

## Living a Life of Truth

In our previous study in Ephesians 4:17-24 we saw that the Lord has called us to live a very different lifestyle from those around us in the world. It is important for us to profess our faith publicly and then to walk consistently with the Lord Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 4:25-5:5, the Apostle gives us six examples of how we are to walk in true righteousness and holiness, in the very likeness of God Himself. Our first teaching is found in verse 25:

### Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

In this verse we learn three important truths:

#### I. Our truth telling comes from Christ.

The Apostle Paul uses the word “therefore” to indicate that what is being commanded in verse 25 is connected to the profound conversion we have undergone in verses 17 through 24. There are many reasons to be honest. As Mark Twain said, “If you tell the truth, you don’t have to remember anything.” Our parents taught us that “honesty is the best policy.” For the Christian, however, there is a much deeper motivation for truth-telling; namely, that we are remade in the likeness of God, *therefore*, we must be truth-tellers. In Titus 1:2 we see that God cannot lie. In Genesis 3, we see that Satan is the very author of deceit and lying. We have been united to God in Jesus Christ; therefore it is absolutely incumbent upon us to be truthful as He is truthful.

#### II. Our truth-telling emerges from our intentional, vigorous effort.

Our sanctification consists of both mortification and vivification. Paul uses both of those concepts in his exhortation for us to be truth-tellers.

##### A. “having put away falsehood”

Here the Apostle is teaching us that we must renounce the lies of the world: the lies the world believes, the lies the world tells, and the lies the world lives. Christians are people who believe in Absolute Truth and we believe that truth is to be sought, even though none of us are perfectly able to discern the truth; therefore, we must strive in all ways to be honest people, avoiding all self-justification, all exaggerations and self-aggrandizements, all flatteries, and all slander. At the same time, we renounce lives of pretension and defensiveness.

##### B. “let each one of you speak the truth to his neighbor”

The Apostle is teaching us that we are to bring to this broken world the radiance of truth in all of its accuracy, boldness and humility. We tell the truth even when it hurts. We tell the truth even when it humbles us to the dust.

#### III. Our truth-telling emanates from our love.

In this verse Paul gives us the reason we must be truth-tellers: “for we are members one of another.” That is, we are members of the same family. How can we lie to our family? John Mackay, the late president of Princeton Theological Seminary, once said, “A lie is a stab into the very vitals of the body of Christ.” Martyn Lloyd-Jones taught that lying destroys fellowship. On the other hand, truth-telling builds up the body of Christ. We all know the lovely experience of encouragement, true confession, loving confrontation, and supportive words in a time of need. The truth is indeed beautiful. We are a people who are to live a life of truth.

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## Discussion Questions

1. Why is it essential that followers of Christ be truth-tellers? What do we learn from Titus 1:2 and from Genesis 3:4?
2. What is the biggest lie that human beings believe? What happens to us when we put away this big lie?
3. What are the most common forms of untruthful speech? Why are these lies so destructive? How can we avoid speaking those lies? (vs. 20, 21)
4. How can we overcome lying lifestyles with all their pretensions?
5. When is it the most difficult for us to speak the truth? How can we prepare ourselves for such moments?
6. Describe a moment when you observed someone telling the truth at great cost to themselves and great benefit to others? (vs. 24)

### Going Deeper

Is there someone to whom you need to confess that you have been untruthful? Will you go to him/her this week and confess?

Is there a situation from which you have withheld the truth for fear of persecution? Can you remedy that situation this week?