

— DISCUSSION GUIDE —

LIES *MEN* BELIEVE

AND THE TRUTH THAT SETS THEM FREE



ROBERT
WOLGEMUTH

LET'S GET STARTED!

Truth is powerful. Jesus said it can literally “set [us] free.” But, let’s be real . . . most of us know way more spiritual truth than we’re experiencing.

Lies Men Believe is filled with truth for men like you and me. Truth that will change us. Truth that will liberate us and our families. Truth that will plant our feet on solid ground and strengthen our spiritual muscles.

But only reading these truths will have little effect if we do not make adjustments along the way to align our daily life with what we’re learning. This is why I’m joining my friend Robert Wolgemuth, so we can all walk through the experience together.

If your car is out of alignment, you can feel it, but still ignore the reality. The result will be worn-out tires, poor mileage, increased tension on the road, and a very bumpy ride! A wise man will take his car to a professional for an alignment when it’s needed.

The purpose of this Discussion Guide is to help you align your daily life—practically and personally—with the truth. My hope is that you’ll do this along with some friends.

Robert and I encourage you to “process” these truths together until they become a natural part of your walk with Christ, strengthening you to live according to the light.

If you do, the rewards will be fantastic . . . more peace, strengthened relationships, more confidence, and the supernatural favor of God. You will prove to others that God’s truth really is good, acceptable, and perfect (Romans 12:2).

So, jump in! Whether you’re studying this with a group of ten men or just another guy, be honest and intentional. Don’t think you have to get through every question, but take time where you believe God is speaking. When you’ve made it through, my hope is that your life will be strengthened by learning to recognize and resist the **Lies Men Believe!**

For a truth-filled life,



Bill Elliff

CHAPTER 1

CROSSING THE BRIDGE WHEN WE GET THERE

From the beginning, the “father of lies” has been tempting us to embrace what he says. Take time to assess together why we are falling for his lies. If you are able to recognize and resist them, your life and the lives of those you love will be greatly impacted!

STARTER QUESTION: Share about a time when you made a decision based on the thought, “Well, it’s probably not right, but if there are consequences, we’ll cross that bridge when we get there!” What was the result of this decision?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

You’ve probably read something recently about a man who did something very foolish. What did this guy do? Why do you think smart men do stupid things in spite of what they know to be true? Why do we do this?

1. Think for a moment about areas where you *know* what God requires but you choose to disobey. What are the top three issues in your life where this seems to be true? (Be honest, write them down, and then share with the group).

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2. Every man is moved to sin at times by the fear of man. When was the last time you made the wrong choice, just so you wouldn’t “rock the boat” with someone else? What were the consequences of that choice?

3. Share about a time when your *mind* was telling you to take a step (or *not* take a step), but your *heart* was not in line and you went ahead without a clear conscience. What happened?

4. As adults, we usually do what we really want to do. Our values (what’s most important to us) drive our actions. And often our values are not in line with the truth. List your top three values (as illustrated by your choices) and what you think God might want them to be instead.

What my choices <i>really</i> value	What God wants me to value
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

5. The next chapters are going to challenge your thinking and your life. Knowing that God is perfect and He loves you with an everlasting love, are you willing to give God your “Yes” even before you know what He might ask of you? If so, pray this prayer and sign your name at the bottom. If you’re in a group, why not read this aloud and sign it together?

Dear heavenly Father and faithful Author of all truth,

I know that I have believed a lot of lies in my life. Please open my eyes so I can see the lies that are affecting me and those around me. Give me the humility to accept your view of what I'm thinking and the way I'm living. Show me the steps I need to take, by Your grace and the Spirit's power, to align my life with Your truth.

Bring clear thinking to my mind, emotions, and will. Renew my mind, tame my emotions, and bend my will to match Yours. Take me, and all these guys with me, many steps further along the path to authentic, biblical manhood. Help us to not only know the truth but live it out in ways that the world can see the value of a truth-filled life.

(Signature)

YOUR NEXT STEP...

This week, keep your eyes open for obvious lies around you. Jot down lies that you hear (either in your mind or hear from others around you) and be ready to share them next week.

CHAPTER 2

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT GOD

STARTER QUESTION: As you looked and listened this week, what obvious lies did you see or hear, either in your own head or in the world around you? One of the goals of this study is to help you become a “Lie-Detector”! Share with the group what you experienced this week.

In chapter 2, Robert identifies five lies we believe about God.

LIE #1: GOD IS NOT A WHOLE LOT DIFFERENT FROM ME.

- Why do you think Satan would want us to believe this?

- In what ways is God different than us, and what would be changed if we really, honestly embraced God’s holiness?

