

Ephesians Chapter 4

Week 9, v.25-29

Eph 4:25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH, EACH ONE [of you,] WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another.

Paul now begins the close of this chapter with several exhortations to put off specific characteristics that should no longer be a part of the new self and to put on the behavior of one who is a Christian.

Therefore <dio> consequently

Laying aside <apotithemi> putting away, casting off (once for all)

Falsehood <pseudos> lying

Speak truth, each one of you – exactly what it means!

With his neighbor – fellow Christians

For we are members of one another – referring back to the “body” (limbs)

This verse means exactly what it says. Since we are a new man, we are able to act accordingly. Because we are no longer controlled by sin (v.17-24), we should have nothing to do with lying in our lives. Instead, we ought to be truthful with each other because we are of one body – the church.

Le 19:11 ‘You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another.

Zec 8:16 ‘These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates.

Eph 4:15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all [aspects] into Him, who is the head, [even] Christ,

Col 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its [evil] practices,

Eph 4:25 (TCNT) Since, therefore, you have cast off what is false, ‘you must every one of you speak the truth to your neighbors.’ For we are united to one another like the parts of a body.

What does speaking truth require? Sincerity, honesty, accuracy

What is truth based on? Fact (as opposed to feelings)

The Ephesians were fairly new believers and used to heathen ways so perhaps Paul felt this was a problem and important to address. Regardless of the

reason this is addressed, the actions of a Christian should not be characterized by lying. Our sinful nature leads us to the easier option of lying when feelings may be hurt or we may benefit from not telling the truth.

Ps 52:3 You love evil more than good, Falsehood more than speaking what is right. Selah.

Pr 21:6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.

Ac 5:3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back [some] of the price of the land?"

How would you define lying? How might lying creep into our lives without us giving it much thought?

How about saying we are not home, when we are; we are sick, when we are not, etc? What about exaggerating or giving a false impression of something?

How about being willing to believe "facts" that you hear without taking the time to investigate them yourself, then spreading that info as truth?

What about making promises that you do not intend to keep?

How important is truth to the integrity of the gospel we represent? If we are not truthful, what does this do to the unity of the body? What happens to our physical bodies when we do not have the confidence that each part will do as our brain tells it to do? What happens to a relationship when someone is dishonest?

Zechariah 8:19 says we are to love the truth.

Ephesians 4:25 says do not lie, instead speak the truth.

Eph 4:26-27 BE ANGRY, AND [yet] DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.

Is there righteous anger? God displayed anger against the Jewish nation when they were disobedient to Him. Jesus was angry when he overturned the money tables in the temple in Matt 21:12-13. Also in Mark 3:1-5, Jesus was angry when the Pharisees questioned Him about healing someone on the Sabbath.

We looked at examples of righteous anger however, when we get angry, it is usually for the wrong reason. Just think of the things that cause you to get angry. Even when our anger may be prompted by someone's unfaithful actions towards God, is the offense we take *truly* for *His* name or is it born out of our own self-righteousness? (i.e. "I can't believe they did or said that", etc...)

Honestly evaluate this in your heart: **How many times is your anger a result of personal offense?**

If we believe we have reason to be angry it might be good to review **James 1:19: [This] you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak [and] slow to anger;**

What about being angry towards our own sin? If we take the first part of verse 26 as one complete thought it says "be angry, and do not sin". Perhaps meaning that we are to be angry about the times when we fall into temptation. This would certainly be a right reason to be angry. If we hate sin, we will keep away from it.

What is sin? Missing the mark, to err. In our English dictionary this would include offenses in our acts and thoughts. Biblical sin is also the omission of doing what we should. Give an example of sins of omission.

Verse 26 goes on to say "**do not let the sun go down on your anger**".

What happens when we do not deal with anger or sin quickly? How do you react when your heart is full of anger towards someone or something?

We are to deal with anger quickly, to reconcile sin in our heart so that we might have rest. **Have you ever tried to sleep when you were angry?**

Verse 27 gives us the reason why we need to put anger aside quickly. The devil is waiting for an opportunity to weaken the body of believers. It is as if we are caught without the full strength of our armor. We open up a weak spot and become at risk for sin.

2Co 2:10-11 But whom you forgive anything, I [forgive] also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, [I did it] for your sakes in the presence of Christ, in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

Jas 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Verse 26-27 tells us to put off anger, take care of sin quickly.

Eph 4:28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have [something] to share with him who has need.

