

Telling the Truth

Week 4 - Telling the Truth...to Others

June 11, 2006

Speak the truth in love... Ephesians chapter 4 verse 15 (897)

Throw away your old sinful nature & your former way of life.... Put on your new nature, created to be like God, truly righteous & holy. So stop telling lies. Ephesians chapter 4 verses 22, 24 & 25 (897)

Telling the truth to someone you love

How not to do it...

The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful & its fruit looked delicious, & she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit & ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, & he ate it too. At that moment, their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. Genesis chapter 3 verses 6 & 7 (4)

- Where was Adam while Eve was being worked over & “convinced” by Satan? Why was he silent?
- Eve needed Adam to lovingly speak truth into her life. The last thing she needed was for him to quietly watch her ruin her (AND his!) life!!
- Watching & saying nothing seldom leads to a good outcome!
- When I say nothing as someone I love struggles with sin, their sin often affects me as well. And it makes it very easy for me to sin too!
- When I say nothing as someone I love struggles with sin, the consequences of their sin will affect me as well!

How Jesus did it...

Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things.... He would be killed.... But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. ...Jesus turned to Peter & said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me.” Matthew chapter 21 verses 21 - 23 (747)

- “plainly” - Jesus said it like it was, he pulled no punches. When he knew something would be tough to hear, he kept it simple & deliberate
- Notice he spells it out clearly. He told them everything, but he was calm and kept the focus on God, faith!
- It is our responsibility to speak the truth, NOT to worry about how our loved ones respond to the truth. Peter had a choice to make, and he chose to respond in a sinful way. This was his choice. It wasn't Jesus' fault!
- Jesus responds right away, directly & forcefully. He spells out clearly what the stakes are and why Peter is wrong.

Telling the truth to someone in authority

How not to do it...

David got out of bed & was walking on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, “She is Bathsheba...the wife of Uriah....”

2 Samuel chapter 11 verses 2 & 3 (242)

Then David sent messengers to get her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her.
2 Samuel chapter 11 verse 4 (242)

Later, when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant, she sent David a message, saying, “I’m pregnant.” 2 Samuel chapter 11 verse 5 (242)

David told Uriah, “Go home & relax.” 2 Samuel chapter 11 verse 7 (242)

David wrote a letter.... The letter said, “Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so he will be killed.” 2 Samuel chapter 11 verse 15 (242)

The Lord was displeased with what David had done. So the Lord sent Nathan the prophet....
2 Samuel chapter 11 verse 27 & chapter 12 verse 1 (242)

- There were multiple opportunities for lots of people to stop & speak the truth to David...yet notice that none did! Why??
- Everyone around David willingly allowed him to sin & sin & sin...totally unchallenged
- King David had become untouchable...no one around him had the courage to challenge him, to love him enough to speak the truth in love into his life
- When a leader becomes “untouchable,” the leader & his people are doomed! Watch out!

How Jesus did it...

Jesus said, “Hypocrites! ...Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy & lawlessness. What sorrow awaits you....”

Matthew chapter 23 verses 27 - 29 (754)

- Jesus was forceful & direct
- Jesus’ anger was directed at the damage they were doing to others in leading them astray
- Jesus had the courage to speak truth here because he knew there was joy & eternity at stake
- “What sorrow awaits you...” Jesus tells us that those in authority who misuse their power & position are accountable before God for this. Jesus cared enough to say something because he loved his dad more than he loved the acceptance of people!

Telling the truth when it costs me

Jesus was standing before Pilate, the Roman governor. “Are you the king of the Jews?” the governor asked him. Jesus replied, “You have said it.” Matthew chapter 27 verse 11 (759)

- Jesus did not withhold the truth, tell a half-truth or lie.
- Jesus was always truthful, even when it cost him...his life!

Next Week, Father’s Day: Come hear the compelling story of a boy who desperately wanted the love & approval of his dad, how this set him up for so much pain in life, & how God used all of this in an amazing way. This will be a Father’s Day you won’t soon forget.

This study is based on the series “28 Days of Telling the Truth” first taught at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill. Bill Hybels is the Sr. Pastor of this dynamic church that God is using to challenge tens-of-thousands of churches around the world, including Bethel.
You can visit Willow Creek at www.WillowCreek.org