LIE #2: GOD ISN'T ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN OR CONCERNED WITH THE DETAILS OF MY LIFE.

- If we believed that God cared about details in our lives, we would operate differently. Take a minute to evaluate your relationship with the questions below and then share with the group. Do you . . .

- *Talk with God throughout the day?* __ yes __ not really
- *Consult Him about most decisions?* __ yes __ not really
- *Give Him thanks often?* __ yes __ not really
- *Recognize and acknowledge what He is doing daily?* __ yes __ not really
- *Take time to listen to Him daily by reading His Word?* __ yes __ not really

Which of these needs the greatest adjustment?

LIE #3: I CAN EARN GOD'S FAVOR.

- Even if you have come to know Christ by faith, do you have a hard time believing that God accepts you and forgives you unconditionally? What do you feel like God's opinion is of you most of the time?

- What does the cross of Jesus say about you?

**If you have not yet come to see your sin and accept God's forgiveness by trusting Him as your personal Savior, then talk to someone after the group is finished. Ask them to help you take this most important step!*

LIE #4: THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GOD.

- Why do you think people believe the lie that there are many ways to God? What do you think motivates men to hold on to this belief?

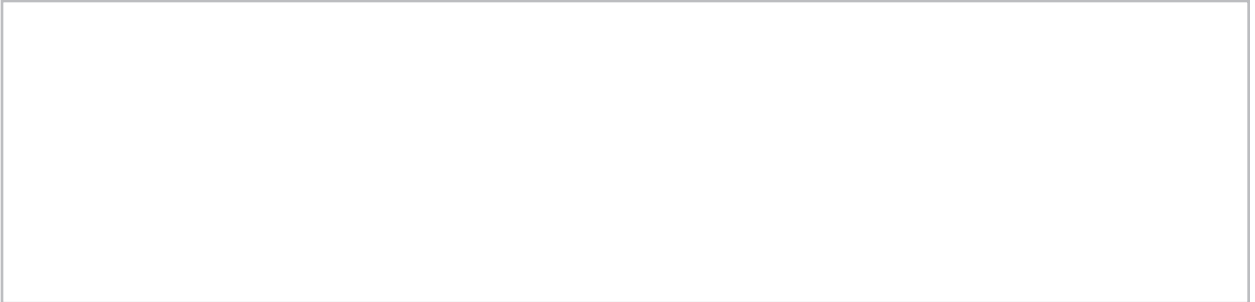
- Do you find yourself shying away from declaring the truth that Christ is the only way to God (John 14:6)? Why or why not? Does our silence help or hurt people?

LIE #5: CHURCH? I CAN TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT.

- What tempts you to not be regular about church attendance?

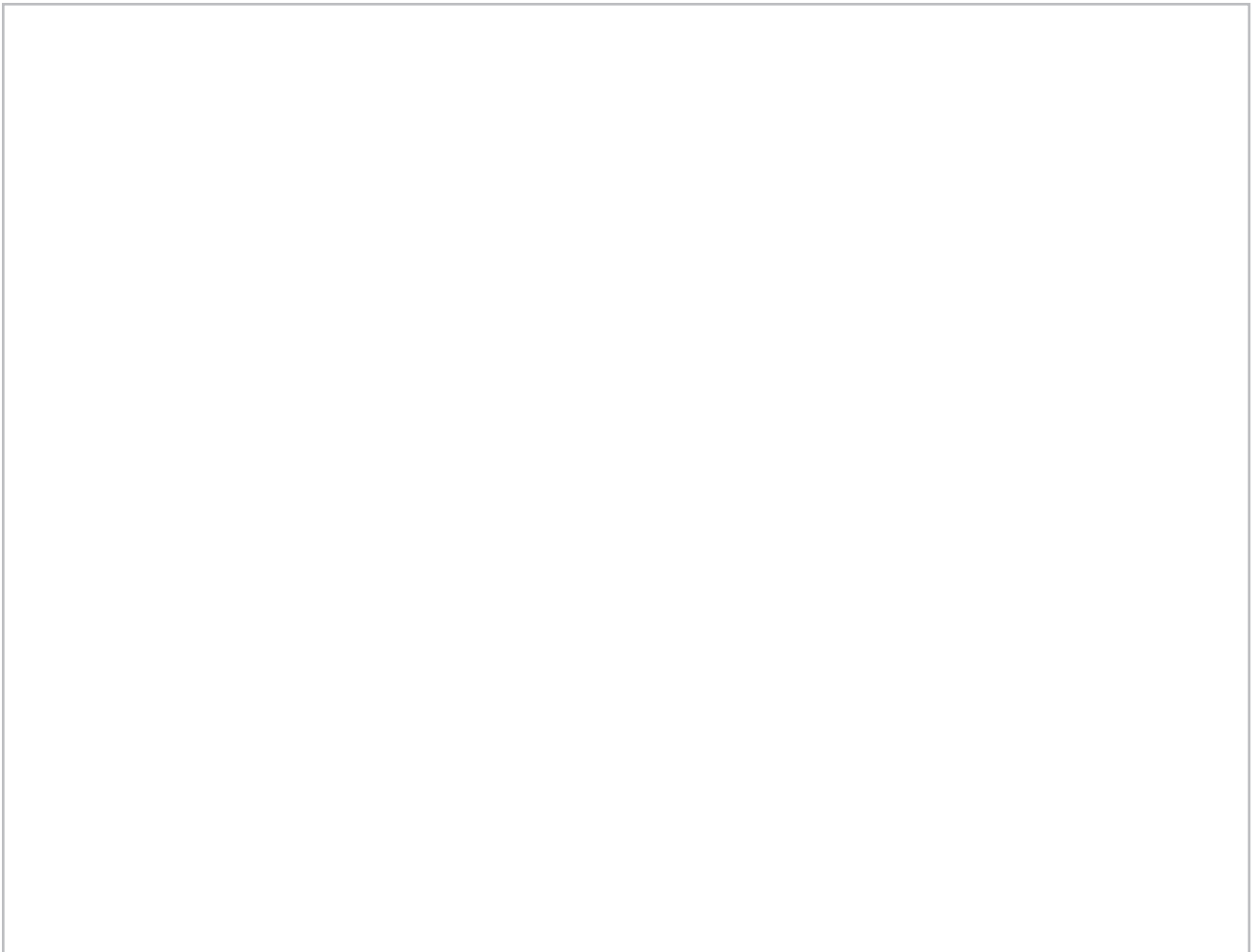
- How could getting involved in your church change your view of it?

