

RIGHT IN THE EYE

PART 1: Stranger Than Fiction

INTRODUCTION

There's an unstated part of the American dream. It goes like this: *"We have the freedom to do what we want, when we want, with whom we want, and nobody can tell us what to do . . . as long as it doesn't hurt anybody."* But what if life doesn't work that way? What if you can't do what's right in your own eyes without eventually hurting someone?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you ever daydream about a life in which you don't have to answer to anyone—your boss, your parents, your spouse, the IRS? What is the allure of that kind of fantasy?
2. As you look around the cultural landscape, what consequences do you see of people doing what they want, when they want, with whom they want?
3. Consider the story in Judges 19–20. How is it that circumstances spun out of control even though everyone in the story did what they thought was right? In your own life, when have you seen or experienced bad consequences from people doing what they think is right.
4. Think about a time in your life when you chose to do what was right in your own eyes. In what ways did it hurt you, the people with you, the people who care about you, or the people coming after you?
5. During the message, Andy said, *"The thing that has mastered you—debt, addiction, cycles of bad behavior—began as an expression of your freedom."* What has mastered you? What do you think it would take to break that thing's mastery over you?
6. If you were God, how would you respond to a culture, a nation, or an individual characterized by an attitude of *what I want, when I want it, with whom I want?*

MOVING FORWARD

None of us wants a king until doing what we want lands us in a place where we can't do what we want. When we begin to reap what we sow, we all look for a king to bail us out. We throw ourselves on the mercy of our parents, our bosses, the government . . . or God.

How might your life be different if your standard of behavior changed from doing what you want as long as it *doesn't hurt* anyone to doing what you want as long as it *helps* someone? How would your relationships be different?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Judges 21:25