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## Truthfulness

### Matthew 16:21-28

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#### *“Saying what needs to be said”*

“Who do you think you are.. .talking to me that way?”

But, it needed to be said, and Harry wasn't about to back down.

Jim was going to leave his wife for his secretary and he was looking for some “biblical” justification for it. He said that he was not obligated to see it through because they never really “became one” in God's sight, in spite of two kids.

Harry went right to the heart of the matter. “Whether you can admit it or not, Jim, you are living in sin...cheating on your wife and your children. Because of some bad choices, you are now caught in some very wrong thinking. You will live to greatly regret any decisions that you make in this current state of mind, and I care enough to tell you that. Change your mind. Repent. There is still time. I will help you put it all back together. But, you have to repent.”

#### *Reflection*

Everyone wishes to have truth on his side, but few wish to be on the side of truth. —Richard Whateley

Jesus zeros in on Peter's real motives and painfully exposes them before his peers. Peter's motives were very worldly. He had left his small business expecting to be rewarded by a Savior-King who was going to be placed on the throne of a greater Israel. Jesus was making it very plain that he came to establish another kingdom with different values. And the relationship he had with Peter, plus the hopes that he had for Peter, permitted him to be truthful, even painfully so.

#### *Accountability and Application*

Do you find Harry's “in your face” style appropriate?

Why did Harry have the right to talk that way?

Would you be able to stand for truth and speak that way to a friend?

Would you be able to receive this from a friend?

Truthfulness is making our words conform to fact, reality and standard. There is a stigma attached to direct, truthful communication in the church today. It implies that there is a lack of spirituality if anger is ever expressed. This could not be further from the model of Jesus. When he needed to be, he could be confrontational, direct, and brutally honest. We've been called to be like him—not a watered down, culturally acceptable, polite substitute.

**Prayer:** *Lord, if I am afraid to speak up for the truth, help me. Prepare my heart and give me the words to say. Don't let me be ashamed of you or your standards. Don't let me hide in the culturally acceptable. I want to be all that you'd have me be. And if I need this kind of talk, let me be able to receive it with an open heart.*

Matthew 16:21-28 (New International Version)

#### **Jesus Predicts His Death**

<sup>21</sup>From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

<sup>22</sup>Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

<sup>23</sup>Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. <sup>26</sup>What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? <sup>27</sup>For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done. <sup>28</sup>I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."