- Because church members are imperfect, church is imperfect. But Christ is bigger than our imperfections. Jesus said that His church is His body. What does that mean? In what ways do you need the body of Christ, the church? In what ways does the church need you?



YOUR NEXT STEP...

Who is a man you admire, someone who you think believes most rightly about God? If possible, call him or go see him this week and thank him for what you've observed. Ask him what is the most important truth he believes about God. Be ready to share this with the group next week.



CHAPTER 3

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT THEMSELVES

Last week, you were asked to contact a godly man you admired and ask him what was his most important belief about God. Share what you discovered with the group.

One of the most important qualities of great men is a proper self-awareness. We must not think too highly of ourselves, or too lowly. We must understand who we are in God's economy and where we fit in His plan. This week we'll tackle some of the big lies our enemy loves for us to believe about ourselves.

STARTER QUESTION: What do you think is the biggest lie you've believed about yourself in the past twenty years?

LIE #6: I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS.

- A truth-filled man accepts responsibility for what he does and what he says. In the weaker areas of your life, what are the normal excuses you use to rationalize your sin?

LIE #7: PLEASURE AND ENTERTAINMENT CAN SATISFY ME.

- What's your "go-to" pleasure or entertainment? What is the trigger that tells you that this has become excessive?

- What should be our greatest source of satisfaction? What adjustment could you make so this would be true of you?

LIE #8: I'M THE MASTER OF MY OWN DESTINY.

- What things are you doing right now (or NOT doing) that show you think you are in charge of your life?

- What practical steps could you take to change this?

LIE #9: REAL MEN DON'T CRY.

- On a scale of 1–10 (10=very emotional), where do you land on emotional expression? Where do you wish you would be on this scale? Why?

LIE #10: I DON'T NEED MALE FRIENDS.

- Share about the best friend you've ever had and what made this relationship special and unique.

- Talk about the qualities you look for in a good friend.

- Where do you go to find friends like this?

YOUR NEXT STEP...

To have friends we need to BE a friend. Who is someone you could connect with in this stage of your life?

If you have a good friend, set up a time for coffee or lunch with them this week. Thank them for their friendship and tell them what you learned this week in your group that made you realize how valuable they are to you.

If you don't have a good friend, call and make a lunch or coffee appointment with a man you'd like to connect with. (It may be someone in this group.) Pray about your meeting before you get there and ask God to begin to develop an enduring, life-giving relationship.

CHAPTER 4

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT SIN

Believing lies about sin makes perfect sense because Satan, the tempter for all sin, is a liar himself. In fact, he is the “father of all lies,” Jesus said (John 8:44).

But lies we believe here are deadly. Each lie can take us deeper and deeper into sin, and further and further from God.