What does it mean to steal something?

To take something unlawfully, to take something that belongs to somebody else, illegally or without the owner's permission (Encarta English Dictionary)

"There are many different ways that we can steal, of course. We steal from God when we fail to worship him as we ought or when we set our own interests before his legitimate interests. We steal from him when we fail to honor him by our lives or fail to tell others of his love. We steal from an employer when we do not give the best work of which we are capable or when we waste time or consistently leave work early. If we are in business, we can steal by overcharging for what we make or for the service we render. We steal if we sell an inferior product, pretending it is better than it is. We steal by borrowing and not repaying. We steal by damaging another's reputation. We steal from ourselves when we waste the time, talents, or resources God has entrusted to us." (J. Boice, Ephesians, An Expositional Commentary)

This idea of working hard in order to bless others is contrary to what the world would say. **Why do most people work hard?**

Verse 28 says do not steal but instead work hard so you are able to give. Think about this: if we do not try to work hard to provide for ourselves then we are in a position of need. Need leads to dishonest gain and stealing in an unregenerate mind. **Have you had contact with someone who expects that it is everyone else's job to provide for them?**

We can go back again to the body of Christ working as a whole. **What happens when one member does not contribute the gifts he has been given to serve?**

Ac 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Lu 3:11 And he would answer and say to them, "Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise."

Eph 4:29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such [a word] as is good for edification according to the need [of the moment,] that it may give grace to those who hear.

Unwholesome <sapros> rotten, worthless, bad, corrupt

Good for edification – that which will benefit

Give grace to those who hear – minister joy or pleasure to the audience

Mt 12:36 "And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.

Eph 5:4 and [there must be no] filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

Col 3:8, 16 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, [and] abusive speech from your mouth. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms [and] hymns [and] spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Col 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, [as it were,] with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.

1Th 5:11 Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

How is our speech? Does it bless others or does it injure others? Is our conversation centered on encouraging the body to grow in their relationship with Christ? Are your choice of words pure? Are you sensitive to controlling your tongue?

Ps 5:9 There is nothing reliable in what they say; Their inward part is destruction [itself]; Their throat is an open grave; They flatter with their tongue.

Ps 52:2 Your tongue devises destruction, Like a sharp razor, O worker of deceit.

Pr 15:2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, But the mouth of fools spouts folly.

Would you write and sign what you are sometimes willing to say?

Ps 37:30 The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, And his tongue speaks justice.

Eph 4:29 says do not speak corruptly but speak with blessing.

Application Questions

Week 9, Eph 4:25-29

Small group prayer: take 5 minutes and quietly think about the study this morning. What is God saying to you personally? What one area do you need to focus on?

v. 25 tells us to put off lying and put on truth; v. 26-27 says be angry yet do not sin, put it off quickly; v. 28 tells us do not steal but instead work hard in order to give. Finally, v. 29 reminds us to put off worthless speech and use our words to bless others.

You will have an opportunity in your small group to pray about your personal application following ACTS. Your leader will begin each section with scripture.

Adoration – “I praise You for...”

Confession – “Forgive me for...”

Thanksgiving – “Thank you for...”

Supplication – “I pray for...”

If your group is done before 12noon please use the time to quietly work on your memory verses or begin to work on the life application questions below. Visiting time begins at noon.

This week: Read Ephesians 4 and use the “Apply It” bookmark to guide you in personal application. Pray for the concerns of those in your small group. Continue to work on memorization – Eph 4: 1-7, 12-16 – and pray for growth in the areas God has brought to your attention.

In what ways do you see lying creep into your life? Are you surprised how dishonesty can trickle into your life without truly giving it careful thought? Pinpoint one area that has come to mind that you can work on and make a plan to change.

When we choose to be less than 100% truthful what relationships do we harm?

How easy is it for you to get angry? What can you do to be slow to anger? What is your plan to deal with anger quickly so that you do not leave an opening for sin to enter your life? How quick are you to forgive? Read 2 Cor 2:10-11.

When you think of stealing what comes to mind? Take some time to look up definitions for this word. Do you waste time? Do you take credit for things you shouldn't? What other areas can you think of that might be considered stealing?

Do you work to gain only for self or are you mindful of blessing others when there is a need?

Think about your speech this last week. How would you feel if all your words were written down for everyone to read? What is your motivation when you speak? Is your conversation blessing others or harming them? Is there something you need to act on in this area?