



Truth-Telling

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GROUP ICE BREAKER

In a game of truth or dare, which would you choose and why?

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will seek input and wisdom from a pastor and professional counselor before considering divorce.
- I will talk to my spouse about our relationship.
- I will get out of the environment where there is danger and physical abuse.
- I will guard my heart from pride, self-righteousness, and judgmentalism as I interact with those who are divorced in our community.
- I will extend grace and truth to those who are struggling.

MESSAGE SUMMARY

If a child doubts what you're saying, they will generally ask one question, "Do you promise?" The same is true as we get older. In a courtroom, you place your hand on the Bible, raise your other hand, and say, "I promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God." Why is it necessary for people to swear oaths? Because people lie.

In Matthew 5:37, Jesus says what he's after; all you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'. He wants you to become the kind of person who speaks the truth. Jesus is after the heart of lying, which is the intention to deceive. To live in the Kingdom of God, we need to make the decision, "I'm going to put lying away."

So here's the decision; I'm not going to lie anymore. That's a radical thing. Now, the writers of Scripture have some difficult things to say to people who do not speak truth. In Psalm 101:7, God says, "No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house." In God's house truth reigns.

The commitment to truth-telling not only means, "I'm going to put away lying," it also means, "In situations that are difficult, I am going to be courageous to speak hard truth." Now, it's possible to do great damage to people and then to justify it by saying, "Well, it's the truth," but it must be truth in love.

Here's a little phrase to remember as you live in this school of Jesus: "Here's my chance. Here's my chance to practice what it is that Jesus is teaching." Make this week all about practicing truth-telling.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How was or wasn't truthfulness modeled for you in the home you were raised in?
2. In what ways does culture influence the twisting of truth? Where are you most tempted to twist the truth?
3. Have you known someone who didn't exactly lie, but you knew you couldn't really count on their word? How did this affect the relationship?
4. List and discuss what the following verses say about truthfulness.
 - Proverbs 12:19, 22
 - Ephesians 4:25
 - Colossians 3:9-10
 - James 5:12
5. What are some consequences for a community when people are unable to rely on each other's word? Discuss what a community built on trust should look like.
6. Have you ever had someone speak the "truth in love" to you? If so, share how it impacted you. What keeps you from speaking the truth in love to someone?
7. "Here's my chance to practice what Jesus is teaching" is the phrase to remember this week; to not lie, but be a truth-teller. Have you used it?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I will make the decision — “I’m not going to lie anymore.”
- I will endure pain for the sake of telling the truth.
- I will pause throughout the week and say, “Here’s my chance to tell the truth and practice what Jesus taught.”

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Matthew 5:33-37
- Matthew 23:16-22
- Jeremiah 17:9
- John 1:14
- Psalm 101:7
- Ephesians 4:15

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

- [A Deeper Look At the Sermon on the Mount: Living Out the Way of Jesus](#), John Stott
- [The Cost of Discipleship](#), Dietrich Bonhoeffer

PRAYER REQUESTS

Take time to share how you can be praying for each other over the next week:

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