

The, in your face,  
honesty of Jesus  
Part 1

Oh, the things Jesus says

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Have you ever been around someone who said something that made someone feel uncomfortable? It was the truth but no one else had dared to mention this. It was the truth. It was the 800 pound pink gorilla that had been in the living room for a while but no one dared to say a word about it. In our opinion, the person who dared to mention the 800 pound pink gorilla, said the wrong thing, to the wrong person, at the wrong time? And we thought, “ut-oh. Here we go. This is not gonna be pretty.”

Did you know that Jesus did this regularly?

Often we see Jesus saying things, to certain people, at the most unusual times that would make most of us cringe and want to disappear!

These encounters are really awkward and make people uncomfortable.

When we look at the difficult sayings of Jesus, we need to remember that we are watching love in action. Jesus is not having not having a “bad day, frustrated or simply blowing off steam.”

“When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. But the Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal. Then the Lord said to him, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.” Luke 11:37-39

Jesus has just entered this man’s home, having accepted an invitation to dinner. Every guest who has ever passed through those doors has washed their hands before being seated, slavishly observing a custom unbroken for centuries. It is a test of orthodoxy and solidarity. It was the first step of proof that you were a “real Jew.”

Jesus knows this, knows everyone is watching his every move. He walks right past the line at the washbasin, makes himself comfortable at the table. The host is speechless. Jesus reads the looks on his face and offers an explanation:

“Oh – the washing bit,” he says as he takes a bit of bread, “It completely clouds the issue. Outwardly, you look sensational. But inwardly, your heart is full of greed and wickedness.”

Apparently, he’s not concerned about being invited back.

You might be saying to yourself... “loving? Yea. Right. This wasn’t even polite.”

“Remember, Jesus was not strolling through the Israeli countryside offering poetry readings. He is on a mission to rescue a people who are so utterly deceived most of them don’t even want to be rescued.” John Eldredge

- The honesty and severity are measured out precisely, according to the amount of delusion and self-deception encasing his listener.

When a soul is encrusted with pride, bigotry, self-righteousness, and intellectual elitism – as was his dinner host – then that shell does need to be struck hard at times in order to cause a crack that might allow some light in.

I. Why am I afraid to tell the truth?

Why are you afraid to tell the truth to our mother who is self-destructing because of alcohol?

Why are we afraid to tell the truth to our grown children who are not living for the Lord?

Why are we afraid to tell the truth to our partner concerning their selfish, arrogant behavior?

Why am I afraid to tell your friend that they are being fearful and controlling?

#### 1. We love our “own” sins

“You love evil rather than good, falsehood rather than speaking the truth.” Psalm 52:3

#### 2. Fear

Most of us are NOT afraid to tell the truth, we are afraid of the reaction we would get.

How it would change our relationship, our job, our situation. We just don’t want to rock the boat or change the status quo as so we allow the other person to continue in their sin, unabated.

#### 3. It will cost us – and we don’t want to pay the price.

Anytime we venture into the hallowed sanctuary of someone else precious sin, it is going to make the relationship messy.

#### 4. We’re cowards

I don’t really care enough to risk the tension, backlash, penalties, or rejection that will come from being honest.

John the Baptist got his head cut off – for speaking the truth  
Paul was beaten and thrown in prison – for speaking the truth  
Jesus was nailed to a cross – for speaking the truth

Pretty much all the honest truth telling in the world is done by children. ~ Oliver Wendell

“Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 18:3

Besides the obvious faith of children in their parents, I wonder if Jesus might have also been thinking about the honesty of a child?

### II. Let’s be clear about a couple of things:

#### 1. I’m not Jesus

He is perfect love and he knows what is good, right and true in every situation.

#### 2. I’m not the Holy Spirit

It is the job of the HS to convict people of sin, righteousness and judgment.

#### 3. I’m not God

God is all-knowing, all powerful, and present at every place at every moment.

However God will use me to speak the truth to others

Am under the control of the HS?

Meaning: what I am saying to you is first and foremost for the glory of God and secondly for your good.

I have nothing to do with this. I am just the UPS delivery man.  
I am just the messenger.

Am under the control of the Flesh?

I may be speaking the Truth, but it comes across as mean, hateful and rude. And it is mean, hateful and rude because I am no longer just the messenger - I have personal vendetta, agenda or score to settle. This is when we get into trouble.

When Jesus confronted the Pharisee with his “greed and wickedness” – to the average person, it seemed mean, hateful and rude. Yet we know that Jesus was not being any of these things.

He was like a master surgeon, who realizes, “This cut is really gonna hurt. But in order to reset this bone, the cut must be made. I’m so sorry, but I am willing to hurt you in order to help you.”

What is the alternative, the surgeon could say:

“OK since this is gonna be so painful, let just forget about the fact that your leg is broke in two of 3 pieces. I think, in time, it will probably all work out just fine. Just gone on home, have a great day and I’ll see you around.”

If this ever happened to you, you would sue for malpractice. Yet when God does surgery on us, we accuse him of being mean, angry and rude. Ironic.

In order to appreciate how beautiful this is, think of how rarely it occurs, and how even more rarely it is done well. Most people go through their entire lives without anyone, ever, speaking honest, loving direct words to the most damaging issues in their lives.

Pause of a moment, and count the times, this has been done for you. Better, pause and count the times you have offered this to someone you love.

### III. I need people who will speak the truth to me

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.” Eph 4:15

How open am I to receiving the truth?

### IV. I need to speak truth to other people

How willing am I to confront someone about their sin or bad behavior?