

PILATE THEREFORE ENTERED AGAIN INTO THE PRÆTORIUM,
AND CALLED JESUS, AND SAID UNTO HIM, ART THOU THE
KING OF THE JEWS? JESUS ANSWERED, SAYEST THOU THIS
OF THYSELF, OR DID OTHERS TELL IT THEE CONCERNING
ME? PILATE ANSWERED, AM I A JEW? THINE OWN NATION
AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS DELIVERED THEE UNTO ME: WHAT
HAST THOU DONE? JESUS ANSWERED, MY KINGDOM IS NOT
OF THIS WORLD:

truth hurts

IF MY KINGDOM WERE OF THIS WORLD, THEN WOULD MY
SERVANTS FIGHT, THAT I SHOULD NOT BE DELIVERED TO
THE JEWS: BUT NOW IS MY KINGDOM NOT FROM HENCE.
PILATE THEREFORE SAID UNTO HIM, ART THOU A KING
THEN? JESUS ANSWERED, THOU SAYEST THAT I AM A KING.
TO THIS END HAVE I BEEN BORN, AND TO THIS END AM I
COME INTO THE WORLD, THAT I SHOULD BEAR WITNESS
UNTO THE TRUTH. EVERY ONE THAT IS OF THE TRUTH
HEARETH MY VOICE. PILATE SAITH UNTO HIM, WHAT IS
TRUTH?



JOHN 18: 33-38 

GROUP GUIDE 3rd Quarter, 2023

truth-hurts

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Series Introduction3
Group Guidelines4
Sample Meeting Outline5

Week	Study Title	Page
1	What is Truth?	5
2	The Dangers of Living in 'Your Truth'	6
3	The Burden of Being Lied To	7
4	Finding Freedom in God's Truth	8

ABOUT

Too often we rely on the world around us to teach us what is best for us while overlooking what God says is best for us. This leads to a misunderstanding of God by projecting our disappointment onto our heavenly father when in reality WE set ourselves up for failure by looking for Truth in the wrong place.

Ground Rules

Here are some guidelines for your gatherings.

Confidentiality

If the group is going to move towards authenticity, then what's shared in the group should stay in the group (note: for situations that you are not qualified to speak into, use a referral to Cornerstone Counseling).

Don't Rescue and Don't Fix

Let people openly share without trying to solve their problems. Only give advice if they request it.

No Crosstalk

People feel valued when we listen. The opposite is true as well: people will feel devalued if they are constantly interrupted. If someone has the floor, no other conversations should be happening.

Give Everyone a Chance to Share

Everyone has something to contribute and everyone should feel heard. Don't be too quick to provide all of the answers. Give others space to share.

Use Humor Responsibly

Our conversation should build up rather than tear down. Humor can be a great thing provided it is not used as the expense of others.

Use 'I' Statements

Groups are an opportunity for self-reflection. We should be quick to reflect on how what we are studying should shape us personally, and slow to tell others how it should shape them.

Fight for the Relationship

Real relationships only thrive when we commit to 'fight' for the relationship. We will not hide from conflict or disagreement, but will instead discuss them in an open and healthy way.

Leader Guidelines

Thank you for taking the time to invest in others by leading a group. As a leader, your task is to create an environment where real relationships can thrive. Here are some things to keep in mind as you do that:

Multiply.

The mission of the church is to multiply disciples. Groups are one of the environments where this occurs. You are involved in the discipleship of each person in your group. We ask that each of our group leaders has someone who they are equipping to be a disciple-maker.

Create a safe environment.

When we say 'safe', we mean an environment where participants can freely share without feeling belittled or that what they share will get spread beyond the group. When we say 'safe', we also mean a group where participants can encounter Jesus and His plan for their life.

Recognize that your group is unique.

This booklet is designed to be a general guide, but every group is unique. So when you're planning, take into account what does and doesn't work for your group and shape the session to their personalities and needs.

Review the ground rules.

Periodically, remind your group about the ground rules for the group.

Ask lots of questions.

Engaging leaders draw participants into the discussion. Ask many questions and lead your group into self-discovery. Follow the 70/30 rule: your goal should be to talk for less than 30% of the time. If you're going over that, then people in your group are going to feel limited in their ability to engage!

Get feedback.

Improve your group by asking others for feedback.

Seek wise council.

There are some questions you won't be able to answer and some situations you aren't trained to handle. That's OK! Know who your wise council is (whether a coach, minister, or another disciple-maker) and turn to them in your time of need.

For more on this topic, check out *Servant-Leadership Training* and the *CCW Group Leader Training 2.0* resource on RightNow Media.

