

Spiritual Warfare - Believing the Truth

Truth stands the test of time; lies are soon exposed.
(Proverbs 12:19 NLT)

Jesus wants us to live well in this life. He promised us: **"and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."** (John 8:32 NLT). It is God's plan that we not only know about the truth but that we believe the truth, speak the truth and rearrange our lives so all of our actions support the truth. That's a huge turnaround from a life in active addiction where deception is the rule of the day. Even prior to active addiction for many of us, truth was hard to live because we didn't feel safe where the truth was. We felt we had to hide behind a mask and pretend we were someone other than who we are. We felt we had to say something other than truth so we wouldn't create trouble in our home or even bring abusive actions onto ourselves. Sometimes we were even forced to lie as violent people beat out of us the words they wanted to hear.

For many of us our the first necessary action is to break the lie off us that Satan has wound around our heart and mind, that telling the truth is not safe, not worth it, and will not get us what we need. We do that by **asking God to forgive us** for believing the lie - even though circumstances made it difficult to do otherwise. We **ask God to cleanse us from our sin** of trusting in lies rather than the truth and then we **receive God's healing**. We take authority in the name of Jesus, who was the complete truth-teller, and we **break the power of the lie off us**. In place of that lie we **bless our minds and hearts with the truth** that God's truth active in my life is filled with blessing and comfort and healing and power. It's God's gift of love and care for me. We choose to accept that truth and invite God to fill the empty place in our hearts where the lie used to be with His loving truth.

What lies have we told ourselves or believed that other have told us. There are many. Here are ten beliefs many hold. Following each is God's response from the Bible.

1. Money will give me security, bring me happiness and solve problems. I need money to be okay. **For the love of money is at the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.** (1 Timothy 6:10)
2. Mood-altering substances can heal my pain, give me joy, and release stress. **Wine produces mockers; liquor leads to brawls. Whoever is led astray by drink cannot be wise.** (Proverbs 20:1)
3. If I look okay, I'll be okay OR I'm nobody unless I look okay. **Charm is deceptive, and beauty does not last; but a woman who fears the Lord will be greatly praised.** (Proverbs 31:30 NLT)

4. Feeding my sexual need is normal and will satisfy me. **Throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception.** (Ephesians 4:22 NLT)
5. I can do what I want and it's no one else's business. **Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.** (Proverbs 16:18 NLT)
6. One little sin doesn't matter. As long as no one knows, I can get by. **You must warn each other every day, as long as it is called "today," so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God.** (Hebrews 3:13 NLT)
7. I can still associate with old friends, go to old places, hang around old neighborhoods, and it won't harm me. **Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for bad company corrupts good character.** (1 Corinthians 15:33)
8. Please tell me you like me. I can't really feel settled until you let me know you approve of me. **Obviously, I'm not trying to be a people pleaser! No, I am trying to please God. If I were still trying to please people, I would not be Christ's servant.** (Gal. 1:10)
9. I have to do alright, measure up to a certain standard, and then things will be fine OR I can't measure up to that standard so why bother trying. **Have you lost your senses? After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?** (Gal. 3:3 NLT)
10. God is a loving God and would never send anyone to hell so everyone is going to heaven when they die. Death will end my suffering. **Don't you know that those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God? Don't fool yourselves.** (1 Corinthians 6:9 NLT)

When we work the steps we often look at how we have lived in denial. We've blamed others for our problems, made excuses for our behaviours, lashed out in anger on innocent people, minimized the harm caused by our actions, hid the full extent of our addiction, outright lied to others about many things, or just hid behind our addictive behaviour to pretend that everything was alright. Sometimes we thought and spoke the lies for so long they became a whole new pseudo-reality for us. We hardly knew what was true and what was fantasy anymore.

It is God's desire that we be free and that comes by renouncing lies, breaking their power off our lives, receiving the truth and allowing it to replace and replenish our lives where the lie once held us.

Questions For Discussion and Reflection

1. What lies have I believed?
2. What lies am I willing to renounce and break off my life?