

Truth and Dare!

3rd in a series of 6

Welcome to Timberline Church. Welcome to our third edition of Truth or Dare. I keep wondering if we are going to run out of volunteers... so far we haven't... so I need at least 2 volunteers that are at least 10 years old. I promise that... worst case scenario... you will only be 'slightly embarrassed'.

Truth questions:

1st Service Only:

1. What was your most embarrassing moment?
2. What is the greatest number of days that you have gone without showering?

2nd Service Only:

1. Which animal best represents your personality and why?
2. Tell us your most annoying habit.

Either:

1. What is the funniest thing that you have gotten into trouble for?
2. What do you think is your best feature?
3. If you woke up tomorrow morning and found that you were invisible... what is the first thing you would do?

Dare Challenges:

1st Service Only

1. Show us your best dance move.
2. Go out and hug a person in the congregation that you don't know.
3. Sing a nursery rhythm.

2nd Service Only

1. Stand on your head.
2. Wear this tag

Either:

1. Scream your loudest scream.
2. Try yodeling while the congregation counts to five.
3. Lick your elbow.

Alright... find some people you don't know very well and reassure them we don't always start things this way and then remain standing for a time of worship through singing.

Stand up and Shake hands: open doors

The Apostle Paul writes:

Slide #1

1 Timothy 3:14-15 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

The apostle Paul wants people to know how to 'conduct' themselves. The word 'conduct' can be translated... 'behavior'. Paul is concerned about our behavior. It comes from a Greek word that means to twist, turn around, reverse or convert. Paul expects the church, the pillar and foundation of truth, to be converted... to be turned around... to behave differently from others in our culture. He expects Jesus people to live differently at school, at home, at work, at the gym and behind the wheel. Do you?

Slide #2 Truth and Dare!

This series of messages are about how truth works itself out in relationships. Our Clarian Call challenges us to 'Rebuild Relationships' and this most often comes through the reversal of behavior.

So many times we develop patterns of behavior that tear relationships apart... like two weeks ago... impatience... it tears relationships apart... and last week... meanness... it tears relationships apart... and in this series we are challenging you to take the dare and conduct yourselves in a way that rebuilds relationships.

The title of the message this week is...

Slide #3 Love dares to not be selfish!

Once again we want to start with an assumption.

Slide #4 Assumption: None of us want to hang around a selfish person.

If there were ever a word that basically mans the opposite of love, it is selfishness. There would be no point to this message... if all of us would find that we love being around selfish people. Maybe I'm wrong... but this morning I am going to assume that none of us want to hang out with selfish people.... but the reality is... some people are all about self!

We live in a world that is enamored with 'self'. The culture around us teaches us to focus on our appearance, our feelings, and our personal desires. Think about how many selfies are taken in a day!

Why? Why are people selfish? What is underneath it all? What is the root cause of selfishness? Let's go to the mic... who has a response?

We threw this question around at our Creative Ministries Team several weeks ago and came up with the following thoughts.

Slide #5 The root of selfishness:

- 1) Over driven by goals.
- 2) Obsession with impressing others.
- 3) Declarations of independence.
- 4) The pursuit of happiness.
- 5) A decrease in the value of community.
- 6) The struggle to find our place.
- 7) Conceit.

Selfishness has been around since the Garden of Eden and is ingrained in each of us since birth. It's the reason Cain killed Abel. It's the reason Lot moved to Sodom. It's the reason Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. It's the reason the rich young ruler walked away from Jesus sad.

Our default switch is set on selfishness. So what does the Bible say about Selfishness?

Slide #6 What does the Bible say about selfishness?

1. Selfishness is nothing to deny or brag about.

James 3:14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.

Selfishness is nothing to be proud of... and yet we live in a culture where living for self is applauded all around us by way of commercials, advertizing and reality shows... and we have come to believe that we owe it to ourself to be self absorbed.

Slide #7

2. Selfishness creates mayhem.

James 3:16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

Mayhem is what results when everyone is clamoring for the top and demands their rightful piece of the pie.

Slide #8

3. Selfishness is in the sin lineup.

Galatians 5:19-20 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions.

Look at this line up of sins... hatred, rage, idolatry and witchcraft... somehow we have come to believe that selfishness is much more refined and not quite so sinful... we tend

to joke about it... getting what we want... taking advantage of others....and yet the apostle Paul puts it in the lineup with the rest.

Slide #9

4. Selfishness makes no sense.

Proverbs 18:1 An unfriendly man pursues selfish ends; he defies all sound judgment.

In the big picture... selfishness doesn't solve anything, it only creates problems and no one is happy.

So... if we are going to make the assumption that selfishness is ingrained in each of us and that none of us want to hang out with selfish people and that the Bible gives specific warning against selfish ambition... what can we do about it? How can we behavior our way out of selfishness?

I want to share four words this morning that will empower us to change our behavior. Let's go to our notes.

Slide #10 How do we behavior our way out of selfishness?

1. Devotion: Honor others.

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

We need to become devoted to others... to the point that we honor others above ourselves.

We have this great story in the OT about two men named David and Jonathan that were devoted to each other in a healthy way. They were not romantically involved and I'm not suggesting that they were 'in love' with each other... but they grew to 'love' each other.

