

January 23, 2011

## TELLING IT LIKE IT IS (Message: Declaration)

Luke 3:1-22

### INTENTION:

*Group members will discover that like the people in the time of John the Baptist, we too can do and say all the right things so that people will see us as good people but God is not impressed. God does not want us to be people who are trying show how righteous we are but to see how righteous He is. John called for the people to prepare their hearts by turning to God and asking Him to cleanse and transform them. Group members should apply John's message by desiring to openly allow God to have His way in their lives.*

### INTRODUCTION:

*This section introduces the idea of being brutally honest.*

1. Optional:
  - a. Show a video clip of Monte Python's "Argument Clinic."
  - b. Go to YouTube: Type in "Argument Clinic" in the title search.
  - c. Show the first 4 minutes.
2. Say: Facebook now has a feature called "Honesty Box." This feature allows people on your Facebook to write comments about what they think about you anonymously.
3. Ask:
  - a. Do you think people should be honest with each other?
  - b. Do you think that most people are honest and open with each other?
  - c. True or False: The closer you are to someone the more honest you should be with them, even if it hurts.
  - d. How honest do you think we should be with ourselves? Why?
4. Say: In our group study, we are going to examine a man who seemed to possess no verbal filter.

### INVESTIGATION

*This section examines the character of John the Baptist.*

1. Say: I am going to read a prediction about who John the Baptist was going to be and what he was going to do. After I am through, try to summarize what this prediction meant to say about him.
  - a. Read Luke 3:4-6
  - b. Allow volunteers to share their insights. (He came to prepare people's hearts for the Messiah)
  - c. With these predictions in mind, what would you expect John's personality to be like?
2. Enlist two volunteers to read about John the Baptist in the following passages:  
Luke 3:7-10, Luke 3:19-20.
3. Ask: From what you have heard:
  - a. What struck you most from this description of John the Baptist?
  - b. What would you guess John's temperament was like?
  - c. What would you say about his people skills?
  - d. Have you ever been that brutally honest with anyone?
  - e. What does it take to motivate or force you to really let someone have it?
  - f. Do you think John has good reason to be so forthright and forceful? Explain.

## INSTRUCTION

*This section examines the “hoped for” response of the people to John’s message.*

1. Say: Every good speech has an application part. The listeners need to respond in some way to what was said. Let’s listen to John’s call to action.
2. Ask a group member to read Luke 3:10-18.
3. Ask:
  - a. What were some specific ways John told his listener they could demonstrate that they had truly repented and had their hearts prepared for the coming Messiah?
  - b. Why do you think John had to spell these things out to members of the crowd?

## INTERACTION

*In this section group members explore how John’s message may apply to us today.*

1. Say: Imagine John the Baptist was making a special appearance at the HP pavilion this weekend. Needless to say he would probably create his share of controversy. Undoubtedly there would be numerous articles or news pieces written about him.
2. Ask:
  - a. John was originally preparing people for the coming of Jesus. What message might he have for us in preparation for the second coming of Christ?
  - b. What specific changes might he lay out for us as believers?
  - c. According to Luke 3:16 who will take over John’s job of preparing hearts for Jesus? (The Holy Spirit).
  - d. What advantage do we have with the Holy Spirit over the crowds that only had John the Baptist?

## IMPLEMENTATION

*This section challenges group members to come bring every part of their lives to God and allow Him to be at home in their hearts*

1. Ask group members to share an area in their life where God needs to work. (You may want to begin the sharing by expressing an area in your life where you tend to turn away from God or have trouble trusting Him.
2. After allowing volunteers to share, thank them for their openness.
3. Show the diagram below to your group. It’s available on the last page.
  - a. Explain that this is a diagram know as the “Johari’s Window.” It demonstrates that all of us have four areas in our awareness of ourselves. (Read each window)
  - b. Say: Ideally, the first window will becoming bigger and the other windows will shrink the longer we know the Lord and the more we allow Him to speak to us.

<b>Known Self</b> Things we know about ourselves and others know about us.	<b>Hidden Self</b> Things we know about ourselves that others do not know about us.
<b>Blind Spots</b> Things others know about us that we do not know.	<b>Unknown Self</b> Things about us that are only known by God.

4. Ask: How many of you believe there are areas in your life where God needs to work that you are unaware of but that others are aware of? If so, what might each of us do to allow open the door for God to work in those areas hidden to us?
5. Now ask: How many of you believe there are things in your life that you are not trusting God with that He is aware you are not aware of? What could do to cooperate with God in those areas?
6. Close by allowing Group members to share their thoughts and pray for each other.

## **Known Self**

Things we know  
about ourselves  
and others know  
about us.

## **Hidden Self**

Things we know  
about ourselves  
that others do not  
know about us.

## **Blind Spots**

Things others  
know about us that  
we do not know.

## **Unknown Self**

Things about us  
that are only  
known by God