STARTER QUESTION: What’s some sin you once thought was not so bad, but you now realize has greater consequences? What changed your mind and helped destroy that deception?

LIE #11: WHO OTHERS THINK I AM MATTERS MORE THAN WHO I REALLY AM.

- What are the reasons behind our attempts to give a better impression of ourselves than is really true?

- How does hypocrisy or “posing” harm us? How does it affect our relationships with others? With God?

LIE #12: IF I MEAN WELL, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH.

- What's the motivation in our hearts when we believe and live this lie?

- Does God differentiate between our heart motivations and our actions? Why is this important?

LIE #13: MY SIN ISN'T REALLY THAT BAD.

- Every sin begins by refusing God's plan for our lives. Therefore, every sin—big or small—is rebellion against God. Do you think most men see ALL of their sins like that? Why or why not?

LIE #14: GOD COULD NEVER FORGIVE ME FOR WHAT I'VE DONE.

- Take a sheet of paper (or do this in your mind) and write down the three worst sins you've committed in your lifetime. No one is going to see this list, so be specific and honest.

- After you've written these out, draw a cross on top of the sins. How many of these sins did Christ cover with His blood on the cross, and how can you know for sure this is true?

LIE #15: I CAN HIDE MY SECRET SIN SINCE IT ONLY HURTS ME.

- What is the danger of hiding your sin?

- *(For your contemplation only, unless you decide to share):* Is there a secret sin that you are hiding? If so, what? How soon do you think it will be exposed and what could be the results of that exposure?

LIE #16: HOLINESS IS BORING.

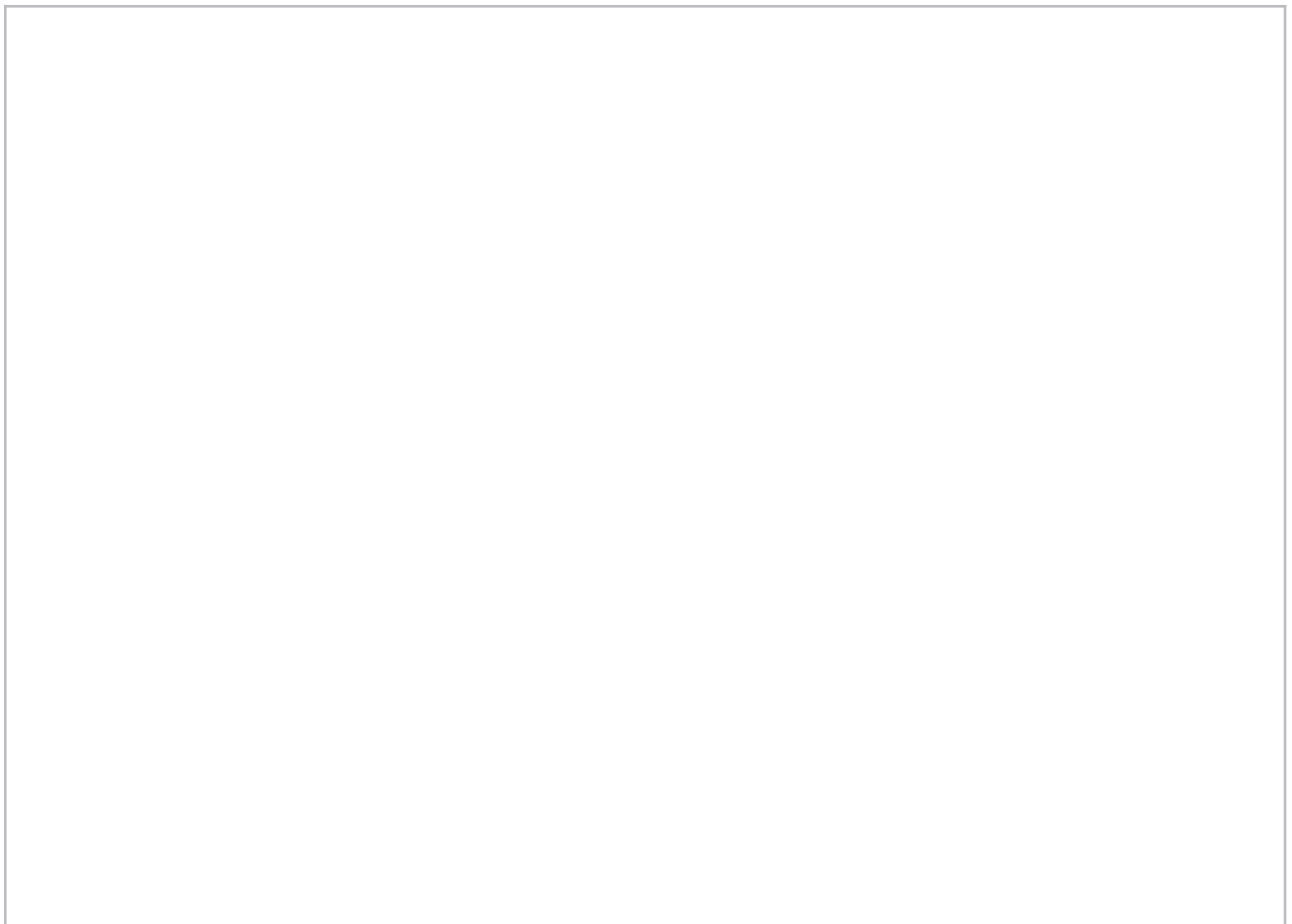
- The word “holy” means to be “different” or “set apart.” Have you ever connected the word “holiness” to the word “joy”? How could real holiness—being like God—lead to incredible joy?

