

Colossians 3:15-16a

Say the Hard Things

1. Intro → Time in Spain, frustrations, needed to say things, but didn't communicate clearly or well. I never learned how to say hard things in a constructive way.
 - a. You: Maybe you're silent when there's an issue. Maybe you are a bulldozer
 - b. When it comes to interacting w/ people, problems will arise. How do you deal?
 - c. Last week we talked about forgiveness, this week about saying the hard things
2. *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.*
 - a. Let = allow, don't fight against it (Old man vs. New man → bodysnatchers)
 - b. The peace of Christ
 - i. Peace = Presence of God w/ his people; well-being and prosperity;
 - ii. of Christ = Genitive of source, possessive, attributive; peace he bought
 - c. Allow the peace that comes from Christ to RULE or CONTROL you
 - i. When you interact w/ people, what governs your behavior? Does the Peace of Christ control you or do YOU desire to control?
 - d. Rule in greek = *Brabeuo* (brra-BU-oh); meaning to umpire in the Greek games
 - i. In your interactions (disagreements) w/ one another, let the peace of Christ be your umpire → unbiased, HE is willing to call foul on YOU
 - ii. His goal is his glory, the gospel, your maturity, not your reputation...
 - e. And be thankful... It's hard to fight when you are being thankful for one another
 - i. ex: If I have a hard time w/ someone, thank God for them/pray for them
 - f. **Allow the blood-purchased peace of Christ to umpire your behavior.**
3. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom...*
 - a. Word of Christ = teachings about Christ; the Apostles' teaching (Acts 6)
 - i. This follows on Col 3:1-4, setting your mind on Christ for change
 - b. Dwell = Live in them, but more → like a fish in the water
 - i. As a fish doesn't realize it is out of the water until it can't breathe, you should be so connected to the Bible that you can't breathe without it
 - ii. Before you even do anything else, **Root your life in the Bible.**
 - c. Teach and admonish w/ wisdom
 - i. Teach what? Teach people to obey Jesus, the Word applied
 1. Without the Word, I have nothing to offer...
 - ii. Admonishment = To warn, exhort
 1. People do things, say things, think things that are wrong. When that happens, Paul says that you need to address it, not ignore it
 - iii. Why bring this up? Paul just talked about forgiveness. The temptation will be to just absorb, forgive look away when people do something
 1. Ignoring it won't make it go away

- d. *As severity is ready to punish the faults which it may discover, so charity is reluctant to discover the faults which it must punish.*¹ - Augustine (aw GUS tin)
 - e. **If we are going to mature, we need to receive and say hard things.**
 - f. But the exhortation we give must be rooted in the Words and Peace of Christ - in love, their maturity, God's glory, the gospel. NOT "you winning"
 - i. If you haven't attempted to go through the process of forgiveness, grounded in his peace, then you aren't ready for exhortation
 - ii. Your words will become ammunition rather than admonition. You aren't looking for them to grow, you're looking to take a cheap shot.
 - iii. Love doesn't ignore problems - it deals with them in a Christlike manner
 - g. "Don't judge me" → Paul says this in 1 Corinthians 5:12 NLT *"It isn't my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning."*
 - i. *Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy. (Proverbs 27:6)*
 - ii. Jesus said a lot of hard things... he commands us to say hard things...
 - h. Address problems w/ Wisdom = applying the teachings of Christ to your life
 - i. Removing plank from your own eye, owning what you need to
 - ii. Having their maturity as the goal and your obedience
 - iii. Being willing to suffer (Col 2) because things often don't go well
 - iv. Willing to care for and speak into their lives and hearts...
4. Blind spots... *Dare you to ask someone yours...*
- a. **Are you approachable? Are you a firecracker? Are you silent? Are you a lone ranger? Do you run from conflict?**
 - b. Community makes us more like Christ... Forgiving each other, yes, but also...
 - i. Sharpening one another → removing burrs
 - ii. Part of being in a real relationship is this kind of raw sending and receiving of hard realities (true in your marriage, w/ kids, w/ friends, w/ church)
 - iii. For this church... Imagine being part of a community that loved like that
 - c. For your loved ones who don't follow Jesus... You can't love them and stay silent.
 - i. Jesus loved you so well... He died for you just as you are, but he doesn't want you to stay that way. That's the way we should love one another.
 - d. **Let the peace of Christ umpire your behavior, root yourself in the Bible, and then love one another by being willing to receive and say the hard things.**
 - e. Paul is concerned with maturity. He wants the Colossians to grow up fully into Christ. If you love someone, that should be your hope for them too. And for yourself.

¹ Augustine of Hippo. (1886). Letters of St. Augustin. In P. Schaff (Ed.), J. G. Cunningham (Trans.), *The Confessions and Letters of St. Augustin with a Sketch of His Life and Work* (Vol. 1, p. 563). Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company.