

# To Be Honest...

By Jason W. Triplett

*Do I really look like that?*

I thought and continued to stare at the picture. In pure vanity I studied all the aspects of my own image.

My sister-in-law had shown my wife and I the picture shortly after she took a cell phone snapshot of us and the kids. I didn't feel like the man in the image; smiling, portly, appearing to be a great dad, husband and son. While it was everything I believe other families try to depict in their family snap shots (kids smiling, the appearance of normalcy, etc.) it somehow felt false or contrived.

I concluded that the picture was hiding secrets. It didn't tell about the insecurity, conflict and misshapeness of my life at the time. It held back so much of the inner-life and told such bold truths about the outside life we tend to portray.

Our outside lives sometimes say, "I'm okay, I've got this covered, It's all roses," while our real lives scream from inside a sealed jar, "I'm unsure, I'm in over my head, I'm scared!"

To be honest, I detest pretentiousness of any type. Any outward show, to me, just isn't worth the energy to maintain the falsehood. Think of all that we do to make things/ourselves "look good". I totally believe reality is the best wake-up call, but therein lies my hypocrisy and for the most part your hypocrisy as well. Most of the time we don't have the courage to get real. I mean no cushion, no chaser and no soft landing, 100% pure truth extract. We cannot intently examine the inside of our lives for one, anchored reason. The truth scares us to death.

Consider these adverse truths for a moment:

- Yes, you are an addict.
- Yes, you are overweight.
- Yes, you are abusive.
- Yes, you have made your kids hate you.
- Yes, you are a liar.
- Yes, you are prideful.

Anyone uncomfortable yet? Anyone want to hit the "browser back" button yet? Maybe these are random, or maybe they all apply to me. Either way it doesn't matter. We have a tendency to spend vast amounts of time convincing ourselves we are all okay or setting up constructs and veneers so we don't have to accept the truth. We are usually unable to look into the mirror and take an accurate inventory of what's there. At the core of our emotions and reasoning, we just don't want to. We would rather live in the constructs, hide behind the veneers or believe the lies we've told ourselves. We believe these things protect us. Or do they?

So our answers look like this: "Truth is what you make it," "Live your life in your own way," "My truth isn't your truth," "I'm okay, you're okay," all the while we never believe any of these answers for a second and most times walk away in judgment of each other based on our own set of standards.

I believe there is freedom on the other side of truth. I believe the more we take in the 100% truth, (straight, no chaser) the more we can accept the reality about human life. Perfection isn't required, freedom and wholeness are accessible and don't have to be faked.

- Yes, you are an addict, but, there is freedom even for you.
- Yes, you are overweight, but you are worthy of being absolutely loved.
- Yes, you are abusive, but the cycle can stop here.
- Yes, you have made your kids hate you, but there's always hope for healing.
- Yes, you are a liar, but there is absolutely nothing to fear in the truth.
- Yes, you are prideful, but you are acceptable even when you don't appear to have it all together.

To be honest...All of these are on the other side of accepting the truth. If only we had the courage to step up to reality and stare it boldly in the eye.