Jonathan was the son of Saul, the king of Israel. David was the son of a lowly shepherd. Jonathan was expected to become the next king of Israel... but God had made it very clear that David would become king instead... and eventually all three of them found out. So it would seem to make sense that these two guys would hate each other because David was about to steal the kingship... but because of honor and devotion... the opposite happened.

Our story opens right after David had killed goliath.

Slide #11 1 Samuel 18:1, 3-4 After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he

was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

Selfishness is a trait that we often hate in others but justify in ourselves.... and yet in this story it didn't happen. Jonathan honored David above himself by giving David his own royal cloths and weaponry. This was significant because not every Israelite had weapons, particularly swords... and Jonathan gave David his sword.

Here is a great quote by Steven and Alex Kendrick, authors of the Love Dare...

Slide #12 Love is saying 'no' to what we want so we can say 'yes' to what others need.

If you want to behavior your way out of selfishness... honor those you love by giving them a random gift.

Slide #13 How do we behavior our way out of selfishness?

2. Love: Seek others.

1 Corinthians 13:5 (talking about love) It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Selfishness seeks self. Selfishness always has self on the radar and one of the best ways to behavior our way out of selfishness is by seeking others... seeking out relationships. Look at what David and Jonathan did.

Slide #14

1 Samuel 20:16-17 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD call David's enemies to account." And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.

I'm intrigued with the way these guys were always making and renewing covenants. Today we make contracts... and we make break contracts and end contracts and fudge on contracts and dissolve contracts... but covenants are for life.

Slide #15 Yesterday Matthew Waltman and Nicole Lapp made a covenant and many of us witnessed this covenant... it was not a contract... it was not designed for a period of time... it was not designed for a way out... it is for life... never to be broken. Selfishness seeks self... but love seeks out others.

I think Randy Travis get's it... in his song 'Forever and Ever Amen!.

Slide #16 Video Clip: Forever and Ever Amen

Slide #17

If you wonder how long I'll be faithful well, just listen to how this song ends
I'm gonna love you forever and ever, forever and ever, amen
I'm gonna love you forever and ever, forever and ever, forever and ever,

forever and ever, amen

John Eldredge says, there is only one story, the Gospel story and everyone else borrows and steals from that one story... and not only is it true in movies and books... but Country Singers do the same.... They borrow their song themes from the Bible.

Love is a covenant, that lasts a lifetime...forever and ever amen....and love seeks out others.

Slide #18 How do we behavior our way out of selfishness?

3. Humility: Elevate others.

Someone once said, 'Humility is not thinking less of ourselves but rather thinking of ourselves less!' We don't grow in humility by putting ourselves down... but by elevating others. The apostle Paul says it this way.

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

Once again David and Jonathan lead the way.

Slide #19 1 Samuel 23:16-18 And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. "Don't be afraid," he said. "My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this." The two of them made a covenant before the LORD.

Here is the son that is in line for the kingdom saying... I will be second to you! Not only am I willing to give it up... but let's seal it with a covenant! Forever and ever amen! Folks, selfishness can't take root with this kind of behavior! Love is putting the happiness of others above our own.

Slide #20 How do we behavior our way out of selfishness?

4. Scripture: Pursue God.

Psalms 119:36 Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.

Psalms 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible and it is just filled with verse after verse about the Word of God and it uses many different words to describe the Word of God. Words like.... law, ways, precepts, decrees, commands, wonders, statues etc. and this particular word... 'statutes' means a 'witness'.

The writer of this Psalm is pleading to God... Turn my heart toward your 'witness', not toward selfishness, but towards your 'witness'. How do we behavior our way out of selfishness... by pursuing God through His witness... the Scriptures.

Hold up the Bible... this is it! I told Matthew and Nicole yesterday in the middle of the ceremony... this is it! If you have not made this 'witness' a regular part of your life... you are missing it! The Word of God is living and active and has the power to drive selfishness right out of our lives... and there is no other arena in life where we so desperately need the power of this witness... then in our marriages!

Slide #21 1 Samuel 20:41-42 David got up from the south side [of the stone] and bowed down before Jonathan three times, with his face to the ground. Then they kissed each other and wept together-- but David wept the most.

Slide #22 Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD is witness between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants forever.'"

True love will pursue God because God is love! When we relinquish our rights for the sake of others we get the chance to lose ourselves in a much greater cause... the cause of God.

Listen carefully... whether we like it or not... we have a reputation in the eyes of those around us, especially to those we are closest to... and the big question is... what is that reputation? Is it self-centeredness or others-centeredness?

I would like to end this morning with a 'selfishness' inventory. Let's go to our notes.

Slide #23 Selfishness Inventory:

- 1) Do I truly want what is best for _____?
- 2) Do I want them to feel loved by me?
- 3) Do they believe I have their best interests in mind?
- 4) Do they see me as looking out for myself first?

Slide #24 Dare for the week: Buy something that communicates... 'I was thinking of you today'.

It might be for you wife, husband, kid, fiancé, best friend, neighbor... you name it!

Slide #25 Prayer and reflection:

Benediction:

Might we be compassionate:

As we see the hurt behind the hard façades of mockers,

As we touch those who might have cried "unclean" in other days,

And as we live among those who might indeed appear unworthy of love

Might we overcome our selfishness, our pride and put on Your robe of abiding, deep love.