

Connect

It has been said, “one should not use truth like a weapon.”

What do you think this means? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Verses - Ephesians 4:7-16 (CSB)

CONTEXT: In verses 7-10, Paul appears to be considering a passage of Old Testament scripture, probably Psalm 68:18, which refers to God’s glory. Paul observes that this passage is a good description of God the Son, who first came down to earth, and then, after conquering Satan, Sin, and Death, ascended to heaven, giving gifts to people.

7 Now grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. 8 For it says:

> **When he ascended on high,**
> **he took the captives captive;**
> **he gave gifts to people.**

9 But what does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower parts of the earth? 10 The one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, to fill all things. 11 And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God’s Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ’s fullness. 14 Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. 15 But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head — Christ. 16 From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part.

Study

1. How has God, through Christ, given gifts(callings) to his people, and what are some of these gifts? (vv.11-12)
2. What is the purpose for which God has given such gifts and callings to his children? (vv.12-13)
3. What is a result of having unity in the faith and knowledge of God? (vv.14, 16)
4. When they are mature, what sort of truths do God's children speak? (v.15)

APPLY: How do each of the gifts / callings work together? Which ones work within society outside the church, and which ones work internally for the church? How are they different, and how are they united in purpose?

DISCUSS: What does it mean to speak the truth? What does it mean to speak the truth in love? (v. 15) What is the difference?

Share

Share some circumstances when you found it difficult to be both truthful and loving at the same time? How have you sometimes been able to resolve such difficulties?

Grow

Minister to one another through sharing praise and specific prayer requests.

- Pray that God will equip each of us for works of ministry, that he will help each of us to become mature, and that he will unify all of us and build us up as his holy church.
- Pray that God will teach us all, within the church, how to speak the truth in love to one another and how to support each other and to build each other up in love.