

Truth and Dare!
4th in a series of 6

Welcome to Timberline Church and welcome to our fourth edition of Truth or Dare. My name is marlin and what a beautiful weekend! Well, you folks know the drill by now? Who is still willing this morning?

Truth questions:

1st Service Only:

1. 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?

Either:

1. What is the funniest thing that you have ever gotten into trouble for?
2. What do you think is your best feature?
3. What is your earliest Childhood memory?
4. What is your biggest fear?
5. If you had to change your first name... what would you change it to?
6. 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. Sing a nursery rhythm.

2nd Service Only

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

Either:

1. Make your funniest face.
2. Give us all a gorilla face and stance.
3. Scream your loudest scream.
4. Try yodeling while the congregation counts to five.
5. Lick your elbow.
6. Say the alphabet backwards.
7. Walk the entire way around the auditorium with your eyes shut.... As fast as you can
8. Pat your head and rub your tummy.

Alright... let's stand up... take at least 10 steps and find some people you don't know very well and say good morning and then remain standing for a time of worship through singing.

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.

Timberline is the household of God... we are like a family and every family has a certain code of behavior. For example: In our family we eat together and share favorite parts of the day around the dinner table and we talk a lot and we eat ice cream on Thursday evening and watch a movie on Monday evening and we pray together before we go to bed. We have developed certain behaviors and those that have moved in with us soon learn that there are certain expectations when you live at the Nafzigers... it's just the way we conduct things in our household.

Paul is saying... the same concept applies to the Church. At TL there is a certain way that people should live because the Church is the pillar and foundation of the truth. And because of this... we bring you these messages.

Slide #2 Truth and Dare!

Truth and dare is a series of sermons about love and behavior... whether it be behavior in the family, behavior on the job, behavior in marriage or behavior in the Church. Our Clarian Call challenges us to love by 'Rebuilding Relationships' because relationships in our culture are vulnerable and are in jeopardy. The Churches job... is to love by protecting relationships and by breathing as much life into them as possible.

So with each truth about love... we are going to give you a dare to act upon. The title of the message this morning is...

Slide #3 Love dares to be Thoughtful!

The dictionary defines 'thoughtful' as... 'given to or chosen or made with heedful anticipation of the needs and wants of others.' Thoughtfulness is all about the needs and wants of others.

Slide #4 Assumption: All of us enjoy being thought about.

I would imagine there are some exceptions... but I believe it's a safe assumption that all of us feel good when other think about us and respond to us in thoughtful ways. There would be no point to this message this morning if none of us appreciated thoughtfulness.

So why would people not be thoughtful? Why would people be thoughtless? What is the root of thoughtlessness? What causes it? So, its mic time... who has a response to this? (Roving Mic)

We threw this question around at our Creative Ministries Team several weeks ago and also just this past Wednesday evening and came up with the following responses.

Slide #5 What is the root of thoughtlessness?

- 1) Lack of consideration
- 2) Lack of thinking (the older we get the more energy it takes to think)
- 3) Overload... rushing through life
- 4) Distractions

Here is another question we threw around at our CM Team meeting: Have cell phones made us more or less thoughtful?

Slide #6 Psalm 139:17-18 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you.

This is an incredible notion... the God of the universe is thinking about us! Not only does He think about us... but he thinks about us a lot!

The sum of his thoughts about us are vast, they are as countless as the grains of sand! How much is that?

That's why we have Google! There are approximately 3,614,981,715 grains of sand in an 8 ounce cup. Multiply that by the seashores and deserts of the world and you have the vast sum of God's thoughts! You do the math! Someone did and I didn't know how to read the number... so I thought I would start with a cup.

Here is how Steven and Alex Kendrick, authors of the Love Dare (pick it up), say it.

Slide #7 Love thinks. It's not a mindless feeling that rides on waves of emotion and falls asleep mentally. It keeps busy in thought... knowing that loving thoughts precede loving actions.

By the way this is a great book, I highly recommend it!

Romance is a good illustration. When we first fall in love, being thoughtful comes naturally! We spend hours dreaming about how great she looks and what she might be doing at the time, thinking about what we might talk about or do next time we are together, enjoying the sweet memories of the past and we text or face book and say things like... I can't stop thinking about you... you are always on my mind.

And then we get married... and the hunt is over, the pursuing is done and our thoughts get refocused on making a living or raising children or paying the bills or our next doctor visit... and if we are not careful...we stop thinking about our spouse.

If we do not relearn to be thoughtful, we may end up regretting missed opportunities to demonstrate our love for each other.

Steven and Alex Kendrick also write....

Slide #8 Thoughtlessness is a silent enemy to a loving relationship.

And men, if we are honest we struggle to be thoughtful more than women do... for the express reason that we tend to focus on things...like a laser... and forget the rest of the world in the process. Mark Gungor says it this way.

Slide #9 Video Clip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8VWjoMwDik>

He's nuts! I watched his marriage video about 4 times and I still laugh every time I see it... because it is so painfully true! This is the reason I just about lost it at Matthew and Nicole's wedding last week... remember... because I was in the middle of the closing prayer when I realized that I had forgotten to marry them... and I have a man's brain which means the prayer box was what was before me and suddenly I hear this little whisper from outside the prayer box that said... you forgot to marry them... and now I got two boxes in front of me... and I'm a guy... I can't do two boxes!

So I opened the 'you forgot to marry them' box... just long enough to panic and then I went back to the prayer box and then back to the 'you forgot to marry them' box and so my prayer sounded like staccato and my family is thinking... he's losing it... he must be about to faint or throw up or

something. Nothing was wrong... it's just that I'm a guy... who suddenly has two boxes that were touching each other... and for me that's a train wreck!

