

Walk in the Light

It has been our church's tradition to select a Theme every year to coalesce all the church ministries in one value or merit. This Coptic year, 1740 AM (Anno Martyrum; Latin for Era of the Martyrs) the Church theme is "Walk in the Light" which is based on [Matthew 5:16](#), "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

In order to fully comprehend this verse, it is better to recognize when and to whom it was said. It is a part of the "Sermon on the Mount" when the Lord was addressing the disciples and the crowds and teaching them the "Beatitudes" and its virtues, where He said: "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" ([Matthew 5:14-16](#)). Hence, Jesus cemented the principles of our faith that serve as a path to follow in order to live a life illuminated by God's divine truth and grace and influence the world for good. As St. Augustine said "'Had He only said, that "***they may see your good works***", He would have seemed to have set up as an end to be sought the praised of men, which the hypocrites desire; but by adding, "and glorify your Father", He teaches that we should not seek as an end to please men with our good works, but referring all to the glory of God.'"

In these verses above, the Lord predestined us to be His disciples and ambassadors to the world guided by His Light, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life" ([John 8:12](#)), and armed with His words "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" ([Psalm 119:105](#)), ready to live the true Christian life and be a living example of Him to the world. But let us be careful, we cannot be lukewarm with our faith, we must be strong and upright in our daily lives in order to walk in the light. Once we accept Christ, we must actively reject the darkness of sin and worldly temptations, as St. Paul said in ([Ephesian 5:8](#)) "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light".

Those who walk in the light, they also walk with the Spirit and His fruits. As St Paul said in [Galatians 5:22-25](#) "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit". By having these fruits of the spirit, not only are we able to walk in the light, but also be a beacon of God's light in this world by attracting people to the faith using these virtues. However, as Theophylact of Ochrid wrote "'He did not say, "You must display your virtue," for that is not good; but rather He said only, "***Let it shine,***" so that even your enemies will marvel and glorify not you, but your Father. If we practice virtue, we must practice it for the glory of God, and not for our own glory".

Walking in the light involves deep commitment to God's words, a life centered on Christ, and a rejection of the world. Let us go forth from those words, committed to living out the message of [Matthew 5:16](#) in our daily lives, radiating the light of Christ to all we encounter.

Sources:

- New King James Version.
- Catena Bible
- St. Thomas Aquinas on the Gospel of Matthew