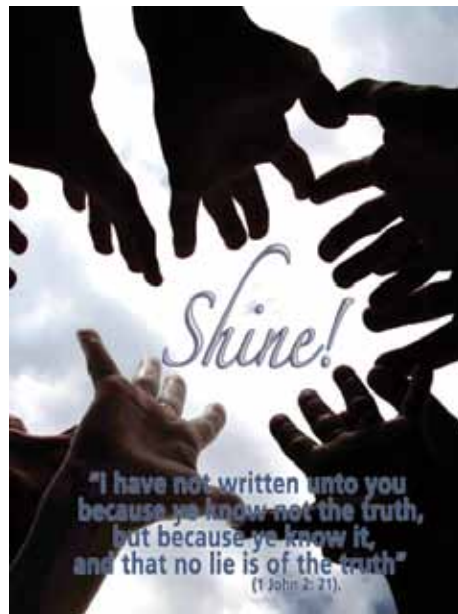


Witness

Shine!

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE
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SHINE IN TRUTH

Study by
Lisa Wood
Fulton, Mississippi

Guide by
Carolyn Michael
Madison, Alabama



Shine IN TRUTH

*How can we shine as light in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation (world)?
We can carry the torch of Truth to those in darkness*

SHINING GOAL: We are called to shine, carrying the torch of Truth to a lost and dying world.

SHINING GUIDANCE: 1 John

SHINING GEMS: "...the true light now shineth" (1 John 2:8).

Are any of you old enough to remember the game show "Truth or Consequences"? The premise was that the host would ask some questions. For correct answers, there would be prizes. But for wrong answers (much more likely than right answers) there were embarrassing or unusual consequences. These consequences would involve participants performing crazy stunts that left them either covered in whipped cream, slime, soaking wet or some other equally uncomfortable situation.

Life also bears consequences. One day everyone will stand before God in judgment. It will be a day of reckoning for the sinner and the saint. Since the Bible is true, we know that the consequences for not accepting Christ as Savior will be terrifying and horrible. Sinners will be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone (Revelation 21:8) where they will forever remain.

The Redeemed, on the other hand, will receive the prize of eternal life in the presence of Jesus (John 3:16). It will be a wonderful day when God welcomes His children home to live with Him forevermore. Christians will experience a judgment—but for rewards received for the ways they've lived their lives. Oh, how I want to receive all that the Lord has for me so that I'll have something to lay at His feet. It's going to be a glorious day; the truth of our life will stand out either as light or darkness.

Do you want to know the Truth and avoid the consequences of living a life of lies? I do. Accept Jesus and live abiding in the majestic truth and light of His Word. Avoid the pitfalls and destruction that come from not obeying and walking in the Truth. You will be so glad you did, not only in this life, but in the next life to come. Learn all you can about Jesus and His holy Word.

The Truth Distorted

✳ Go over the questions and answers for this section on page 29.

✳ What does distorted mean? (*The American Heritage Dictionary defines "distort" as (1) To twist out of proper or natural relation of parts; misshape. (2) To give a false or misleading account of; misrepresent. (3) To cause to work in a twisted or disorderly manner; pervert.*)

✳ Can this definition be applied to anything that is false or untrue?

✳ Have you ever tried to see yourself in a dirty or very old mirror? Is your image clear?

✳ What distorts the gospel? (*Unbelievers, weak preaching, TV, movies, newspapers, false religions, etc.*)

✳ Is it easier for people to accept distorted views of the truth over the actual facts? (*Sometimes. We tend to believe what we hear or see, even though it may not be factual or true.*)

✳ What does the devil love to do? (*Distort and twist the truth—1 Peter 5:8; John 8:44; 1 John 2:22*)



