

### Carefronting III Ephesians Part 39

*Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the head, that is, Christ.*

Ephesians 4:15

In his book *Caring Enough to Confront*, David Augsburger creates an interesting word for believers. Carefronting is the art of confronting with grace and love. We have been looking at being true followers of Christ and walking in the steps of reconciliation. Today I want to look at one of the difficulties we have when reconciling. Last week I spoke about forgiveness. At the core of unforgiveness, I usually find anger. Let's look at some of the things David Augsburger has to say about anger.

Your wife made a cutting remark two days ago and you are still upset. Your daughter didn't thank you for the expensive gift you bought her. Your son did not put the tools back in their place at your work bench. You are feeling angry at them and everything. Even your boss doesn't recognize your hard work.

Anger is a demand. It demands that other people treat you the way you want to be treated. You demand an apology from your wife. You demand appreciation for your gifts. You demand that the tools be returned perfectly. You demand recognition. Even though you seldom put your demands into words, they are there inside you, energizing resentment.

Freedom from being dominated by anger begins by tracking down the demands you put on others. Recognize them. Many times we are not aware of the fuel of our own angst or the words that come with it. I love to watch a new program on TV. I think it's just called Tracker. This guy and his pal ride their horses through some wilderness setting trying to track down two other men or women who are on the run, trying to get to a set destination before the tracker can find them. Man, this guy's good! The event usually takes a day or two. Some actually make it to the end. Most don't. I wish we all could be as good at tracking down the words of demand that erupt in our spirit. But here is a clue: if you keep at it and keep trying, you'll get good at it.

Recognize the words of anger in your head. Admit them. Even say them out loud and see how silly they sound. Then you have a choice. Once it's out in the open, negotiate the demands that really matter and cancel the ones that don't. Freedom comes when you are candid with yourself. Wisdom comes when you are willing to either rethink your demands or cancel them altogether and forgive the one who disrespected you. Maturity comes from dealing with your issues and not letting them fuel your emotions.

Underneath your anger are some unexposed expectations. Many times you just want to be heard or be treated with worth and feel valued. Demands emerge whenever you feel rejected. We are all automatically defensive when we feel rejected. But if you choose to just ignore your rejection you are going to get aggressive or back off from relationships. You will not only have anger; anxiety is one of the primary emotions created by rejection. When you perceive that someone may squash your worth, you will be anxious. What can you do? You must deal with your heart to be free.

David came to a powerful revelation. He said, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps 139:14). There is more in this Psalm, turn to it and read it. But the essence of what he was saying is that he felt wonderful, precious and loved by God his creator. If you don't feel loved and valued, you won't like your life. In the great command Jesus simply said "Love your neighbor as yourself." How can you love your neighbor if you don't love you? Freedom comes from love. What do you need to do to develop and walk in the wonderful love of God your Father? Look through the bible and come up with ways that you can learn to love yourself and give that love away to others. Love is a revelation. May your search lead to seeing! Love will create a climate of self worth and lead you to freedom over the demands of anger. Love never fails. Dr. and Pastor Frank Kimper said, "You are precious simply because you are. You were born that way." To see that is to love.