

10.27.19 ~ Ephesians 4:25, Speaking the Truth

Ephesians 4:11 And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. **14** As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; **15** but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. **17** So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, **18** being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; **19** and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. **20** But you did not learn Christ in this way, **21** if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, **22** that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, **23** and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24** and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. **25** *Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.*

If you are a Christian, you are a new creation; your life is sustained, directed, and eternally protected by Almighty God. As a Christian, you belong to God and your purpose is to serve Him as a witness for Jesus Christ, so that others might come to know Him for salvation.

Richard Halverson served as the Chaplain of the United States Senate from February 2, 1981 until December 31, 1994. He once said, "*Christianity is either relevant all the time or useless anytime. It is not just a phase of life; it is life itself,*" *it is not something you do, it is who you are, in Christ.*

Ephesians 4:25 tells us, that because of the new life we have in and through Jesus Christ, we are not to lie, but are to *speak the truth to our neighbor*. Our neighbor is defined in this context, not necessarily as

someone who lives next door, but as, "*members of one another*," i.e., of one family, the body of Christ, making it clear that this is talking about fellow believers, other Christians.

We are to speak truthfully to all people, but we are especially exhorted to speak truthfully to our brothers and sisters in Christ (**Galatians 6:10**), "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."

The native language of God and His children (all true Christians), is truth speaking -- telling the truth, in love; while the native language of Satan and his children (those who reject Christ), is lying and deception -- speaking falsehoods.

John 8:42-47, Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God."

Ever since sin's curse entered creation, lying has been a characteristic of sinful mankind (Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent).

We live in a society where truth is not popular. Truth be told, most people do not really want to know or hear the truth; they only want to hear or read that which makes them feel good, even if it is a lie.

Hitler said, "tell a lie, tell it often enough and the people will believe it." Think about it, our politicians and governmental officials lie to us constantly.

Students often cheat in school [just another form of lying] and they see nothing wrong with it, in fact, it has become somewhat expected.

People cheat on their taxes and feel justified in doing so.

You or I may say or do something unkind toward another person, not thinking we will be found out; but when we are caught in it, we might say, I didn't mean it that way, or I didn't mean for that to happen, knowing full well we just lied.

Ephesians 4:25 is specifically talking about the way believers are to relate to other believers. We are to **lay aside** [cast off, discard, strip away,

get rid of] any and all behavior and speech that isn't Christlike, for our example is Jesus Christ Himself.

John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

John 14:16-17, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; *that is* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."

John 17:17, "Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth" [*set them apart for God's honor, through God's Word*].

The Word of God [the 66 Books of the Bible] is the sovereign Word of Truth, and we are sanctified [set apart] for the holy work of God, by God's Holy Word of Truth.

God the Father is the God of Truth, Jesus Christ, God's Son is the Truth made known, the fullness of God in human flesh.

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, and He lives in every Christian.

As Christians we are to imitate Christ. He is our example and everything He said and did, as revealed in the Scripture, is Truth (**1John 2:6**), those who belong to God are "to walk in the same manner as [Jesus] walked," i.e., to live and act like Jesus did.

Everything conforming to the nature and character of God is Truth, His living, spoken, written, or otherwise revealed truth.

Jesus' most repeated statement in the Gospels is, "*I tell you the truth.*" Why does God repeat something that should be so obvious? Would a Holy God tell us anything but the truth? No! So, why the repetition? Perhaps it is because repetition is one of the most common ways that we learn. In the New Testament, the word *truth* is used 99 times; the word *lie* is used 15 times. Get the point?

D.L. (Dwight Lyman) Moody (1837-1899) who founded the Moody Church in Chicago, along with Moody Bible Institute and Moody Publishers, once said, "The best way to show that a stick is crooked is not to argue about it or spend time denouncing it, but to lay a straight stick alongside it."

The Bible is our "straight stick," it is the sovereign truth on all things God, man, good, evil, sin, salvation, and eternity. See **Ephesians 5:13**.

Truth is important to God, and as His servants, it should be important to us! Whatever we say to one another should be irrevocably true; but we do not necessarily need to tell everything we know in every situation. Perhaps

we have a confidence to keep or a legitimate secret which cannot be shared because of the harm it might cause someone. Even Jesus Christ didn't tell everything He knew in every situation, but only that which was prudent and profitable, i.e., He always spoke the truth in love.

Never should we withhold information in order to deceive or mislead someone, that would be lying, and lying is the native language of the devil.

The native language of God and His children is truth speaking -- telling the truth, in love. The Word of God, revealed in and through the life of Jesus Christ, and all that is written in God's Holy Word -- is Truth!

A. W. (Aiden Wilson) Tozer (1897–1963) was a Christian pastor, author, and spiritual mentor to many pastors and theologians; he had no formal theological training, yet he received two honorary doctoral degrees. He said many notable things, but one of my favorite is, "Of all the work done under the sun, religious work should be the most open to examination. There is positively no place in the church for sleight of hand or double talk." "Everything done by the churches should be completely above suspicion. The true church will have nothing to hide."

Colossians 3:17, *"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."*

Colossians 3:23-24, *"Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve."*

All of those who desire to serve the Lord honorably and obediently, should only speak that which is helpful for building others up, according to their needs; that which is for the benefit of the individual believer, and for the whole body of Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Truth; everything He said and did is Truth. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, God's Spirit living in, guiding and empowering every genuine Christian through the Word of God [the Bible] which is the Word of Truth, and as we obey it, we are clearly set apart by the Truth.

If you are a believer and follower of Jesus Christ, you are a child of God, having been born into God's family by God's Spirit, making you a new creation with a new language to speak, it is called truth.

Truth-Speaking is the language of God, and all those who belong to Him by faith in Jesus Christ, will earnestly seek to live by, and to speak, the truth, in love.

Pastor Mike

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