

YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS OF ME

Undercover Boss

Most of us have learned to monitor our behavior enough to look like 'upstanding citizens.' But it's possible to modify visible behavior while still harboring a heart controlled by toxic emotions, which may even disguise themselves as virtues. Jesus said that human beings are not tainted by *external* factors, but by *internal* emotions that cause us to dishonor others. So it's not enough to modify our behavior. We've got to go a step further and examine the condition of our hearts in order to isolate the areas where indifference and comfort have taken over and caused us to act without regard for the well-being of others.

Start Talking

When was the last time you were in a movie theater and somebody was being disruptive? How did you handle the situation?

Do you feel like a person who revels in confrontation, or runs from it?

Have you ever choked down a less than desirable restaurant meal because you were too scared to confront the wait staff? What happened?

Looking Back

1. Overall, how did you do this past week in the fight to keep fear out of the driver's seat?
2. Describe any situations in which you found yourself ambushed by fear.
3. Were there any instances in which you actually felt able to follow Peter's lead and, "cast your cares" upon Jesus?



What About You?

1. As an adult, have you ever been confronted about something in your life by someone who took a big risk bringing it to your attention?
2. If so, how did it go?
3. If not, would you be better off today if someone had?
4. What are your “go-to” excuses when you resist the need to confront other people about something harmful in their life?
5. Do you think that “caring” is always comfortable? Why or why not?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: Matthew 18:1–17,

6. In our culture, Jesus’ instructions here might scan as disrespectful or even rude. Why do you think he gives this potentially offensive advice?
7. Why do you think Jesus prescribes this particular order for the confrontations?
8. This passage has particularly harsh words for those who cause other people to get off track in their lives. Why do you think that is?
9. How do you interpret the instruction to treat particularly stubborn members of your faith community who persist in harmful behavior as “Gentiles or tax collectors?” Do you think this phrase is intended as an insult?
10. How can you know the difference between caring enough to confront someone about sin, and simply berating others with your own judgmental attitudes?

Putting It All Together

11. Who in your life would benefit from your decision to put aside indifference, forsake comfort, and confront them about something harmful you’ve noticed?
12. How can you prepare to do this?
13. How can you prepare yourself to be receptive in the event that somebody cares enough to confront you?
14. What other steps can you take to let love win out over indifference in your relationships this week?