YOUR NEXT STEP...

This week, set aside thirty minutes or an hour to take a deep dive in repentance. Get a sheet of paper (or use your computer) and write the words “Sin Sheet” on the top of the page. Put a #1 on the first line and ask God this question: “Lord, is there anything in my life that is harming me and others and is not pleasing to you?” Listen for His promptings in your heart and write down everything He brings to mind. Don’t rationalize or make excuses.

After you have dealt with everything that comes to mind, go back and circle those areas where your sin is known to others or is hurting them. These may need more attention as you seek to have a “clear conscience before God and man” (Acts 24:16). It may be that you need to go to someone and simply say, “God has shown me that what I did was wrong. Would you please forgive me?”

When you have finished with your list, mark through each line, thanking God for His forgiveness and asking Him to remove these issues from your life. Commit to make a regular habit of this self-examination and confession.



CHAPTER 5

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT SEXUALITY

Of all the lies men believe, Satan's probably got his biggest guns aimed at us here. As men, we're easy targets. Dig deep this week in your heart and our discussion. If we can understand the truth about sexuality, it will affect many other areas of our lives.

STARTER QUESTION: Where did you learn about sex? How old were you?

LIE #17: A LITTLE PORN IS HARMLESS.

- What's the potential fallout of pornography in a man's life? List all the ways it can hurt any man.

- If God has delivered you from pornography, share a few of the things that have been your greatest help in getting clean and staying there?

LIE #18: WHAT MY WIFE DOESN'T KNOW WON'T HURT HER.

- Have you ever known anyone involved in sexual immorality who had not been found out? Why do you think this is true, especially for a believer?

- Why would it be more beneficial for a wife to hear about a man's immorality from the man himself, with a humble, contrite heart, BEFORE he is found out?

- (You don't have to answer this out loud, but is there a step of disclosure and confession you need to take with your wife? If so, why not talk with your leader or a trusted, godly friend after this meeting?)

LIE #19: IF I EXPERIENCE SAME-SEX ATTRACTION, I SHOULD PURSUE A SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIP.

- Are struggling with the *temptations* of same-sex attraction and *engaging* in same-sex activity the same thing? Why or why not?

- What, from Robert's book, do you see as the ultimate answer to overcoming this temptation?

LIE #20: I HAVE SEXUAL NEEDS MY WIFE CAN'T FULFILL.

- Read together 1 Corinthians 13:4–7, which is the best description of God's kind of love in the Bible. The opposite of God's kind of love is not hatred it's selfishness. Notice that all of these descriptions are unselfish, particularly, "love does not seek its own" (verse 5b NASB). Fill in the blank: Love does not seek its own _____.

- How does this apply to your sexual relationship with your wife? What would change in your marital intimacy if you were completely unselfish, empowered by God's love?

YOUR NEXT STEP...

This week, see how many ways you can express love to your wife in completely unselfish ways. Be creative, but go easy—she might have a heart attack!

CHAPTER 6

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Last week, we saw that our physical relationship is not so much about us as it is about loving our wife unselfishly. As this is true about our sexuality, it's also true about all of our marriage and family relationships. The one big instruction from God is to "love your wife" like Christ loved the church. How did He do this? Tall order, but doable by grace.

STARTER QUESTION: What's something you did in a dating relationship or in your marriage that was the OPPOSITE of good, godly, biblical love? Something incredibly selfish?

LIE #21: LOVE DOESN'T REQUIRE SPOKEN WORDS.

- Did your dad tell you he loved you verbally? If he did or didn't, how did that affect you?

- Why do you think it's so critical to verbalize your love to each of your family members?

LIE #22: MY WIFE IS SUPPOSED TO MAKE ME HAPPY.

