



Shine in Truth

Philippians 2:15 says, “That ye may be blameless and harmless the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” How can we “shine as lights” in a dark and sinful world? We must live lives of truth.

DRAW NEAR—*Worship and and prepare your heart to hear from God’s Word.*

Share prayer requests and spend some time in prayer. Listen to worship music of your choice and prepare your heart to hear from God’s Word today.

GO DEEP—*Dig into the Bible to learn truths from God’s Word.*

Ice Breaker Game – Two Truths and a Lie

Give each girl in your group an index card. On that card, have each girl write three things about herself. Two of the statements on the card should be true and one should be a lie. Tell the girls to think of something really convincing for their lies, so that it will be hard to know the lies from the truth.

When everyone is finished with their cards, let the girls take turns reading their cards out loud. Let the other girls try to guess which statement is the lie. You will be surprised what you find out about each other, and you’ll be surprised how convincing some lies can be.

It’s hard to always know what is true and what it not. In the game you just played, you had to determine what was a lie and what was truth. It’s not always easy to do that.

And unlike your friends in the game you just played, the rest of the world isn’t going to give you a few guesses and then just “fess up” to the truth.

So how is a girl supposed to know what’s true and what’s not?

In John 8:32, Jesus said, “...ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” People like to quote that verse a lot, but we need to dig a little deeper into the Word for a minute and look at the context of the verse. Looking at something in context means that you look at what happened before and after so you can really understand what is going on. Check out the passage below to really understand what Jesus was saying...

John 8:31-36: “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed: And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

What does this passage tell us?

Look at the first verse. Who is Jesus talking to? _____

What condition did Jesus give the believers?

“IF _____, then ye are my disciples indeed.”

Jesus told the believers that they had to “continue in [His] word.” That is a command for us, too. If we want to know the truth, we have to go to the Book of Truth—the Bible. If we know God’s Word, then we know the truth. And, according to Jesus, that truth makes us free.

Free from what? That’s the question the believers had for Jesus. They weren’t slaves or servants. They weren’t prisoners. They were already free, so why was Jesus telling them this?

Jesus went on to explain that He wasn’t talking about physical bondage. He was talking about spiritual bondage.

They were servants (or slaves) to SIN. They were not free, because their sin had them held captive. You and I have the same problem today.

We’re just like Eve in the Garden of Eden. Satan comes to us in a beautiful disguise and whispers lies in our ears. His lies sound really good, and he makes some really convincing arguments. We don’t know the truth, so we believe him, and we fall into sin.

“Fall into” is a really good way to picture how sin happens in our lives. Imagine that you are walking through a field and see a big pit in the ground. You stay away from it at first, because it looks dangerous. But after you walk around it for a little while, you start getting a little closer. You inch closer and closer, trying to see what is in the pit. You see something shiny in the bottom of the pit. It looks sparkly and beautiful, like treasure. You inch closer, wanting to get a better look. The closer you get to it, the more careless you become. You lean over the edge of the pit, trying to get a better look, and your foot slips. The ground crumbles under you and you fall into the pit.

That pit represents sin. At first, we stay away from it because it’s dangerous. But then we get curious about it. It’s so interesting, right? We just have to know more about it. From a distance, it looks great. Shiny and sparkly, like treasure. But when we fall into the pit of sin, we realize that its shine was just a reflection from a shallow, slimy mud puddle.

Sin always looks good from a distance. The inside of that pit may have looked good from a distance. But now that you are in it, you look up and realize that you can’t get out. You are a prisoner. You are not free.

But Jesus offers you freedom. He wants you to know the truth, to recognize your sin for the horrible pit that it is, and to continue in His Word and learn how to be free.

Write John 8:36 here: _____

What an awesome promise! When the Son (Jesus) makes you free, you are free indeed. When Jesus sets you free, you are no longer a prisoner of your sin. Jesus comes by, reaches into the pit, and pulls you out.

Psalms 40:2 says, “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my foot upon a rock, and established my goings.”

That’s what Jesus wants to do for you. He wants to teach you the truth and set you free.

GET REAL—Apply God’s Word to your life.

Still wondering how you can know what’s really true? The Bible is full of God’s promises, and the more you study it, the more truth you will learn from it. But there are four huge truths in the Bible that you can’t afford to miss. Check them out.

1. God loves you and has a purpose for your life.

John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

John 10:10 says, “...I have come that they might have life, and that they might _____ have it more abundantly.”

2. Sin separates you from God.

God created you to have an abundant life, but He didn’t make you like a robot that would automatically obey Him. When you choose to go your own way and disobey God, that’s called sin. Sin separates you from God.

“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23

3. There is only one way to get to Heaven—through Jesus Christ.

People try lots of ways to reach God, but the Bible makes it clear that there is only ONE way to bridge the gap between us and God. Philosophy, morality and good works won't help us get to God. You have to trust Jesus Christ.

In John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

4. You have a choice—God lets you decide if you will follow Him.

God is not going to force you to come to Him. He gave you a free will and the freedom to decide what you want to believe. If you choose to trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you can be free and spend eternity in Heaven.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Romans 10:9

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12

Will you receive Jesus Christ right now? Here is how you can receive Christ:

1. Admit that you are a sinner and need Christ to be your Savior.
2. Be willing to turn from your sins.
3. Believe that Jesus did for your sins and that He rose from the dead.
4. Through prayer, invite Jesus to come into your heart and control your life through the Holy Spirit.

How to pray:

Dear Lord,

I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior.

In Your Name, Amen.

If you prayed this prayer, check out these Bible verses.

Romans 10:13

Ephesians 2:8-9

1 John 5:12-13

***Outline adapted from "Steps to Peace with God" - published by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.*

Now *tell* someone about your decision. You will need someone you can trust to help you learn how to study God's Word and to encourage you as you start this new life as a Christian.

If you are already saved, then "continue in [the] Word!" Keep studying the truths and promises God recorded for you. Challenge yourself to live out the verses you read.

When you spend time in God's Word, He will help you SHINE as a light for Him.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



Christina Hopper is 24 years old and attends Sulphur Springs FWB Church in Northport, AL. She is a student at Mississippi University for Women where she is studying Creative Writing. Christina teaches the Junior Youth Group at her church. They were recently named the "Youth Group of the Year" at the 2011 FWB National Youth Conference in Charlotte, NC.