

PILGRIM HOME CHURCH

The smaller groups in our church community are inside our homes where we go deeper, build friendships, and walk out the Christian life with each other.

HOME CHURCH GUIDE

- + "Breaking the Ice" question (group facilitator)
- + **CHECK-INS:** Introduce, check-in
- + **CARE:** Needs in the group
- + **COMPASSION:** What is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbours to join in?
- + **GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS** Church-wide, group-only
- + **DIG IN:** Discuss questions as a group
- + **END AND HOMEWORK:** Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

WARM-UP QUESTIONS:

- When are you most tempted to withhold the truth, shade the story a bit in a conversation or situation?
- Why do you think political actors are tempted to (and often do) spin the truth?
- Think of a time when you were lied to about something and later found out the true story. What did you think about the lie? The motivations of the one telling it? What did it do to the relationship?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Read main passages again: Matthew 5:33-37, 15:10-20
- Do you think it is ever morally permissible to lie? If so, on what basis?
- What are some ways in which people develop the habit of lying? How can this habit be broken?
- What about lying in moral emergencies or other situations of extreme oppression?
- What is the most significant thing we can do to change or break the cycle of lies and deceptions in our world, related to truthful speech?
- Is God's truthfulness, fidelity, and "true-ness" an important part of your understanding of God's character as revealed in Jesus?
- Other scripture to consider: Ephesians 4:14-15, Matthew 23:16-22

PRAYER REQUESTS:

FEBRUARY 16, 2020

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE ON FIRE

THE HEART AND TRUTH-TELLING

Our words shape the world we live in. From "fake news" and wildly different reports on impeachment, to Communist China's suppression of the truth about the Novel Coronavirus, we live in a world of offence fed by lies and deception.

Today we continue in our series with The Heart and Truth-Telling. Truthful speech that flows out of a new heart helps shape a different kind of church and society. We have a light-shining role that makes the world better or worse. Jesus restated this from Jewish law and calls us to a transformed use of our words.

KEY TEXTS:

Matthew 15:10-20 (NET Bible)

True Defilement

Then he called the crowd to him and said, "Listen and understand. What defiles a person is not what goes into the mouth; it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles a person." Then the disciples came to him and said, "Do you know that when the Pharisees heard this saying they were offended?" And he replied, "Every plant that my heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted. Leave them! They are blind guides. If someone who is blind leads another who is blind, both will fall into a pit." But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." Jesus said, "Even after all this, are you still so foolish? Don't you understand that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and then passes out into the sewer? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these things defile a person. For out of the heart come evil ideas, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are the things that defile a person; it is not eating with unwashed hands that defiles a person."

Matthew 5:33-37 (NET Bible)

Oaths

"Again, you have heard that it was said to an older generation, 'Do not break an oath, but fulfill your vows to the Lord.' But I say to you, do not take oaths at all—not by heaven, because it is the throne of God, not by earth, because it is his footstool, and not by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. Do not take an oath by your head, because you are not able to make one hair white or black. Let your word be 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no.' More than this is from the evil one.

MAIN IDEA: Speaking Truthfully and "In-love" harnesses the tongue. This is what flows out of a mind/heart being continually surrendered to Jesus' grace. Discipleship and repentance aim at our hearts, to change desires, which change our loves, and manifest in our words and actions.

PRAYER

WHY THIS SERIES FOCUS? Two images of fire and our words in scripture: James 3:5-6 - Fire of Hell or Acts 2:1-4 Holy Spirit's fire manifesting in our words? Which fire is in your fireplace?

RECAP LAST SUNDAY, THE MAIN IDEA: Our Cursing/Spell-Casting Use of the Tongue. Awareness of our words.

The Problem -

- **False Solutions -**
- **The Right Start -**
- **Matthew 15:10-20**
 - "External weariness and the burdens of religious legalistic activity can never produce the rest for one's soul that is found in being yoked to the gentleness and meekness of Jesus' heart (11:28 - 30). The words one utters are the external evidence of either a good or evil inner heart (12:34 - 35). Ultimately, the seed of the Word of God planted in one's heart will reveal externally whether one has received Jesus' message of the kingdom or has hardened his or her heart against it (13:10 - 23)."
- Transformation from the heart.
 - Hearts are _____ - which direction is your heart headed?

EXCURSUS: THE HEART

- **In the Old Testament/New Testament**
- "It was essentially the whole man, with all his attributes, physical, intellectual and psychological, of which the Hebrew thought and spoke, and the heart was conceived of as the governing centre of all of these...Character, personality, will, mind are modern terms which all reflect something of the meaning of "heart" in its biblical usage (IVP NBD,456).
- "Mind"

- "The use of the word heart in all of these contexts [OT, NT] suggests that on the deepest level human beings are guided and determined from one central point which represents their true humanity, the heart. This is true both of their response to the revelation of God and of their responsibility for their own thinking, willing, and acting" (Eerdman's BD, 471).

- Personality, Intellect and Memory, Emotions, Will.

14 Triads in the Sermon on the Mount: #4 You Shall Not Swear Falsely, Matthew 5:33-37

- The only imperative or commanded behaviour in the text is verse 37 "Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No.'"
- Big idea:
 - There was a perversion of oaths Jesus addresses in Matthew 23:16-22, using them to avoid covenant responsibilities towards others. Oaths to avoid the loving and hard thing to do.
 - The way of deliverance from a sinful pattern of lying and deceiving through 'creative' use of words, oaths, etc. the TRANSFORMING INITIATIVE, is:
- Truth is not only about words, but a

What are we called to?

- A softening heart...will empower us by grace to: _____
- Strip away all
- Truthful living and straightforward, YET IN LOVE, _____ (Ephesians 4:15).
- Our church is striving to create _____

_____, Home Church, prayer huddles, 1-2s.

Final Thought