- We can trace most of our dissatisfaction in our marriage back to this lie: that marriage exists primarily to make me happy. How does this self-centered lie affect us every day?

- What are practical ways you can help your whole family understand that marriage and family is intended as God's tool to make you more godly?

LIE #23: I DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE THE CEO OF MY HOME. I CAN LEAVE THAT ROLE TO MY WIFE.

- As Robert says, no man has what it takes to lead his family. But God does, and He is anxious to help any humble, dependent man who will look to Him for help. What is the most profound, effective, and visible way to lead a family?

- Take a minute to think about it before you answer the following. Where is your greatest weakness in leading your family? What is one step you could take to begin to change that area this week?

LIE #24: I DON'T HAVE TO GROW UP.

- How does this desire to “not grow up” manifest itself in our families? What are some things men do or fail to do that illustrate passivity or a lack of embracing manly responsibility?

LIE #25: IF I DISCIPLINE MY KIDS, THEY'LL REBEL.

- This is a very critical lie for us to understand, for our children’s development is deeply affected by how we train them. The truth is, if we DON’T discipline them properly, they will rebel. How is this counterintuitive?

- Loving discipline, combined with prayer for them are our most powerful tools in raising them. How could you do a better job of praying for your children? Share ideas of what has worked for you to develop unceasing prayer for your family.

YOUR NEXT STEP...

This week, take at least one visible step toward leading your family. Resist Satan's lies that you can't do it or it won't work. He doesn't want you to lead. Talk to your wife about how you can be a more effective servant = leader in your home. Pray about this before, during, and after your conversation with her.

CHAPTER 7

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT WORK AND HEALTH

Last week, we challenged each other to take a step in our families toward prayerful, godly leadership. What step did you take, and how'd it go?

STARTER QUESTION: Today we're going to look at work and health. What's the dumbest purchase you ever made? Why did you buy it? What happened?

LIE #26: MAKING MORE MONEY WILL MAKE ME HAPPIER.

- Who do you know who is very wealthy and very unhappy? Not so wealthy and very happy? How does this work?

- If your house was on fire, what would be the five most important things you'd grab before you went out the door?

- What's the greatest antidote to this lie, in your opinion? What can we do to continually keep this in perspective?

LIE #27: HOW I SPEND MY SPARE TIME IS MY BUSINESS.

- Do you think we will give an account before the Lord one day of how we spent our time? If so, what's the best adjustment you could make, right now, in the use of your time?

LIE #28: I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE TO BE THE PROVIDER FOR MY WIFE AND FAMILY.

- What are the ways we are to provide for our family beyond financial provision?

- Which of these areas come most easily and which are most difficult for you?

LIE #29: MY FAITH AND MY WORK ARE UNRELATED.

- Who is a man you've seen who lived his faith at his work? Whose workplace was as spiritually sacred and fruitful to him as his home or church? Tell us about him.

- How do you think he made this alignment? How can we?

LIE #30: I CAN'T AFFORD TO GIVE MORE MONEY AWAY.

- Regardless of your income and possessions, your “wealth” likely exceeds the vast majority of men on earth. Why do you think that it’s easy to feel we don’t have enough money to be more generous?

- What are some practical steps we could take to cultivate a lifestyle of generosity?

YOUR NEXT STEP...

What are the ten things you desire God to say, and others to say, about how you handle your work life? What adjustments do you need to make? Take thirty minutes this week to write out your own personal “Workplace Manifesto.” Prayerfully think through this. Print it out and place it in a prominent place at work where you can see it daily, perhaps on your desktop.

CHAPTER 8

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT CIRCUMSTANCES

Today we're going to look at lies about our circumstances. How we view God is determined in great measure by how we view what God causes or allows in our lives. Our "theology" about this makes us either bitter or better with each circumstance.

STARTER QUESTION: What's the toughest circumstance you've ever faced?

LIE #31: I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE ANGRY WHEN THINGS DON'T GO MY WAY.

- Initial anger and confusion are understandable when we face tough circumstances, but what does my continued anger say about what I think about God?

- Further, what does it say about what I think about myself?

LIE #32: PAIN AND SUFFERING ARE ALWAYS BAD.

- How did a tough circumstance in your life "work together for good"? (See Romans 8:28-29.)

- How did/could this promise change you to be more like Christ? What did it develop in you, by God's grace?

LIE #33: THE WORLD IS RIGGED AGAINST ME.

- Sin has damaged this world and its effects touch us all. What are some biblical promises that remind us that God is for us?

LIE #34: I CAN'T HELP HOW I REACT TO CERTAIN PEOPLE OR CIRCUMSTANCES.