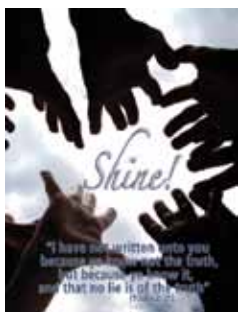
- * What will become of the devil at the end of time? (*He'll be cast into hell—Revelation 20:10.*)
- * How did the serpent (Satan) deceive Eve? (*By lying to her—Genesis 3:1-5*)
- * Did Adam tell God the complete truth? (*Genesis 3:9-12*)
- * Who did Eve blame? (*Genesis 3:13*)
- * Don't we all wish that Eve had believed God instead of Satan? Did she have a choice? (*Yes, she had a free will to do what she wanted—2 Corinthians 11:3.*)
- * As a result of believing a lie, what happened to Adam and Eve (and all of mankind)? (*Genesis 3:16-19*)
- * Write 1 John 2:8 in a journal and review it often, “.....the true light now shineth.”
- * Close in prayer. Ask God to protect you and help you see circumstances in your life clearly according to God's Word.

The Truth Defined

- * Read the paragraphs under the title on p. 29. These words should make everyone say, “Praise the Lord.”
- * Go over the questions and answers on pp. 29-30.
- * Why do we need to define the truth for others? (*So they will understand that real truth is “sincerity in action, character, and utterance.” It is the person of Jesus Christ.*)
- * What is the fundamental characteristic of truth? (*Consistency. It must fit every fact, every known, and unknown situation the same way every time.*)
- * Why doesn't everyone believe the truth? (*(1) The heart is deceitful and we believe what we want to believe—Jeremiah 17:9, and (2) The devil deceives—2 Thessalonians 2:9-12.*)
- * Read 1 John 1:10. What is the second word in Romans 8:23? (*ALL—that means everyone who has lived on this earth—except Jesus.*)
- * How can knowing Jesus change our lives? (*(1) We will keep His commandments—1 John 2:3; (2) We will keep/believe His Word—1 John 2:5; (3) We will walk as we should—1 John 2:6; (4) We will love our brother—1 John 2:10; (5) We will love the things of God and not the world—1 John 2:15; and (6) We will abide in Him—1 John 2:28.*)
- * Does God ever lie? (*No. It's impossible—Hebrews 6:18; Numbers 23:19.*)
- * What is your TRUTH acrostic? (*Mine is: True Righteousness Upholds The Heart*)
- * Write some of the acrostics in your journal.
- * Dismiss by singing “I Love To Tell The Story,” *Rejoice*, The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book, p. 351. Emphasize: Jesus' story is true.

The Truth Defended

- * Go over the questions and answers on p. 31.
- * Why is it important to always tell the truth? (*Others are watching our lives, and truth is part of being a Christian—Ephesians 4:25; Zechariah 8:16.*)
- * What happens to those who do not tell the truth? (*They'll have no part of God—Proverbs 19:5; Revelation 21:8; Psalm 101:7.*)
- * Have you ever had to have a lawyer defend you? (*Traffic ticket, car accident, wrongful bill, divorce.... No need to go into details unless it would help someone.*)



* Do fairness and justice always win out? *(Not necessarily, because our world is filled with deception and lies.)*

* When Pilate put Jesus on trial, was the truth extinguished? *(No, Jesus rose from the dead just as He said—John 18:37,38; 19:11; Luke 23:23;24:5-7.)*

* There have been famous trials in which lawyers were able to get their defendants acquitted when it seemed to everyone that they were guilty. How does this type situation make people feel? *(outraged, angry, mad at our legal system)*

* In Matthew 27:11-14, we find that Jesus' trial was just the opposite. He was innocent of any crimes, yet, He had no lawyer to defend him. Instead, He spoke not a word except to agree.

* What accusation did they make against Jesus?

* What was his sentence? *(Crucifixion)*

* As a result of Jesus' death on the cross, what became of the disciples? *(They fully understood everything—Luke 24:45; they received power—Acts 1:8; they were commissioned to preach—Mark 16:15-20.)*

* Did the disciples have to defend their faith in Jesus?