Before the Session

Prepare for the Session: As a group leader, it's essential to be prepared. Before the group session:

1. **Pray.** God is the one doing the transformation.
2. **Take time to read over the Bible passage.** Write down questions and observations.
3. **Preview the session guide.** Highlight important questions to ask and add your own.
4. **Tap into study resources.** Check outside sources to expand your understanding of the topic. Some recommended resources include: The BibleProject, RightNow Media, and the CCW Resource Center.

During the Session

Share: Take time to review the content from last week. Use this time to check on:

- **Prayer Requests:** Follow up on any prayer requests that were made the previous session.
- **Application and Challenges:** Take time to provide accountability for any goals that the group set the previous week ('This week, I would like to...').

Transition: Introduce the topic (we give you an example each session).

Read It: Read through the Scripture passage. If it's a larger section of scripture, break it into smaller sections and ask questions throughout.

Talk About It: Make sure the passage is understood by:

1. *Retelling* the story in your own words.
2. *Asking review questions.*
3. *Seeking additional questions.* Check to see if your group has additional questions about the passage.

Apply It: The apply it section may have both (a) application questions and (b) challenges. Challenges are real-life ways to put Biblical Truth into effect this week.

Pray Together: Find creative ways to engage your group in prayer.

After the Session

Follow Up: Be present with group members throughout the week by: (1) Reminding them of their application/challenge commitments, (2) Checking in on needs and prayer requests and (3) Finding opportunities to do life together.

Input Group Attendance: Fill out your Group attendance in the ChurchTeams email that you receive.

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What is a lie that you believed as a child?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

This week, we began the Truth-Hurts series. Throughout this series, we'll be talking about the lies that often shape our lives. But in order to recognize what lies are, we first need to discover the definition to Truth.

Read It

Scripture reference: **John 18:28 - 38 and John 14:1 - 6**

Talk About It

Review:

- (29 - 30) What accusation did the Jewish leaders make against Jesus?
- (31) What did the Jewish leaders desire Pilate to do?
- (33) What question did Pilate ask of Jesus? Why this question?
- (35 - 36) How did Jesus explain His Kingdom to Pilate?
- (37) According to Jesus, who would choose to follow Him as King?
- (38) What does Pilate's final question reveal about him?
- (14:1 - 3) What hope did Jesus give to His disciples?

- (5) What fear does Thomas express?
- (6 - 7) What titles does Jesus claim for Himself?

Reflect:

- How is Jesus' kingdom both in the world but not of this world? How have you seen this Kingdom in your own life?
- What does it mean for Jesus to be King over those who are of Truth?
- What does it mean for Jesus to be the 'Way'? The 'Truth'? The 'Life'? How should these characteristics of Jesus shape how you live?
- How have you seen the need for the Way, Truth, and Life in the world around you?

React:

- How often do you find yourself wrestling with Truth in your own life?
- What would it look like for you to be a person who is committed to Truth? How might you recognize Truth from lies?
- How would you explain 'Truth' to someone who voices the same question as Pilate: 'What is truth?'

Pray Together

DANGERS OF 'YOUR TRUTH'

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- When have you been super-convinced of something only to discover you were wrong?

Meditate On It

It's time to move towards reading God's Word. Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

This session is going to be a little different than the previous, because we're going to practice some guided meditation together. This is how it works:

- *We start with prayer; asking God to speak to us thru what we're about to read.*
- *We will minimize distractions by turning off phones and creating a quiet space.*
- *You will close your eyes as I slowly read over the following Scripture.*
- *We will have one minute of silence as we strive to listen to God. Try to hold on to a phrase or idea that sticks with you from what we've read.*
- *I will read over the Scripture a second time.*
- *We will have a second minute of silence.*
- *I will read over the Scripture a final time.*
- *We will go to God in prayer, thanking Him for what He has revealed to us.*

Read It

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He

leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Psalm 23:1 - 3

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"— 14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

James 4:13 - 17

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

Proverbs 3:5 - 6

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8 - 9

Apply It

- What were some specific words or phrases in these passages that resonated with you?
- What do you feel that God is saying to you through the Scripture that we meditated on?
- How will you live out this message from God this week?

BEING LIED TO

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- How do you react when you discover that you have been lied to?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Lies are all around us. In our culture, we buy into lies about freedom, lies about happiness, and lies about fulfillment. We turn to voices that promise easy solutions. But lies have a terrible cost, as Peter recounts in the passage that we'll be reading today.