- It's important in our reactions to others to realize that each of us will individually stand before God regarding how we react. We can't control others, but by humility, confession, continual repentance, and dependency on the Holy Spirit, we can have the fruit of the Spirit called "self-control." Where do you need this the most?

- Why not take a moment and pray for each other right now in these areas?

LIE #35: I CAN RUN AWAY FROM GOD.

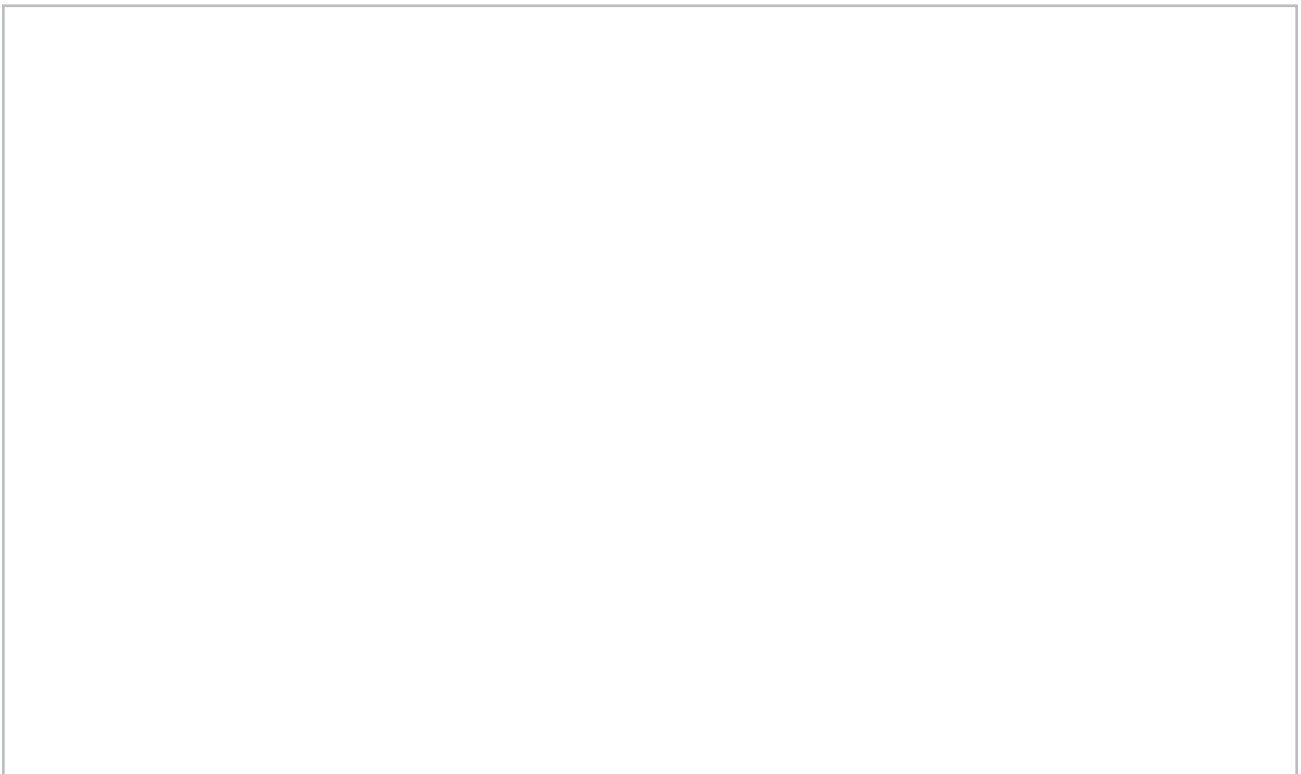
- Take a moment to read Psalm 139 together and then pray together, thanking God for His relentless pursuit of you.



YOUR NEXT STEP...

Bitterness is a sourness in our soul that results from our failure to embrace or thank God in the midst of the people and circumstances He has placed in our lives. Is there something that has happened to you in which you cannot embrace or give thanks? If so, it will affect you and others until it is resolved. The Bible says that a root of bitterness will always spring up, always cause trouble, and always defile many—often those we love the most (Hebrews 12:15).

Spend some time working through this issue this week. It may be very helpful to find a godly pastor or counselor who could help you come to spiritual resolution and release.



CHAPTER 9

LIES MEN BELIEVE ABOUT THE WORLD

The Bible says that we are to be in the world, but not of the world. Our world is broken and dark . . . it continually presses in upon our lives. There is a relentless battle to not be conformed to this world, but be “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Romans 12:2). Many men are not winning this battle.

STARTER QUESTION: What do most television and social media advertisements tell us about the world we live in?

