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# TRUTH

Ephesians 4:25

## TODAY'S VERSE:

Ephesians 4:25 *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.*

## THREE STORIES:

- ▶ Abraham & Sarah: Genesis 12:1-20, 20:1-7
- ▶ Reuben: Genesis 37:19-34
- ▶ Ananias & Sapphira: Acts 5:1-11

## WHY DID THEY (O.K., we) LIE?

Psalm 5:4, Psalm 101:5, Proverbs 19:9

To avoid pain?

Fear rejection?

Social pressure?

To impress?

*In all of these we are putting faith in our lies, not in God.*

## BEFORE YOU BUTT IN,

Proverbs 12:17, Proverbs 12:20, Proverbs 27:6, Zechariah 8:16, Matthew 23:1-4

**ASK:** What is my motive?

Will I be heard?

Is it my responsibility?

Am I willing to help?

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of April 24, 2005

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## QUICK REVIEW

What was something from Chris' message this weekend that you found to be helpful, interesting or challenging? Don't be afraid to speak truthfully about this!

## MY STORY

1. Describe a time in your life when someone spoke the truth to you about an issue you were facing. Was it a positive experience? Would you have wanted them to do things differently? If so, what would you have wanted them to do differently?

2. What are some of the challenges that come with speaking the truth to other people?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. One of the greatest risks we can take is to speak truthfully to others. Read the following passages that deal with people willing to take this risk and answer the questions that follow.

*2 Samuel 12:1-14* - The Prophet Nathan speaks to King David.

What was the risk that Nathan took in speaking truthfully to David?

### **2 Samuel 12:1-14**

The Lord sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, "There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. [2] The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, [3] but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

[4] "Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him."

[5] David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this deserves to die! [6] He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity."

[7] Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. [8] I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. [9] Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. [10] Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'

[11] "This is what the Lord says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. [12] You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel.' "

[13] Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Nathan replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. [14] But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the Lord show utter contempt, the son born to you will die." [NIV]

What might have happened had he not been willing to take this risk?

*Galatians 2:11-21* – Paul speaks to Peter.

What was the risk that Paul took in speaking truthfully to Peter?

#### **Galatians 2:11-21**

When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. [12] Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. [13] The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

[14] When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?

[15] "We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' [16] know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

[17] "If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not! [18] If I rebuild what I destroyed, I prove that I am a lawbreaker. [19] For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. [20] I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. [21] I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!" [NIV]

What might have happened had he not been willing to take this risk?

2. Chris pointed out that the reason we need to speak truthfully to each other is that Paul writes we are all members of one body (Ephesians 4:25). What are some reasons that speaking the truth to each other is an important part of maintaining healthy relationships?

*Ephesians 4:25*

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. [NIV]

3. How we go about speaking the truth to each other is just as important as being willing to speak the truth to each other. What do the following verses tell us about this idea?

**Proverbs 12:18**

Reckless words pierce like a sword,  
but the tongue of the wise brings healing. [NIV]

**Proverbs 27:6**

Wounds from a friend can be trusted,  
but an enemy multiplies kisses. [NIV]

**Ephesians 4:15**

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. [NIV]

**TAKING IT HOME**

1. When you think about *speaking the truth in love* to others, where would you place yourself on the scale below (1 being 'the truth, the whole truth & nothing but the truth' & 10 being 'feelings, nothing more than feelings')?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

As you think about the message and homework for this week, how do you think you might need to either strengthen or soften the way you speak the truth in love to others?

2. Sometimes we can miss the mark when it comes to speaking the truth to others by going too far with our words or not far enough. Are there any relationships (friends, family members, co-workers, etc.) where you have missed the mark when it comes to speaking the truth? What is something you can do to help 'mend the fence' in that relationship?