Read It

Scripture reference: **2 Peter 2:1 - 22**

Talk About It

Review:

- (1) What warning does Peter give at the beginning of this chapter?
- (2 - 3) What is the product of allowing false teachers into Christ's community?
- (4 - 10) Peter wants to emphasize God's ability to both protect the righteous and judge the unrighteous. What examples does Peter use to illustrate this?
- (12) What is the final outcome of these 'deceivers'?
- (13 - 17) How does Peter characterize the 'deceivers' attempting to hide with the Church?

- (15 - 16) What is their motivation for choosing lies?
- (18) Who do the 'deceivers' direct their attention to?
- (19 - 20) Why is the 'freedom' that these 'deceivers' offer a false freedom?
- (20 - 22) According to Peter, why does returning to sin AFTER discovering true freedom leave a person in an ever worse position?

Reflect:

- How is Peter able to confidently assert that 'lies' lead to seduction, blasphemy and destruction?
- Why do you think that Peter had such strong words regarding false teachers?
- How have you seen lies damage Christ's Church?
- How has the destructive impact of lies affected your own life?
- What kind of 'false freedoms' do you see our world buying into?
- When have you pursued a 'false freedom'? How did you discover that it was a lie?

React:

- What lie do you need to stop believing? How will you confront that lie?
- How can we cultivate the accountability in our Church community and group to resist deception?

Pray Together

Session Four

FREEDOM IN GOD'S TRUTH

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- If you had a day to do anything you wanted (free of charge), what would you do?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

We can't trust this world to provide authentic freedom. It has proved itself untrustworthy through its frequent lies. But there is a source for true freedom - and when we begin to believe that, everything changes.

Talk About It

Read: **2 Corinthians 10:3 - 5**

Review:

- According to this passage, what divine power does this Truth have?
- What sort of 'strongholds' do you think the writer is speaking of?

Read: **Romans 12:1 - 2**

Review:

- What are we called to present to God?
- How do we go about presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (1 - 2)?
- What might a renewal of the mind look like?
- What is the product of this transformation?

Read: **Colossians 3:1 - 4**

Review:

- What are we to set our minds upon?
- (3 - 4) What reason are we given for setting our minds on that which is above?

Read: **Philippians 4:8**

Review:

- What sort of things should we be thinking about?

Reflect:

- How have you seen freedom as a result of discovering God's Truth?
- Where do you find that you are falling short of having a renewed mind? What tends to draw your focus from God's truth?
- How can you adjust your focus so that you're keeping God's Truth within vision?
- What does a renewed mind look like in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BOOKS

- **Don't Let the Enemy Have a Seat at Your Table** (Louie Giglio)

RIGHTNOW MEDIA

Get a free RightNow Media account to get access to thousands of study resources. Some potential resources include:

- **Get Out of Your Head** (Jennie Allen): Are your thoughts holding you captive? Jennie Allen knows what it's like to swirl in a spiral of destructive thoughts, such as I'll never be good enough. Other people have better lives than I do. God couldn't really love me. But Jennie also knows we don't have to stay stuck in toxic thinking patterns. As she discovered, God built a way for us to escape that downward spiral. Freedom comes when we refuse to be victims to our thoughts and realize we have already been equipped with power from God to fight and win the war for our minds.
- **Twisting the Truth** (Andy Stanley): In six insight-packed sessions, Andy Stanley exposes four destructive and all-too-prevalent lies about authority, pain, sex, and sin. They're deceptions powerful enough to ruin our relationships, our lives, even our eternities—but only if we let them. Twisting the Truth untwists the lies that can drag us down. With his gift for straight, to-the-heart communication, Andy Stanley helps us exchange falsehoods for truths that can turn our lives completely around.
- **Truth** (Mark Moore): In this 3-part series we will wrestle with truth. The truth of Jesus living a perfect life, dying on a cross, and resurrecting so that our sins will forever be wiped clean. Mark Moore weaves personal antidotes and scriptural truth together to tell a story of what living an evangelistic life is all about. How does one live a life defined by the truth of the gospel in a world where truth is relative? Well you have to be willing to step into the ring and find out.
- **Finding Truth** (Francis Chan): Christians today face all kinds of challenges when it comes to understanding who they are and what they're meant to do. There's no shortage of options that claim to offer "truth." If we're not careful, we can find ourselves chasing after popular opinion, celebrity opinions, or the tug of our emotions all the while neglecting the unchanging truth found in Scripture. In this four-session series, pastor and author Francis Chan invites students into the power and confidence that comes from anchoring their identity, purpose, and relationships in the truth of Scripture. Students will walk away with practical steps toward building their lives on the firm foundation of the Bible.

THE BIBLE PROJECT (www.thebibleproject.com)

The Bible Project offers a variety of amazing resources. These videos expand on many of the ideas that we have touched on in this series.