



Living Well

The Real Deal



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Check out these websites for more information:

For more detailed information about the ministry - www.livingwellokcc.org
Photos and writings about the ministry - www.livingwellokcc.blogspot.com
Encouragement/culture on marriage - www.livingwellinmarriage.blogspot.com
Marriage events in the state, resources for marriage - www.marriagenetworkok.net
Making Marriage Memorable blog - www.marriagenetworkok.nblogger.com

Get Real!

Resume': a written exaggeration of only the good things a person has done in the past, as well as a wish list of the qualities a person would like to have.
Bo Bennett

"Authenticity" is a buzz word in the culture today. When analyzing the current, youngest adult generation, people often describe them as people who desire authenticity in others.

Does their desire for authenticity come from living in a world of duplicity, deception, and technological illusions?

Interactions often come in the form of electronic dialogues with someone that we only know through their online personae. **We see a picture or video and wonder** if it is real or computer generated or photoshop enhanced.

Authenticity is essential in healthy relationships and for a strong marriage. Being authentic begins with getting real with myself. John Calvin sums up the place where people often find themselves: *The human heart has so many crannies where vanity hides, so many holes where falsehood lurks, is so decked out with deceiving hypocrisy, that it often dupes itself.*

When we travel, in the hotel bathroom, they often have one of those mirrors with extreme magnification. At my age, it is terrifying to look in that mirror and see the reality of the wrinkles in my skin. So, I choose not to. It doesn't change the truth though.

I can't do much about my wrinkles but **I can take a close look at my heart and see the truth.**

What keeps us from being honest with ourselves? For some, the pain is too great—pride precludes us from admitting that we are in a mess and we don't know how to get out or that we haven't done what we know to do.

God knew from the beginning that humans would have a hard time examining their own hearts. *The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?* Jeremiah 17:9 (NAS)

But I can go before him and say *Test me, O LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind.* Psalm 26:2 (NIV)

He will show me the truth about my life. He will also show me the truth about His love for me. He will give me His presence and power to grow to be more like Him.



Ask around

A lie consists in speaking a falsehood with the intention of deceiving. Augustine

One problem with being deceptive is that eventually we may even be honest with ourselves. *How do we know if we have reached that point?*

Ask around.

It takes courage to ask those who know you best. Then, even more courage to admit

it to yourself and ask the Lord to change you.

Give your spouse, your parents, your adult children, your closest friends **permission to tell you the truth about your character and your authenticity.**

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV)

Ask yourself.

- *Do I often have broken relationships?*
- *Do other people doubt what I say or not trust my word?*
- *Do I blame others for what is wrong in my life?*
- *Do I have overdue bills or creditors calling me?*
- *Do I ignore others criticisms of me or justify destructive behavior?*

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, examine your heart. [See the other side]

On the reverse side:

Appearances

Beginning

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

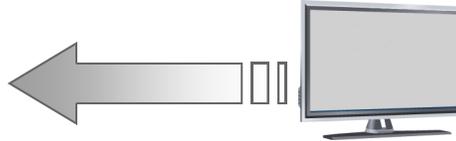
www.livingwellokc.org
www.livingwellokc.blogspot.com
www.livingwellinmarriage.blogspot.com

Coming Soon!

Spending Money: The Go(o)d Way
Class, Thursdays, Aug. 25-Sept. 29
7-8:30 at our office

Annual Dinner, Tuesday, Sept. 27

See more details
on our website.



Appearances can be deceiving

The belief that one's own view of reality is the only reality is the most dangerous of all delusions.

Paul Watzlawick

How life appears to us and to others can be very different.

For example, children growing up in the same home often have very different views of their parents. Eye witness accounts of the same event can be conflicting.

In a research study, when **married couples were asked how long it had been since the last time they had a date together**, averaging the responses, the wives thought it had been 12 weeks and the husbands thought it was six weeks.

Which is true?

Everything we hear is an opinion, not a fact. Everything we see is a perspective, not the truth.

Marcus Aurelius

Is truth important?

Of course, it is important. But how do I know if what I am seeing or hearing is the truth? Am I letting the truth rule my life or my perceptions rule my life?

I act on what I believe to be true, my view of reality.

But I also judge others by what I believe to be true. If "my truth" is based on distorted perspectives, then "my truth" may not be truth at all.

As a person grows up, he will experience emotional pain. As he learns to deal with the pain, he constructs his idea of how life should be lived to avoid pain and have happiness. Those ideas are

then put to the test when he enters into adulthood and begins to make decisions on his own.

Part of what most people decide, at some point, is **how much they are going to reveal to others of who they are on the inside.**

How do I want to appear to others? I reveal only those thoughts, emotions, desires, and dreams that **I think will benefit my standing with others.**

Children usually tell the unfiltered truth about others but often lie to protect themselves from **p u n i s h m e n t** or disapproval.

One of the hardest things to teach a child is that the truth is more important than the consequences. O. A. Battista

As a follower of Christ, I can rely on the fact that He is Truth. I believe that whatever **God wants for me is the very best, even if the consequences of o b e d i e n c e** are uncomfortable or even painful at the time.

I am to see God's truth rather than living by my version of the truth.

God knows my heart and is not deceived by my appearance.

I can come to Him honestly and trust Him to deal with me graciously and lovingly. I can be assured that as I live according to His truth that my life will be more meaningful and my relationships will be healthier.

The Beginning of the End

It began with one lie.

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. Genesis 3:4

Eve believed the lie from Satan.

She believed that she could sin and nothing would happen. She believed that God was withholding something good from her. And she

believed that the forbidden fruit would satisfy her fleshly needs, her physically longings, and her desire for importance. And so did Adam, who was with her and also ate the fruit.

Once **sin became the uniform of life**, man and woman joined the **deception team** with Satan. When

God asked Adam if he had eaten the fruit, **shame started the blame game,** *The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.*

Transparency and authenticity were discarded for self-protection and self-righteousness. I don't have stay on that team—God can redeem me!