Now if I'd have been a women...it would have been no problem... the one box would have stayed open... I would have been praying... and the 'you forgot it' box would have been opened... and I would have multi tasked... without a glitch or missing a beat. Mark explains it this way.

Slide #10 Video Clip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnEfmUd68G4>

Women tend to be more thoughtful... partly because they are more emotional and care, and partly because they think relationally... but it's also because of the way their brain functions... because everything is connected in their life and they can look in multiple boxes at one time... and make the connection.

Men... it's not an excuse for us... it's just that knowing this helps us to understand better what is going on.

Men tend to think in headlines and say exactly what they mean. Women tend to hint at things...so at times men we need to listen to what is implied if we want to get the full meaning of what is said. Again, Steven and Alex Kendrick address this in The Love Dare.

Women long for their husbands to be thoughtful. When a woman speaks she desires her husband to be attentive enough to figure out her unspoken needs... things implied. Why? Because she can easily connect all the dots... and therefore she thinks that with a little effort we can do the same and it's much more difficult for us to do this! So sometimes we are all bewildered by this! But there is a solution... there really is. Love requires that we think about each other... thoughtfulness... men & women... the kind of thinking that builds bridges through the dares of patience, kindness and selflessness.

What does the Bible say about thoughtfulness? If you go to your NIV or KJV concordance... you won't find anything. But if you go to the TLB you will find some interesting verses.

Slide #11

1. There is a connection between thoughtfulness and common sense.

Proverbs 23:15 TLB My son, how I will rejoice if you become a man of common sense. Yes, my heart will thrill to your thoughtful, wise words.

Slide #12

2. Thoughtfulness is a requirement for leadership.

1 Timothy 3:2 TLB For a pastor must be a good man whose life cannot be spoken against. He must have only one wife, and he must be hard working and thoughtful, orderly, and full of good deeds.

The word for pastor can also be translated... bishop, elder, overseer, Christian officer, superintendent or a leader in general. Thoughtfulness is a requirement for good leadership.

Slide #13

3. Thoughtfulness is a marriage thing.

1 Timothy 3:11 TLB Their wives must be thoughtful, not heavy drinkers, not gossipers, but faithful in everything they do. (deacon's wives)

Slide #14

1 Peter 3:7 TLB You husbands must be careful of your wives, being thoughtful of their needs and honoring them as the weaker sex. Remember that you and your wife are partners in receiving God's blessings, and if you don't treat her as you should, your prayers will not get ready answers.

Slide #15

4. Thoughtfulness is a conscious choice.

1 Peter 4:7-8 TLB The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore be earnest, thoughtful men of prayer. Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love makes up for many of your faults.

Being thoughtful means more than just observation... it means making a decision that leads to action and in the NT we have such an individual. Her name was Dorcas... and although we don't know much about Dorcas... and even though she only appears in the Bible in one account... her story has been told over and over... down through the ages because it clearly depicts thoughtfulness. Let's go to the Word of God.

Slide #16 Acts 9:36-43 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor.

Slide #17 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

Slide #18 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

Slide #19 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.

Slide #20 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

What a great story! Let's talk for a few minutes about the power of thoughtfulness. Let's go to our notes.

Slide #21 The power of thoughtfulness:

1. Thoughtful people are always doing good.

Acts 9:36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good...

It wasn't an occasionally good deed by Dorcas... it was all the time! The NASB reads, 'this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity, which she continually did.' It had become a way of life for her.

Slide #22 The power of thoughtfulness:

2. Thoughtful people help the poor and marginalized.

Acts 9:36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor.

She had a focus... it wasn't just her family or her kids or her well-to-do neighbors... it was the poor. She was an Isaiah 58 kind of person... if you don't know what that is... read it. If you don't like it... you are probably in the wrong church.

Slide #23 The power of thoughtfulness:

3. Thoughtful people are not immune from struggle.

Acts 9:37 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room.

I included this because of perspective! We have this illusion at times that if we are good people and do good things that God will bless us with prosperity, good health and longevity... not necessarily true. Dorcas, the one who did good and cared for poor people... got sick and died.

Being thoughtful is not about us! It's not about getting something... it's about giving something!

Slide #24 The power of thoughtfulness:

4. Thoughtful people develop a following.

Acts 9:39 All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

She had a following, they showed up and it grabbed the attention of the disciples and eventually Peter. People will notice when we are thoughtful! People will be attracted to us when we are thoughtful!

Slide #25 The power of thoughtfulness:

5. Thoughtful people are positioned for a miracle and witness.

Acts 9:42 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

Many people believed in the Lord... and yes it was the miracle that brought on this revival... but it was the thoughtful quiet life of Dorcas that brought on the miracle? Being a thoughtful person will position us for a miracle and it will also empower us to be a witness. It's no guarantee... but it places us in the line up.

Will you take the dare this week to be like Dorcas?

Invite the Worship Team up:

Slide #26 Dare for the week: Contact a friend and ask how it's going... and then be ready to listen or to help.

Slide #27 Prayer and Reflection (Lisa on Piano)

I would love to hear some stories about what you are doing with the love dares. Maybe you gave... maybe you received... tell us about them... call... email... snail mail.... whatever! I can read them the closing week of this series and it can be a great encouragement to all of us.

Benediction:

Might we be considerate

As we sense sorrow or strain in another,

As we are asked to handle something dear or holy,

And as we lean in to understand or even touch

Might we come to know something of Your loving-kindness.