

The Book of Ephesians

Ephesians 4:11-16

Session 34: Speaking the Truth in Love

Since we have now come in the unity of the faith (the completion of Paul's written epistles), we are no longer children in our understanding, but we have been given everything we need in order to grow up into Christ (spiritually mature).

Ephesians 4:14 That we **henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;**¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Being tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine is describing the phase 1 policy of evil (PoE) that is working against us as we attain unto each "measure of faith" (we are living out of the doctrine; being edified by the doctrine).

When we first trusted Christ, we were all "children" in our understanding. As we learned the truths in the book of Romans, the phase 1 attack of the PoE sought to corrupt our understanding of the doctrine. It did this in several ways, which we will discuss shortly. In the place of the truth, false doctrines were presented to us that were counter to the truths we were learning.

That means that as we progressed through the doctrines of the book of Romans, those doctrines were subject to attack. The attacks are always subtle, so that the Adversary's work is not readily apparent.

How are the attacks carried out?

- 1) It may be through thoughts that Satan planted in our minds. He can more easily do this if we already have a predisposition against the truth; either a stronghold, or something we do not want to believe.

For example: Let's say that James grew up experiencing a lot of rejection and criticism, producing a stronghold in his mind. Now let's flash forward in time; James is presented with the gospel and that God loves James and demonstrated it

by sending His Son to bear the sins of the world. Satan will use the stronghold of rejection to bring the thought to James' mind, "God doesn't love you, how could He, God doesn't even know you." Now, let's say James winds up trusting Christ as Savior. Flash forward again and James is being presented with the truth of his new, righteous identity in Christ. Again, Satan has a place (ground) from which to oppose this doctrine. What does James need? He needs to clear the old garbage out of his life by going through the Sonship Transformation course. So, that is the first way that Satan attacks the message, but there is another way Satan can launch his attack on the message of truth.

- 2) It may be through people which Satan is using for his own purposes. They may or may not be willing participants with Satan's attacks. These attacks are insidious; as Satan will use anyone who happens to present an opportunity. Our best armor against this form of the attack is to be grounded in the truth of the scripture.

There is more to say about this, but let's get back to the issue of us being "children" in our understanding. When we first get saved, we are all "children" in the measure of our understanding. That is not a problem, unless we remain in that condition, for then we will be very susceptible to contrary doctrines.

The problem is when we don't grow up. This was the problem with the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, **even as unto babes** in Christ. 2 I have **fed you with milk**, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

The Corinthians were not babies, they were "as babies" because they were carnal. They should have grown beyond this. They had heard enough of Paul's doctrine to have matured.

And that will be the problem with some of the Believing Remnant (BR) of Israel, out in the resumption of Israel's program.

Hebrews 5:12 For when for the time **ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you** again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.¹³ For **every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness**: for he is a babe.

Verse 13 gives an objective measure by which maturity is measured; those who are "unskillful in the word of righteousness" are babies.

Hebrews 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

If I can say it this way; to come unto a perfect man is for those who "by reason of use," understand God's word, and they have "the word of Christ [dwelling] in [them] richly in all wisdom" which means they are applying God's word to their life so that they are being transformed by it.

This doctrine that makes us "stable" or "established," the doctrine that keeps us from being children "tossed to and fro" and "carried about by every wind of doctrine," started back in Romans 8:16-39; our sonship establishment. This foundation of giving us an absolute confidence in God and His word is the foundation for the rest of the stabilizing doctrine we receive.

By the time we are into Ephesians, we should see evidence that the word has been working in us. We should be able to identify the ways in which we are thinking differently than before, and how our conduct has changed as a result of it; for these are indicators that our minds are being renewed and we are being transformed, just as Romans 12:2 exhorted us be.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but **be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The book of Ephesians is furthering that which was started in Romans. It is “perfecting” our godliness by furthering it. As we respond properly to the doctrine in Ephesians, and we see further changes to our thinking and behavior, that is the evidence that the life of Christ is being made manifest in us. We are becoming what God predestinated us to become, “conformed to the image of His Son.”

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did **predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

God predestinated that we “be conformed to the image of His Son.” That is going to happen, if not here while we are on this earth, then it will happen in the ages to come. And it won’t happen automatically. It will happen as a process over time, with everyone having to be fully engaged in the education and its resulting edification.

And this is what Paul is continuing to talk about here in Ephesians, so to use the language of vs. 15, this doctrine is enabling us to “grow up into Him in all things,” to be adults and not children. We “grow up” unto “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” And how does that happen? It happens by “speaking the truth in love.”

Notice the flow of this coming out of vs. 14.

Ephesians 4:14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Everything that is not in bold type is descriptive of what happens to children and by what means it happens. The bold type is the main part of the sentence. If you read the main sentence of vs. 14, removing the explanatory details, and push it up to vs. 15, you will see the main flow of the sentence.

Ephesians 4:14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, 15 But speaking the truth in love, may **grow up into him** in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

By “speaking the truth” (the truth being Paul’s doctrine) “in love,” we “grow up” (mature, grow in grace) “into [Christ] in all things.”

This works best when we “speak the truth” out of the love which is already generated in us for our fellow saints. That is the proper order. That is why the five core features of godly love were generated as the 1st part of the sonship education proper.

Let me walk us through the process by filling in the diagram on your Notetaker.

Before we start “speaking the truth,” godly love should have already been generated in us from back in Romans.

“Speaking the truth” is not about telling people their flaws and what you don’t like about them.

