

Small Group Guide: Walking Worthy of Your Calling

Based on Ephesians 4:17-32

Sermon Summary (5 minutes)

This week's message challenged us to examine the contrast between our old life before Christ and our new life in Him. Paul calls believers to "walk worthy" of their calling—to live consistently with what we say we believe. This involves making intentional decisions to put off our old nature and put on the new nature created in righteousness and holiness.

Key Scripture Passages

- **Ephesians 4:17-19** - The futility of living without Christ
- **Ephesians 4:22-24** - Putting off the old self, putting on the new
- **Ephesians 4:25-32** - Practical applications of the transformed life

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message (15 minutes)

1. **What does it mean to "walk worthy" of your calling as a Christian?**
How is this different from simply attending church on Sundays?
2. **Paul describes the Gentiles as walking "in the futility of their mind" with "darkened understanding."** What does spiritual darkness look like in our culture today? How have you experienced the difference between living in darkness and living in the light of Christ?
3. **The sermon mentioned that "our desires are deceitful."** Can you think of examples where something seemed appealing but ultimately would have been harmful? How does God's Word help us discern truth from deception?

Personal Reflection (20 minutes)

4. **Verse 22 tells us to "put off...the old man."** What are some specific "old nature" habits or attitudes that believers might need to put away? What makes this difficult?
5. **The pastor said, "We will not be perfect until we meet Jesus face to face."** How does understanding that transformation is a *process* (a "walk") rather than instant perfection change how you view your spiritual growth?
6. **Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry and do not sin."** What's the difference between righteous anger and sinful anger? Share an example if you're comfortable.
7. **"Do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (v. 27)** is often applied to marriage, but how does it apply to all relationships? Why is unresolved conflict spiritually dangerous?

Practical Application (20 minutes)

8. **Verse 29 challenges us: "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification."**
 - Before speaking, how can we evaluate whether our words will build up or tear down?
 - Who in your life needs encouraging words this week?
9. **The sermon mentioned that unforgiveness gives the devil a "foothold" in our lives.** Is there someone you need to forgive? What practical steps can you take this week toward forgiveness?
10. **Look at the "trash pile" (v. 31) and "keep pile" (v. 32):**
 - **Trash pile:** bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, malice
 - **Keep pile:** kindness, tenderheartedness, forgiveness
11. **Which item from the "trash pile" do you most struggle with?** Which item from the "keep pile" do you want to grow in?

Key Takeaways

1. **Walking worthy requires intentional decisions** - It's not automatic; we must choose daily to follow Christ's way rather than our own desires.
2. **Transformation is a process, not perfection** - We grow step by step as we consistently pursue God through His Word.
3. **Our words have power** - We can either impart grace and build others up, or tear them down. Choose wisely.
4. **Forgiveness is non-negotiable** - Since Christ forgave us when we were His enemies, we must extend forgiveness to others.
5. **Don't grieve the Holy Spirit** - When we choose to walk in our old nature rather than in the Spirit, we frustrate God's work in our lives.

This Week's Challenge

Choose **ONE** of the following to focus on this week:

1. **Daily Bible Reading:** Commit to reading God's Word every day this week, asking the Holy Spirit to renew your mind and reveal areas where you need to grow.
2. **Encouragement Challenge:** Intentionally speak words of encouragement to at least three people this week. Use the test from verse 29: "Is it good for necessary edification? Does it impart grace?"
3. **Forgiveness Action:** If there's someone you're holding bitterness toward, take a step toward forgiveness this week—whether through prayer, a conversation, or releasing the offense to God.
4. **Evening Reconciliation:** Practice not letting the sun go down on your anger. If conflict arises with family members or others, commit to addressing it before bedtime.

- 5. Declutter Your Heart:** Make two lists—one of attitudes/habits you need to "put off" (the trash pile) and one of Christ-like qualities you want to "put on" (the keep pile). Pray over these lists daily.

Accountability & Prayer (15 minutes)

Accountability Partner Time:

- Share which challenge you're committing to this week
- Exchange contact information to check in mid-week

Group Prayer Requests:

- Pray for strength to walk worthy of our calling
- Pray for those struggling with forgiveness
- Pray for wisdom to speak words that build up rather than tear down
- Pray for anyone who doesn't yet know Christ as Savior
- Pray for the Padgett family (Tom passed away and is now with Jesus)