



Inside Out
Part 1: Honesty
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July 31 & August 1, 2010

An Honest Request for My Summer

Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody. – *1 Thessalonians 4:11-12*

My Response

1. I took my life “off the grid” (lead a quiet life)
2. I focused on my relationship with God (mind your own business)
3. I built a fire pit in my backyard (work with your hands)

My Discovery: Honest conversations are hard!

*Some people will not tolerate such emotional honesty in communication.
They would rather defend their dishonesty
on the grounds that it might hurt others.
Therefore, having rationalized their phoniness into nobility,
they settle for superficial relationships.
– Author Unknown*

An Honest Conversation with God

GOD: Grant, do you love me?

ME: Of course I love you, I...

- Come from a long tradition of people who love you (History)
- Chose a profession that centers on loving you (Performance)
- Have accepted your offer to deal with my guilt and my shame (Compliance)
- Say it all the time (Declaration)

GOD: That’s not what I asked. Let’s try again. Do you love me? Have you ever simply allowed yourself to be loved by me?

Honest Questions to Consider

1. Is my life quiet enough to hear God?

The LORD said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.”

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” – *1 Kings 19:9b-13*
(Continues on back)

2. Is my life owned by another love other than God?

Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. – *Revelation 2:4-5*

3. Have I ever allowed myself to fully experience God's love?

The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."
– *Zephaniah 3:17*

**Before you can ever be honest with yourself or others,
you must first be honest with God.**

Next Steps

In September, life gets busy and noisy for most of us. Take the month of August to develop a habit of spending at least 15 minutes a day in quiet and solitude (that's just 1.5% of your waking hours), letting God "quiet you with his love." No music, no books, no sleeping... just quiet. In the last couple minutes of your quiet time each day, write down what you experienced. At the end of the month, take an honest look at what you wrote to see if God might be telling you something you need to hear.

On Your Way Home

Count how many options you have to make your life noisy. How many of them get in the way of hearing God?

Personal or Small Group Questions



- 1) How would you characterize your summer so far? (fun, busy, exhausting, challenging, etc.) Are you satisfied with your answer?
- 2) How does the idea of quietness make you feel? Scared? Excited? Uncomfortable? At ease? Why?
- 3) In what ways have you been obedient to 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12?
- 4) How could being honest with God help you be honest with yourself and others?
- 5) How can we pray for you tonight?