LIE #36: THE WORLD IS TOO MESSED UP TO BRING CHILDREN INTO.

- On what basis do most couples make their decisions regarding having children? Is this the right foundation for their thinking? If not, what would be a better source?

- Read Genesis 1:28 together. This command is repeated several times by God in the Scripture. Do you think God has ever revoked this command? Why or why not?

LIE #37: I'M MEASURED BY HOW I COMPARE WITH OTHER MEN.

- This spirit of comparison is pervasive and subtle. How does it manifest itself in your life? Where do you feel you are comparing yourself to others? How does this affect you?

- Robert reminds us that the antidote to this comparison is to genuinely rejoice with and compliment others . . . like the other car on the California freeway. What do you think of this illustration? Look for opportunities to do that this week.

LIE #38: WITH EVERYTHING GOING ON IN MY LIFE, IT'S REALLY NOT POSSIBLE TO LIVE WITH INTEGRITY.

- What man have you observed who seems to have great integrity? How do you think he's accomplished this?

- How do you think this integrity has benefitted him, and how will your integrity benefit you?

LIE #39: BEING A CHRISTIAN IS SUPPOSED TO BE COOL.

- What is the root cause behind why many Christians seldom share their faith?

- What could help us overcome this fear?

LIE #40: MY DEATH WILL BE THE END OF MY STORY.

- What's the greatest step we can take now to prepare for eternity?

- Have you taken that step? If you have questions about your eternity, please talk with your leader or pastor. Nothing could be more important!

YOUR NEXT STEP...

Spend time this week thinking through the legacy you are leaving in this world and your preparation for the next. Write down four or five things you would pray would be said about you after you die.

Finally, write down what you pray you will hear from God after you die.

CHAPTER 10

COUNTERING THE LIES WITH THE TRUTH

For nine weeks we have looked intently at the lies of the Enemy. In this final conversation, we're going to see the liberating power of the truth when it is known, believed, and acted upon.

STARTER QUESTION: Share about a time that you saw something out of place in the morning mirror, but failed to make an adjustment, and what were the results (e.g., hair out of place, shirt buttoned wrong, pants unzipped, etc.)?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think most men realize that believing a lie will always lead to bondage? Why or why not?

2. In your experience, how often are you confronted with a lie that is designed to defeat you? What are some of the most persistent lies you deal with personally?

3. Are there some areas where you have believed—even lived by—a lie that is impossible to overcome? Are there any lies that are unchangeable in our lives?

4. There is one antidote for these lies: a continual application of the truth. List as many ways as possible that a man can get a deeper and greater infusion of the truth that sets us free.

5. Is it possible to KNOW a truth, but not BELIEVE it? What are the results?

6. Is it possible to BELIEVE a truth, but not OBEY it? What are the results?

7. Is it possible to KNOW, BELIEVE, and SEEK to live by a truth, but do all of this legalistically? What are the results?

8. What is the antidote for a purely rule-keeping religion? How can we know and experience gospel grace every day and let Christ give us His gracious, truth-filled direction?

LEADER NOTE: Look at the instructions for chapter 11. If you are NOT meeting next week, you will need to give your group the final instructions to do on their own.

YOUR NEXT STEP...

Spend some time this week praying through and writing down the answers to the following questions:

- Is there any lie you have believed that needs to be renounced?

- Is there any truth you have believed that you have not surrendered to in humble obedience? If so, deal with that today!

CHAPTER 11

THE TRUTH THAT SETS US FREE

If you are meeting in your group this week ...

This week will be a little different, but a wonderful summary of all you've learned. Ask the men to each read one of the forty truths out loud. Encourage them to give a few seconds after a truth is read so it can sink into their hearts.

Have them circle truths that are most impactful to them. Let the totality of the truths wash over the entire group.

At the end of the reading, ask the men what has been most impactful about this whole study. Or, you could ask them what they circled and why.

As you close, encourage the men to read through this last chapter periodically to refresh their minds about the truths of God and the lies of the enemy. Spend some time praying for each other.

If you are NOT meeting in your group this week ...

Sometime this week spend time on your own at the end of chapter 10 session and do the following exercise.

You've looked at forty lies men believe with some intensity.

Now, in chapter 11, Robert walks us through the contrasting TRUTHS in each of these areas.

Sit down with chapter 11 and your pen this week. Read slowly and prayerfully through the great truths—the forty truths—that will set you free. As you read each one, take a moment to pray it into your life or the life of someone you know. Circle those you most need to remember, or come back to more frequently than others.

In future months, periodically pick up the book and reread chapter 11, letting God remind you of the great truths every man should know—the truths that overcome the **Lies Men Believe!**