

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

FUTURE *in* FOCUS

Future in Focus | Week 4 | September 28, 2025

Text: Ephesians 4-5:20

Discuss:

- Share a time when you had to unlearn an old habit and learn a new one (rehab, new skill, new way of thinking). How did it feel at first?
- Share one or two “nuggets” that stood out from the sermon.

Come and See:

Paul now turns from the soaring truths of chapters 1–3 to the “walk” of chapters 4–6. The word he keeps using for “walk” (*peripateō*) is a vivid term for the pattern or direction of one’s whole life — not a single act but a continuous lifestyle.

1. Walk Worthy of the Calling (4:1–6)

Paul says “live a life worthy” of the calling (*klēsis* = summons). This is more than a career; it’s an identity and a summons with the weight of the King’s authority. Like receiving an invitation to the White House or a royal court, there’s an expected decorum. Read also Philippians 1:27 and Colossians 1:10. What changes in your view of discipleship when you see it as living up to a summons rather than achieving a status?

2. Take Off the Old Self / Put On the New Self (4:17–24)

Paul contrasts the futility and darkness of life apart from God with the new self, “created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (v. 24). The verb for “put off” (*apothesthai*) is the same word for stripping off old clothes. The verb for “put on” (*endysasthai*) pictures dressing yourself intentionally. Compare Romans 13:12–14 and Galatians 3:27. Where do you sense the Spirit prompting you to change “garments” — attitudes, habits, words — that no longer fit your new life?

3. Walk in Love (5:1–2)

We are to “walk in the way of love” just as Christ loved us and “gave himself up” for us “as a fragrant offering.” *Osmē* (“fragrance”) recalls the Old Testament sacrifices that rose like a pleasing aroma to God (see Leviticus 1:9). It’s easier to imagine ourselves jumping in front of a car to save someone, or taking a bullet for someone in a split second decision. That is heroic and good. But the real test of sacrifice like Christ is when we can do it in the daily moments of life—the comparatively smaller things that don’t make headlines but show selfless sacrifice for another.

1. What is one area you could choose to “give yourself up” for someone you love this week as a sacrifice pleasing to God?

4. Walk as Children of Light (5:8–10)

“You were once darkness” — not just in darkness but darkness itself. Now you “are light in the Lord.” Light produces “goodness, righteousness, and truth” (v. 9). Cross-reference Matthew 5:14–16 and 1 Peter 2:9–10. How does your identity as “light” reshape your decisions in everyday settings?

5. Walk Not as Unwise but as Wise (5:15–16)

“Make the most of every opportunity” translates *exagorazomenoi ton kairon* — literally “redeeming the time,” buying it back for God’s purposes. Read Psalm 90:12 and James 1:5.

1. Paul wants us to think through an economic lens—how can we make wise “investments” with our lives that recover some of the lost places for the kingdom of God?
2. Jason said that God’s law is not only authoritative, but it is a better way to live. Even a beautiful way to live. Where can you point to examples of this in someone’s life you’ve seen lived beautifully by following the wise way of God?

Follow Me:

- This section of Ephesians is not only descriptive; it’s invitational. Paul is calling you to a different gait, a new way of moving through the world. Like learning to walk on a new knee, it may feel awkward at first, but it leads to supernatural strength and freedom.
- Identity check: Which of these “walks” (love, light, wisdom) feels most unnatural to you right now? Why might that be?
- Daily gait training: What practices could help retrain your spiritual muscles? Examples: memorizing one of these passages; pausing daily to ask “What pleases the Lord?” (5:10); scheduling intentional acts of love or service; practicing confession and forgiveness quickly.
- Community practice: Paul’s commands are plural — “you all.” How can your group, family, or ministry team help each other walk in love, light, and wisdom?
- Vision: Picture your life, your home, or your church if these three “walks” became your normal gait. What would be different?

Write down one concrete step in each area — love, light, wisdom — and pray for the Spirit’s power to strengthen you to live it this week.

Go and Be:

- Choose one area where you sense God inviting you to “walk differently” and commit to one action this week.
- Pray together for the Spirit to strengthen you with power in your “inner being” so that Christ may dwell fully in every part of your life.
- Ask God to make your life a “fragrant offering” that reflects Christ to others.