



Truth in Life is Basic for Believers to Grow in Christ

Believers who read the New Testament book of Ephesians recognize foundational spiritual truth presented in Ephesians 4:10-16.

Ephesians 4:10-16 (NASB), He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things. ¹¹And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵but **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love [**Emphasis added**].

It may surprise you to discover that the phrase “speaking the truth in love” in Ephesians 4:15 is not present in the original language of the New Testament. There are various Greek words that can be translated as “speaking,” “saying,” “declaring,” or “proclaiming” but all of them are absent from that verse.

Instead, the Apostle Paul, the divinely inspired author of Ephesians 4:15, used a verb that can be translated literally as *to truth*, meaning *to deal truthfully* or *be truthful*. He also used a present participle of the verb to indicate that the “truthing” is to be continuous. So, with truth in view, this verb indicates on-going truthfulness as a way of life. On the other hand, the usual translation of “speaking the truth in love” emphasizes only verbal communication, which is but one aspect of a truthful life that brings honor to Christ.

A more literal translation of Ephesians 4:15 could be stated as, “Being truthful in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, Christ.”

Admittedly, Bible translators wanted Ephesians 4:15 to be readily understood but, in making it easier to understand, the more comprehensive meaning was lost in translation. Some Bible versions attempt to present the more complete meaning of “truthing it” by adding notes apart from the text or by including more words into the verse itself. For example, observe the differences between Bible translations in dealing with the translation and meaning of Ephesians 4:15.

The Amplified Bible—Rather, let our lives lovingly express truth [in all things, speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly]. Enfolded in love, let us grow up in every way and in all things into Him Who is the Head, [even] Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).

Darby translation—but, holding the truth in love, we may grow up to him in all things, who is the head, the Christ

Douay-Rheims 1889 American edition—But doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in him who is the head, even Christ:

Phillips New Testament—But we are meant to hold firmly to the truth in love, and to grow up in every way into Christ, the head.

New American Standard Bible—but ^[a]speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ (*marginal note* ^[a]—*holding to or being truthful in*)

Young’s Literal Translation—and, being true in love, we may increase to Him [in] all things, who is the head—the Christ.

Even though the use of “truthing it” in Ephesians 4:15 indicates having a lifestyle of truth, the concept of verbally communicating truth is specifically referenced by the Apostle Paul ten verses later in Ephesians 4:25.

Ephesians 4:25, Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speaking truth each one *of you* with his neighbor, for we are members of one another” [Underlining added].

In Ephesians 4:15, however, the original language indicates that the way we deal with others and live all aspects of our lives—not merely in speech—must mirror truth and be practiced in love.

See also: [Truth is Personal, not Merely a Concept](#), [Truth: The Measurement for All Aspects of Life and Relationship](#), and [Telling the Truth is Naturally Impossible](#).