

Truth and Dare!

6th in a series of 6

Good morning! My name is marlin and I'm the pastor her at TL and welcome to our sixth edition of Truth or Dare. I'm looking for two volunteers this morning brave enough to play the game.

Truth questions:

1st Service Only:

1. What is the greatest number of days that you have gone without showering?

2nd Service Only:

1. If you woke up tomorrow morning and found that you were invisible... what is the first thing you would do?

Either:

1. What is the funniest thing that you have 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. What is one of your biggest regrets!

Dare Challenges:

1st Service Only

1. Show us your best dance move.
2. Give us a gorilla face and stance.

2nd Service Only

1. Wear this tag
2. Try yodeling while the congregation counts to five.

Either:

1. Make your funniest face.
2. Scream your loudest scream.
3. Lick your elbow.
4. Say the alphabet backwards.
5. Pat your head and rub your tummy.

Handout: Check out the lime green handout. What has God been teaching you through this Truth and Dare series?

Do you have a testimony or story as a result of doing these dares or being on the receiving end of these dares? If so... please fill it out and place it in the offering plate or give it to the Welcome Center on your way out.

Alright... let's stand up and find some people we don't know very well and thank them for putting up with us this morning and then remain standing for a time of worship through singing.

Youth Missions Trip: Our youth leave this afternoon for 'City Life' in Philadelphia. This is a weeklong opportunity to serve under Young Life. Parents and youth... please note... supper will not be provided... so bring a packed lunch for the road.

If you are going on this trip... please stand... both youth and adults and we would like to have a prayer for you.

I want to begin this morning with a story that has nothing to do with the message... but I want you to hear it anyway.

My Aunt Lois died on June 2nd of this year. And she was godly woman who loved Jesus and had suffered a stroke several years ago... so her passing was really a joy.

At the viewing her husband Amos kept saying something like... double funeral... and since he would often fade in and out of reality... no one took him very seriously and thought he was getting confused between the viewing and the funeral. The very next day after my aunt Lois died... my uncle Amos died... and their kids were trying to put this 'double funeral' thing together.

Six days after we buried my aunt Lois, we buried my uncle Amos and our family was once again gathered together in the same graveyard at the same spot. The pastor had read the scripture, pronounced the committal and closed in prayer and it's real quiet... and suddenly, out of the blue, my uncle Earl, my aunt Lois's only living brother, who has some dementia and lives way down in the back hills of Kentucky, started talking.

He said that six days earlier at my aunts funeral my uncle Amos said to him, Earl I want you to know that I'm going to see Lois in a couple of days and I want you to be sure to come back to my funeral and tell the people that I told you this.

So... you may think I have two nutty old uncles... but I think it's cool to know that God speaks into our lives... regardless of how old or how young we are!

Now... back to the message... 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.

Here is a question I want you to consider. When you behave badly... is it because you don't **know** better or is it because you deliberately **choose** not to behave better. One time a friend of mine said... I always **know** what I should do...I don't struggle to **know** God's will... it's just that sometimes I choose **not to do** what I **know** I should do. Is that the way it is for you?

Paul is saying... I want to make sure you **know** how you should live. I want you to **know** how you should conduct yourselves in your marriages, you work, your play or in any type of relationship. Paul didn't want us to struggle with the **knowing** part of it... so he wrote letters to Timothy and others so that the Church, the pillar and foundation of the truth, would know how to behave... and therefore we bring you these messages about rebuilding relationships.

Slide #2 Truth and Dare!

'Truth and Dare' is a series of sermons about behavior and it is designed to dare us into behaving in love. Week one we talked about patience, week two kindness, week three selfishness, week four thoughtfulness and last week rudeness. The title of the message this morning is...

Slide #3 Love dares to not be irritable

Irritable is different than rude. Rudeness is much more in your face. Rudeness is discourteous, impolite and ill mannered. Irritable on the other hand is being... easily annoyed, touchy or grumpy. Someone has defined it as... to be near the point of a knife... not far from being poked.

