

THE RIGHT4 MINISTRIES

PEOPLE FACTOR

a monthly resource for
leaders, volunteers, and teams

Four Words that Will Revolutionize Your Relationships

Part 2 of 5

(and they are not four-letter words!)

“Honest – Direct – Respectful – Timely”

I have found these four simple words able to guide me to be a better person, disciple, friend, and leader. Jesus modeled them.

In my last blog of the People Factor, I provided an [overview](#) of how they can be helpful in your relationships and leadership roles. This time, I want to go deeper with being **HONEST**.

In Billy Joel’s song “[Honesty](#)”, he sings,

If you look for truthfulness
You might just as well be blind
It always seems to be so hard to give
Honesty is such a lonely word
Everyone is so untrue
Honesty is hardly ever heard
And mostly what I need from you

We want people to be honest with us. But we are not always so quick to be honest with them. Before having a meaningful or difficult conversation with someone, ask your self..

“Am I being honest with God, my self, and others?” NOTE: I’m making a distinction between the words myself and my self. This isn’t a typo—I do this by design. Self refers to our personhood, our individuality, our holistic identity (physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually). Thus “your self” is the interaction and collaboration of your mind, body, and spirit.

Sometimes we play games with the idea of being truthful.

1. “If I’m totally honest, they will think less of me”
2. “I don’t think they can handle the truth”
3. “What I said was true” (But sometimes we don’t communicate all relevant information, leaving a person believing something that is not completely true).

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Our self-talk can keep us from being honest in our communication. We need to be forthright and honest with God, our self, and others.

Being honest with God is the place to start. Jesus said,

“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8.31-32).

And we want to live free and speak the truth, don't we?

We need to overcome our doubts, fears, or confusion about the facts and our feelings about them. What God may be asking of us may make us feel uncomfortable. Avoiding God's words and wisdom always makes it more difficult to be honest with Him, your self and others.

God has heard it all. He has seen it all. He knows all about the past, present, and future. Humble your self and seek him to experience his presence, power, and peace. Tell him your true feelings and listen to his loving truth for you and others.

Being honest with God is the path to being honest with your self. Why do we pretend not to know what we know? Is it because to admit we know it would require a conversation or an action we are unwilling to take. It would mean we will need to take responsibility for how we handle and communicate the information.

Sometimes we don't know what to do or how to do it. Sometimes we do, and honestly, we choose not to do it. Honesty with others starts with being honest with God and our self. It is not just blurting out your thoughts and then saying, “I was just being honest.”

Remember, we want to live with Honest, Direct, Respectful, and Timely relationships.

Jesus said, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life...”* (John 14.6).

Being honest is a sign of maturity.

“Speaking the truth in love, we will grow up in all aspects into Him who is the Head, Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 4.15).

Jesus came from the father, full of grace and truth (John 1.14, 4.15). We have been called and sent by Jesus to be full of grace and truth like Him.

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But sometimes we can be afraid to be truthful. Being honest might cause others to think less of us. So, we can be tempted to hide our thoughts or deceive others rather than be honest with them. This kind of behavior is based in pride, deception, and fear which can only lead to an inauthentic relationship.

God calls us to walk in truth and humility with grace. Being honest about our flaws, thoughts, and deeds is being real. It engages people and helps them to want to be in a genuine relationship with you.

When I am not willing to be honest, who am I protecting? I don't think God needs my help, He can handle Himself.

If I am trying to protect myself, I will live a life of secrecy. If I am failing to be honest in order to protect others, I will become an enabler and live a life of co-dependence.

Just being honest is not enough. Remember, Jesus came in grace and truth with grace. We need to be Honest, Direct, Respectful, and Timely. It is not one, two, or three, but all four that are the keys to healthy relationships.

Next time, I will talk about being Direct.

Share the insights you are learning. Practice them with those you love as well as with those you need to be loving more.

This has been another *People Factor* to help you do *what you do best!*

Bruce Bugbee

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