“Speaking the truth” means “believing and living” the doctrine which Paul has written to us. (Please refer to the Notetaker on page 1 of these notes.)

“Speaking the truth” of Paul’s doctrine is what allows us to “grow up into Him (Christ).

And speaking the truth in love is what the members of an assembly do in order to function as a body, to function like an assembly of saints is designed to function. Speaking the truth is a mark of a mature assembly.

And now I have a difficult issue to discuss with you. What about speaking the truth (of Paul’s doctrine) outside of the assembly? There are two pendulum swings or exaggerations to speaking the truth outside of your assembly, to the saved or the lost. It takes wisdom to strike a balance between these two exaggerations.

The first pendulum swing is to always remain silent, and never speak the truth. Some choose to never say anything that will cause a problem. Because the truth of Paul’s doctrine may well be rejected, because people might disagree, they may even be angry and reject us, some people choose to stay silent.

I understand that we don’t want to be at odds with our family, friends or the people we work with. But we cannot allow the adversary to use that fear to keep

God's truth from being known. At the same time, we cannot bulldoze people with the truth either; we need wisdom to discern what to say and when.

Our love for God needs to be greater than the love we have for our family, friends, work associates; anyone. If it isn't we won't find the right balance for when to speak and when not to.

Every relationship we have should come out of our relationship with our heavenly Father. If it does, then we won't be destroyed if they reject our message and us.

I understand not wanting to cause rifts in our relationships, that is natural. But what is not natural is not being able to "speak the truth in love" around others because we are afraid of the consequences. If we choose not to speak, let it be out of godly wisdom to read the situation, not fear.

We need to exercise discernment about when and how we "speak the truth in love." Even with the best of intentions and using the most discerning of methods, people may still be offended. It was that way with Jesus, it was that way with Paul, why would it be any different with us?

What we suffer as a result of speaking the truth are called the sufferings of Christ. We are called to these sufferings.

2 Corinthians 1:5 For as **the sufferings of Christ abound in us**, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:7 And our hope of you *is* stedfast, knowing, that as **ye are partakers of the sufferings**, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation.

Philippians 1:29 For **unto you it is given** in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also **to suffer for his sake**;

Philippians 3:10 **That I may know him**, and the power of his resurrection, **and the fellowship of his sufferings**, being made conformable unto his death;

2 Thessalonians 1:5 *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, **that ye may be counted worthy** of the kingdom of God, **for which ye also suffer**:

Does God know that our speaking the truth could bring us some kind of suffering and pain? He does. Even so, we are still called to preach the gospel, cast off the works of darkness, make known the mystery, and the manifold wisdom of God. And when we do, we may indeed suffer at the hands of those we love and care for. That is why we are also told to “put on the armor of light” so we can endure those sufferings without being devastated; so we can become more than conquerors.

The courage to speak the truth, and the discernment to speak the truth in the most receptive way, are issues of “growing up into Christ.”

We do not have to hammer people with the doctrine every time you see them. Don’t be obnoxious with the truth. And don’t use inuendo to get your point across. Don’t look for ways to insert remarks which you know others are not receptive to. We can’t steamroll people into believing. But we can love them; genuinely love them. Let us so manifest the life of Christ that they will see the difference the doctrine makes in us, and that is a powerful persuader.

The other pendulum swing is for those who speak the truth, but because of their lack of discernment or love, what they say is offensive and accomplishes little, if any, spiritual good.

What does it mean to “speak the truth in love? “Speaking the truth in love means communicating sound doctrine; wholesome words which build people up in their inner man and in the faith. Getting sound doctrine in us is a process that involves studying, learning, praying, teaching, unlearning and believing, which results in the spiritual growth of every member of the body of Christ (BoC) collectively. So much of what we do is meant to benefit our fellow saints.

The point I am making is this: as we read the entire sentence in Ephesians 4:11-16, we see that speaking the truth is about practicing the truth in such a way that the whole body is edified.

Truth is a big issue in the book of Ephesians. I am going to list the verses for you, here in your notes, but you might want to do a study on truth in this book.

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that **ye heard the word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

Ephesians 4:15 But **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

Ephesians 4:21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as **the truth is in Jesus**:

Ephesians 4:25 Wherefore putting away lying, **speak every man truth** with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

Ephesians 5:9 (For **the fruit of the Spirit is in all** goodness and righteousness and **truth**;

Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, **having your loins girt about with truth**, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

We speak the truth in love so that the entire body can grow up into Christ, our head, in all things. We speak the truth so that every member can be filled with all the fulness of God. We speak the truth because we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. What is that high calling? It is to be transformed into the image of Christ.

To end the session today, let's recap the doctrine.

The Doctrine: Our advanced, perfected godly living in view of "the measure of the gift of Christ."

The Purpose of the Doctrine: Spiritual maturity - That we:

- 1) grow up unto a perfect man (vs. 13)
- 2) endure the advanced phase 1 attack of the PoE (vs. 14)
- 3) make increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (vs. 16)

The Form of Doctrine: Ephesians 4:7-16.

Sessions on the Doctrine: Ephesians Sessions 30-35

What have we covered today?

- Paul's doctrine is what makes us adults in our understanding
- The PoE is working to corrupt our understanding
- To do this, it uses strongholds and men to teach contrary doctrines
- It is clever in its design and delivery; its goal is to deceive
- The remedy is to speak the truth (of Paul's doctrine) in love by which we grow up into Christ

Application: Stand fast in, and continue to learn Paul's doctrine, so that we grow up into Christ, unto a perfect man.

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