

## ***The Goal of Ministry III: Speaking the Truth in Love (Ephesians 4:15)***

- I. **Introduction**
  - A. Illustration: Paul speaks the truth in love to the Galatians
  - B. Review of the context
  - C. Main point: **A maturing church learns to *speak the truth in love***
  - D. Course of the sermon
  
- II. **Exegesis and Exposition of Ephesians 4:15**
  - A. ***But***: contrasts false teaching with truth and the characteristics of children with that of a maturing church
  - B. ***Speaking the truth***
    1. *Speaking* or *living*? Evidence points to *speaking*
      - a. Context
      - b. Word used elsewhere (Gal 4:16)
  - C. ***In love***
    1. What it does not mean
      - a. Love does not negate truth
      - b. Love does not necessarily imply niceness
    2. What it does mean
      - a. Love warns about errant teaching
      - b. Love does not need to prove itself right
      - c. Love desires the best for the other person
      - d. Love can be animated and zealous
      - e. Love is as strong as death
  
- III. **Speaking the truth in love in the church**
  - A. This is *the work of the ministry* (described in Eph 4:12)
    1. one-anothering, curing of souls, counseling
    2. radical reform is necessary on our churches
    3. Romans 15:14
    4. let us labor to be such a church that would speak the truth in love
  
- IV. **How do we speak the truth in love?**
  - A. The lyrics of our speech must be set to the music of God's grace
    1. past grace
    2. present empowering grace (2 Cor 5:14-15)
    3. future grace (1 Pet 1:13-15)
  - B. Speak out of love rather than duty
    1. Learn from God's Word how He speaks the truth in love
  - C. Make practical obedience the aim of your loving speech
  - D. Listen – a thoughtful response requires you to understand details
    1. Prov 10:19
  - E. Be patient in your response
  - F. Don't be afraid to get specific (but watch gossip)
  
- V. **Why is this important?**