We have a great little story in the book of 1 Samuel that sets the stage for this message.

Slide #4

1 Samuel 18:10-11 Msg The next day an ugly mood was sent by God to afflict Saul, who became quite beside himself, raving. David played his harp, as he usually did at such times. Saul had a spear in his hand. Suddenly Saul threw the spear, thinking, "I'll nail David to the wall." David ducked, and the spear missed. This happened twice.

Saul was a guy who was irritable... he just about poked David. He invited David to come and soothe him with his harp and the next thing we know he is trying to kill him. Irritable people are like this... they are erratic... we never know what they might do next! This morning I'm going to make an assumption...

Slide #5 Assumption: No one enjoys being around an irritable person.

I am going to assume this morning that no one wants to hang out with a touchy, grumpy person that is easily annoyed... anyone come to mind? There would be no point to this message if we would find ourselves attracted to irritable people like Saul, and yet the reality is... there are Sauls on our school bus, they work in

our office and on the job site, they exercise at the Y and they go to Church with us. Why are they like this? What makes people irritable? It's time to go to the mic?

Roving Mic Response:

We looked at this question at our Creative Ministries Team Meeting and came up with the following.

Slide #6 Creative Ministries Response:

- 1) We create scenarios in our head
- 2) We want it now
- 3) There is conflict between the world the way it is and the way we want it to be
- 4) Perfectionism

Slide #7 Steven and Alex Kendrick, authors of The Love Dare, write that there are at least two reasons why people are irritable:

Stress and selfishness. We already spent a Sunday morning talking about selfishness... so today we are going to talk about stress.

They go on to say...

Stress weighs us down, drains our energy, weakens our health and invites us to be cranky.

Stress can come at us from many different fronts.

Slide #8 Stress can be brought on by:

- 1) Relational causes; arguing, division or bitterness.
- 2) Excessive causes; overworking, overplaying and overspending.
- 3) Deficiencies; not getting enough rest, nutrition or exercise.

So this morning I want you to think about the stress level in your life... today? How cranky are you! Let's go to our notes and let's rate ourselves on a scale from 1-10.

Stress... so what can we do about it? How can we keep from being cranky, grumpy and irritable? Let's go to our notes.

Slide #9 The Bible's answer to stress:

1. Eliminate unnecessary arguments.

Arguments create stress! So how can we eliminate arguments?

Slide #10 Colossians 3:12-14 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one

another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

These are the verses that Matthew and Nicole picked for their wedding meditation several weeks ago and it's a great visual for a wedding. In the same way that the bride and groom take off their ordinary clothes and put on extraordinary clothes for their wedding day... in the same way...

if we take off our bad behaviors and put on these loving behaviors out of Colossians.... it sets the stage for eliminating arguments.... and consequently eliminating arguments... will reduce stress.

Slide #11 The Bible's answer to stress:

2. Pray through anxieties. Wait!

Slide #12 Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Slide #13 Sarah Young writes... 'Relax and know that I am *God with you*. When you desire My will above all else, life becomes much less threatening. Stop trying to monitor My responsibilities - things that are beyond your control. Find freedom by accepting the boundaries of your domain.'

Think about it... what are we anxious about? Is there something that we are trying to control? Have we come to grips with the limits of our domain?

The reality is... we can't control our boyfriend, the Stock Market, the economy, the weather, our boss... in fact sometimes the only thing we can do is to accept the boundaries of our domain, what we can control, and then present our requests and anxieties to God.

Slide #14 The Bible's answer to stress:

3. Delegate responsibility. Wait!

Slide #15 Exodus 18:21-22 But select capable men from all the people — men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain — and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.

These are the words of Jethro speaking to his son-in-law Moses. Jethro was visiting Moses and he quickly saw that Moses, who was judge and leader of Israel, a nation of 2 million people... was burning out... so he laid out a plan for delegation... appoint

leaders over groups of people. Now folks... we can't delegate everything... there are always some responsibilities that we need to do... but delegation is critical.