* Have you ever had to defend your faith?

* You've probably heard the question, "If your faith were on trial, would there be enough evidence to convict you as a Christian?"

* Close in prayer and ask God to help you stand firm and faithful in your walk with Him.

The Truth Delivered

* Read 1 John 2:8 in its entirety. Notice the phrase, "the darkness is past." What does that mean? (When we, as Christians, let the light possess us and we grow in grace, knowledge, love and fellowship, then the darkness of apathy, ignorance, and hatred can go away. That darkness may try to creep back in, but we can let the light be stronger to keep the darkness pushed back.)

* We know that "the true light" is Jesus. Did everyone believe that Jesus was Who he said? he was? *(No, not even his own people—Matthew 13:53-58; John 6:64.)*

* Why do you think it was/is so hard for people to believe the truth of the gospel?

* What is our purpose as Christians in this world? *(We are here to tell the truth by declaring and demonstrating it to others.)*

* How does it make you feel when you are ignored?

* Read Genesis 6:14-17. What would have happened if Noah had not believed God? *(Mankind would have completely been destroyed.)*

* Do you think Noah told everyone he could about God' plan? *(He delivered the truth, but it was rejected—Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20.)*

* Why did everyone not believe that God would keep His Word? *(Genesis 6:11-12)*

* Think of other examples in the Bible where God punished when people did not believe and obey the truth. *(Pharaoh—Exodus 7:17;8:1,6;14:27,31; David—II Samuel 12:10,14; Sodom and Gomorrah—Genesis 18:26,32; 19:24; Lot's wife—Genesis 19:17,26; Zacharias—Luke 1:13,20)*

* Jesus taught and preached the truth. Would you expect the disciples to fully believe? *(Yes, we would, but they didn't—John 14:9; Luke 24:25; John 20:27.)*

* Are you spreading the truth of God's Word?

LEADER'S NOTE: Unless you are a pastor, evangelist, motivational speaker, Sunday school teacher, or someone who is in touch with a lot of people, you may not have a way to do this with a large group. Yet, all of us can spread God's truth every day. How? By living as God

would have us and being an example to everyone with whom we come in contact—within our families, at the supermarket, in the mall, on vacation or just anywhere. Others are watching you and looking to see how you will react in various circumstances that come along. Try to be accountable and show them that Jesus is the only true Light of this world. You might want to work with your Ladies' group in an outreach program of some kind. Be creative and available to do what you can to help further the gospel..

* What must anyone possess to believe the Truth? (*Faith—Hebrews 11:3; Matthew 9:21-22; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Matthew 17:19-20*)

* How do we increase our faith? (*by hearing the Word of God—Romans 10:17 by prayer and fasting—Matthew 17:21*)

* Do you truly want to increase your faith?

* Close in a prayer of commitment to God asking for guidance and wisdom in seeking the Truth and believing Him for the results.

In Closing...

Everyone is not going to Heaven. That might come as a shock for some, but Jesus didn't promise that everyone would have eternal life--only those who believe Him and His words and accept them as truth. Many people have rejected the truth of the gospel. Even Christ's disciples didn't really expect Him to be killed and certainly not to come back to life. He had told them this would happen, yet they didn't understand God's truth. If only we could separate the right from the wrong, the fact from the fiction, or the hero from the villain, then life might be a whole lot easier. We just have to rely on the Bible and our faith to sustain us in this sin-cursed world. There's only one way to Heaven and that's on the Glory Road. We have to believe that Jesus is who He says and that we will one day live eternally with Him. It really isn't so hard when you trust with all your heart and do not rely on your knowledge, education, background, culture, or whatever to live upright and holy in this world. Let go and let God lead you in the path of righteousness and truth. Shine like glow sticks in the dark for Jesus. You will reap the benefits of joy, peace, love, comfort and beauty in a world where truth is misdirected and distorted.

