

Ephesians 4:25

There should be blinking lights around the first word of our verse for this week. “Therefore” is ALWAYS an important word to consider when attempting to discover the meaning of a passage of Scripture. The reason is obvious, therefore always assumes a connection between what was previously stated and what is to come. In this case, we are left with instructions dealing with how we are to help one another put on the new self.

1. Speak the truth

- a. Paul’s admonition includes two components
- b. First, we read that we are to speak the truth
 - i. Why?
 - 1. The answer is given in the previous portion of the text!
 - 2. We speak the truth because truth is how we:
 - a. Equip the saints (v. 12)
 - b. Avoid instability (v. 14)
 - c. Grow in Christ (v. 15)
 - d. Put on our new selves (v. 21-22)
- c. Practically speaking, this means that our conversations should be truth-telling interactions!
 - i. Candidly, one of the more interesting (dare I say “discouraging”) observations I have made over the years of ministry revolves around the content of the majority of “Christian” dialogues I have observed and/or participated in as a believer
 - ii. To be frank, many of the discussions Christians have would be fairly indistinguishable from interactions in the lost world
 - 1. Now, there may be less cussing and crude humor but the topics are eerily similar: the weather, sports, politics, vocational discussions and the like
 - 2. While none of those things are particularly evil, it is imperative that we understand and walk in the truth that we have something far greater, more beneficial, and eternal to talk about!
 - 3. These discussions are not only about our well-being, instead this passage teaches us that our dialogues about the truth benefit our brothers and sisters in Christ as well

2. Love our brothers

- a. Notice that Paul qualifies the nature of the discussion we should have as “in love”

- b. We speak the truth with affection, desiring our brothers' wellbeing and trusting God to move within them
 - c. Sometimes the truth can be used like a weapon of destruction
 - i. While it is true that the Bible is a sword, it is just as true that God's intention for believers is not their total decimation, instead the Lord desires their formation!
 - ii. This means that even in moments of correction or rebuke, the goal should be restoration and fruitfulness!
- 3. Live in unity
 - a. The underlying truth that informs this passage is recorded for us in the last clause
 - b. "for we are members one of another"
 - i. When we understand that we all belong to Christ's body, our interest in the wellbeing and prosperity of our brother or sister grows
 - ii. My mind cares about my toe because they are connected!
 - 1. If my toe succumbs to harm, my mind is affected and vice versa!
 - 2. In the same way, I speak the truth in love because I desire the health of the body I belong to
 - 3. When you speak the truth, are you concerned about simply being right or are you worried about your fellow disciple's wellbeing?