Many times there are individuals carrying the lion's share of the load, while others just watch. We need to learn how to delegate... whether it's responsibilities here at TL... or the dishes and laundry at home... or tasks at work.

Sometimes we hesitate to do this because we fear the loss of control or because of perfectionism. At home I often wipe the table after meals... because I want to make sure it gets done right... and that gets in the way of delegation.

Life is a marathon, not a sprint and therefore we need to balance, prioritize and pace ourselves.

Slide #16 The Bible's answer to stress:

4. Avoid overindulging. Wait!

Slide #17 Proverbs 25:16-17 If you find honey, eat just enough - too much of it, and you will vomit. Seldom set foot in your neighbor's house - too much of you, and he will hate you.

One evening I had supper with my father at Landis Homes and that evening they had potato chips and they were delicious! So I went back to the counter and told them how good they were and asked if I could buy another helping. I think the lady was kind of flattered and she told me they were homemade, right in their kitchen, and she promptly gave me this huge helping of chips for free. So I went back to my table and just devoured them... they were phenomenal! They were better than Grandma Utz's Kettle cooked chips... the lard was just dripping off them. Anyway... that night I didn't sleep much... my stomach was all cramped up and my body spent most of the night trying to figure out what to do with all the lard. It was not a pretty night!

A handful was good... but a bucketful caused stress! Think about it... how do we overindulge? It may be food, it may be our cell phones, it may be vacations, it may be work or it may be accumulating stuff.

Slide #18 The Bible's answer to stress:

5. Exercise a Sabbath rest. Wait!

Slide #19 Hebrews 4:9-11 There remains, then, a Sabbath — rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest...

A 'Sabbath Rest' was an OT law and is different from what we know today as 'Sunday'... but I believe there is a principal that still carries on. A Sabbath Rest strategically allows us time to recharge, refocus and add breathing room or margin to

our weekly schedule. By establishing this weekly practice... we place cushions between us and the pressures around us... this helps reduce the stress that keeps us on edge.

Because I'm a pastor... my schedule is a bit different than others and my weekends are the busiest time of my week... so here are some of the things I do to exercise a Sabbath Rest. I work very hard on Saturday... and Sunday morning from about 5:15 AM until 1 PM... and then I do the best I can to disconnect for the rest of the day.

We rarely look for things to do on Sunday afternoon and Sunday evening...and we often read, rest, play games or have family time. Monday during the day I work hard around the house... but my mind gets a rest. Thursday I take the morning off and just spend time with Lisa. That's what it looks like for me to exercise a Sabbath Rest... I set aside these spots to disconnect and this has helped me to find balance in my life.

So how do you exercise a Sabbath Rest?

Here's the question for the morning: Am I a calming breeze or a storm waiting to happen. Monday evening, during Kid's camp, I walked outside and although it had been a really hot day... there was this beautiful breeze that had kicked up... and I made the comment to one of the counselors about how wonderful it felt... and he said... it is a beautiful breeze... my only concern is what this beautiful breeze might bring us.... his concern was a storm.

Are we locked, loaded and ready to overreact? Are we a storm ready to happen or are we a calming breeze that has dropped kicked stress out of our lives?

Slide #20 Dare for the week: Make a list of where you need to build margin into your schedule so you can reduce your stress.

Some people pride themselves in being busy. Some people are uncomfortable with Margin. Psalm 46:10 reads... Be still and know that I am God. I struggle with this... but I'm learning.

Slide #21 Prayer and Reflection

Benediction:

Might we be patient:

As we suffer the abrasive assaults of the ignorant,

As we grow heated... and restrain the words that struggle for release

And as we fail and have to rise to find the righteous path again

Might we, upheld by Your mercy, seek harmony within, in the midst of discord.