

3 Love Comes to Town Week 3: To Tell You the Truth
Week of October 12, 2025
Ephesians 4:15
Discussion Guide

ICEBREAKER

There are lots of different descriptions of conflict styles. A few examples: The TURTLE hides when faced with conflict and waits until it blows over! The TEDDY BEAR wants everyone to love them so they will accept blame and look for accommodation so that the conflict is over fast. Maybe your style is more like THE SHARK—aggressive, seeking out conflict and speaking the truth with the subtlety of a shark bite (well, someone has to be truthful, right?). Or, maybe you're THE FOX—you can wheel and deal yourself in and out of every situation - you are smart and creative. But hopefully, we will strive to be like THE OWL—you work hard to hear the other side of the conflict and have wisdom to engage in resolution. While none of these may fit you perfectly, which of these (or a combination of these) best describes you?

Ⓐ APPLY THE BIBLE

Jesus said, "For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (Matthew 12:34). "Your souls aren't harmed by what you eat, but by what you think and say" (Mark 7: 15, TLB).

Q1. What is the connection between our heart and our words?

Since Jesus tells us that words are an overflow of the heart, we have to start taking our hearts more seriously. Jesus tells us how to do this. He showed us that the kingdom is the key to heart change: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near" (Matthew 4:17). Repent means to turn our hearts and lives around. Jesus taught us to pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done" (Matthew 6:10). God's kingdom is where God's will is done.

Q2. How can seeking the kingdom of heaven first help us change our hearts?

Q3. How does this truth fit with our patterns of communication?

Q4. Are you caught up in a vicious cycle of words with someone? (No need to name names)

Q5. What small step could you take to break this pattern? Remember to think about your heart!

Here are some practical tips that can help break a vicious cycle before words start pouring out of your mouth. Go around the group and have one person read one

suggestion, and then answer the following questions in red. (You might be tempted to think of another person you think should see these; however, ask the Lord to help you open YOUR heart.)

- Take five (or 10) — step away for a few minutes and cool down before speaking.
- Pray for the other person.
- Wait until after you have eaten to have difficult conversations.
- Use owning statements instead of blaming. Own your feelings.
- Watch the tone and volume of your words.
- Focus on the solution, not the problem.
- You are not responsible to—nor can you— change others, but you can change yourself.

Q6. Which of these might be most helpful for you today?

Q7. Which one of these could be a practical next step for you today?

ⓑ BEAR BURDENS

Read this quote from Tim Keller:

“Love without truth is sentimentality; it supports and affirms us but keeps us in denial about our flaws. Truth without love is harshness; it gives us information but in such a way that we cannot really hear it. God’s saving love in Christ, however, is marked by both radical truthfulness about who we are and yet also radical, unconditional commitment to us. The merciful commitment strengthens us to see the truth about ourselves and repent. The conviction and repentance moves us to cling to and rest in God’s mercy and grace.” (The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God).

Q1. What is Keller talking about?

Q2. How can knowing that we can rest in God’s mercy and grace help us as we learn to speak the truth in love?

Q3. Ask your group to pray for one relationship you would love to strengthen or improve.

Q4. How has this lesson helped you identify how you can change in order to help your relationships?

Q5. Would you be willing to share this insight with your group? If you are stuck, ask your group for help!

ⓒ CHANCE TO SERVE

Woodside’s Church Has Left the Building Day of Service is coming up November 2nd.

Groups, families, EVERYONE is invited to participate in this awesome outreach, applying in practical ways all that we are learning about loving others. Are you and your group signed up?!