

DEVOTIONAL

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Ephesians 4:15 – Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

The body of Christ is a beautiful, marvelous mosaic of all kinds of people from diverse backgrounds with all kinds of experiences that shaped them in different ways. This church is a marvelous mosaic, stunning in her beauty because of the people who are part of her and the Savior who makes her pure.

Each one of us is created wonderfully by our Creator, shaped by the homes in which we grew up, the culture in which we lived, the people with whom we rubbed shoulders, and the experiences we encountered throughout our lives. Each one of us is God's original masterpiece (cf. Ephesians 2:10)! He's at work throughout our lives so that this remains true in every moment of our lives.

This means that I will have a profound impact on the people with whom I rub shoulders. You too will have a profound impact on the people in whose circles you run. We, the church, were meant to do that for one another. That's part of Paul's point here in Ephesians 4. He wants us to see that I impact you through my words and that you impact me through your words. We have a profound and maturing effect on each other as we grow, together, up into Christ.

This is why the truth of our words and the heart behind them is so important. The truth spoken without love is worthless. But it's not just that. As we try to communicate the truth of God's Word, it's also important for us to consider the people to whom we're speaking. Love requires a high measure of sitting-in-their-shoes; it calls for empathy and understanding. Speaking the truth in love requires a double measure of listening (not formulating an answer while they speak!); it calls for listening to the heart with our heart. Speaking the

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truth in love calls us to seek a much higher goal. It isn't just about being right. It's about helping this or that dear person to grow up into Christ.

The church is a beautiful mosaic, created this way by her Savior. Our Savior intends that we would help one another to mature in our faith and grow up further into Christ.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus,

You have gathered people into your church from every tribe, from every nation, from every language, and from every people. You have brought us together into one body and have given each of us a place in that body. Help each of us to listen in love and to speak the truth in love so that we might all grow up into you and become more mature Christ-followers.

Amen.

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