior, it usually changes what we are willing to believe.” How have you seen this pattern in your own life or in culture?
- 3 What are you currently “feeding” your mind—social media, entertainment, news, friendships? Is it helping or hindering your spiritual growth?
- 4 Romans 12:2 says we're transformed by the renewing of our minds. What practical steps can you take this week to renew your mind with God's truth?

Change Your Clothes (4:25–32)

- 1 Review the put off / put on contrasts: falsehood → truth; sinful anger → quick reconciliation; stealing → work and generosity; rotten words → words that give grace; bitterness → the character of Christ. Which is most challenging for you right now? Why?
- 2 “Grace brings us into the family, but grace also teaches us what no longer belongs.” How does this differ from legalism? How is this actually good news?
- 3 Ephesians 4:30 warns us not to “grieve the Holy Spirit.” What does it mean that sin grieves God's Spirit rather than just breaking a rule?

Walk in Love, Light & Wisdom (5:1–20)

- 1 Read Ephesians 5:1–2. Biblical love is “holy, truthful, sacrificial, and shaped like the cross”—not simply approving everything someone wants. How does this challenge our culture's definition of love?
- 2 Ephesians 5:8 says we “were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.” Not just in darkness—we were darkness. How does this identity shift change how we should live?
- 3 Pastor Josh shared being called “Sister Joshua” by his hockey teammates because he lived differently. Have you ever experienced pushback for living out your faith? How did you respond?
- 4 “The church cannot be light to the world while copying the darkness of the world.” Where do you see the church (or yourself) struggling to be distinct from culture?

- 5 Read Ephesians 5:15-17. “Show me your bank account and your calendar and I’ll tell you what you love.” What would your calendar and bank statement reveal about your priorities?
- 6 Ephesians 5:18 contrasts being drunk with wine versus being filled with the Spirit. What things (besides alcohol) tend to “fill” and control us—fear, anger, approval, social media, success? What does being “filled with the Spirit” look like practically?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Learning to walk is simply learning to live like someone who already belongs.
- ✓ **Wrong thinking hardens the heart** — and a hardened heart eventually changes the walk.
- ✓ Transformation happens through the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2).
- ✓ **You don't change clothes to become His child** — you change because you already are.
- ✓ **Grace tells the truth** — not to shame you, but so Christ can bring healing.
- ✓ **Light is meant to be seen** — the life of Jesus should make us impossible to explain apart from Him.
- ✓ **We don't drift into wisdom** — a wise walk is chosen, one decision at a time.

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Choose ONE area to focus on this week:

Option 1 Renew Your Mind

Read one chapter of Scripture daily before checking your phone. Take a break from one input (show, podcast, or account) that isn't helping your walk, and memorize one verse from Ephesians 4-5.

Option 2 Change Your Clothes

Identify one “old garment” God is calling you to take off (bitterness, gossip, anger, impurity). Confess it to a trusted brother or sister (James 5:16), and put on the corresponding “new garment.”

Option 3 Walk in Love, Light & Wisdom

Evaluate whether how you're spending your time this week reflects wisdom. Choose one relationship to show Christ-like, sacrificial love, and ask honestly: where am I blending in with darkness instead of shining as light?

Option 4 Group Challenge

Pray for one another through the week in the specific areas each person shared. Text each other mid-week with encouragement or accountability.

CLOSING PRAYER POINTS

- Thank God for His grace and patience with us.
- Confess areas where we've been walking in darkness instead of light.
- Ask for help renewing our minds and changing our “clothes.”
- Commit to walk in love, light, and wisdom this week.

LOOKING AHEAD

Read Ephesians 5:21–6:24 in preparation for next week—the final week of the series. Journal about one way you saw God help you “walk worthy” this week, and share your story of transformation with someone who needs hope.



Grace isn't permission to stay on the floor. It's the Father's hand lifting you back to your feet.

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