

The Truth is Radical...*Tell It*...God's Way!

Ever since I had a dream/conviction/wake-up-call about the dire consequences of not being truthful, I have been astounded and liberated by truth-telling in my own life. Over the years I had gotten into a habit of lying to myself and to others to keep all of us from hurting. As one author pointed out, the truth can be painful, and before it “makes you free” it may hurt you. I didn’t want to be hurt or harm anyone, so my slide into dishonesty—so-called white lies, exaggerations, omission, etc.—was bound to happen. I say “bound to happen” because it’s nearly impossible to tell the truth at all times, and not hurt someone or be hurt sometimes. To attempt to avoid—at all cost—the pain that the truth may bring is a form of denial. Yet, truth-telling is as *radical* in this day and age of *don't-tell-me-something-I don't-want-to-hear* as it is *needful*. And, once you get into the practice of telling the truth God’s way, you’re destined to reap the benefits of good health, relationships, and communion with the Lord:

Here are a few things I’ve learned about truth-telling, God’s way:

1.) *The truth doesn’t have to be blunt to be effective.* In fact, the Bible tells us in Ephesians 4:15 that when we speak the truth in love, we exemplify maturity in relationship to Christ. Instead of being immature when handling the truth, we should be direct yet gentle; fearless yet humble; patient yet uncompromising of God’s standard.

2.) *The truth may cause short-term, long-term, or permanent separations.* In this way, the truth often “purges” our lives, either weeding out unfruitful relationships, or cleaning out the old to make way for the new. Truth is good and it produces good. Don’t allow “separation” alone to be the sole indicator of whether or not a relationship has changed for the good or for the bad. Allow the foundation of truth to fully accomplish what it is meant to accomplish in the lives of each individual, however long it takes. If you tell the truth and people walk out of your life, allow that to be a statement about who they truly are at that season in their lives, not about who you are and your value.

3.) *The truth is a lifesaver.* Being truthful means being trustworthy. If you have a regular mechanic, do you want him to tell you the truth about the condition of your automobile every once in a while, or whenever you take it to him? Certainly, you want to be told the truth about your car at all times, otherwise, how would you know when it was safe to drive? Likewise, we should make it a habit of telling people the truth whenever they come to us with their problems. It may be costly, but it beats attributing to someone being “stuck on the side of the road”—or in some other dangerous or undesirable situation—when it could have been avoided. ■



Kingdom Clarity: *Telling the truth at all times means telling your truth, not some else’s truth. When telling the truth involves someone else, cover the other party with loving discretion—conceal, don’t reveal, unless it cannot or should not be avoided. Pray sincerely to know the difference.*

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).