



**Jesus Christ said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."  
John 8:32 (NLT)**

The above verse implies that there are certain lies that we have bought into that are trapping us and preventing us from experiencing the life God created for us. This series hopes to expose some of those commonly embraced lies and replace them with the truth of God's word. When we truly understand the significance of these truths and apply them to our lives, fears, anxieties, burdens, anger and the need to be in control will all fade away. This is the point when we are truly free.

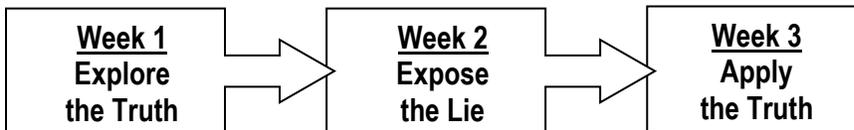
The main truths we are going to address in this series are:

- 1. God loves you**
- 2. The work of measuring up is finished**
- 3. God is changing you to become like him**
- 4. You were created with significance**

Though at first glance you might think you agree with and believe each of these truths, we hope to show you that each of us has a tendency to distrust these deeply. As a result, our lives are hindered in many ways in our relationship with God and with others. As we explore these truths we trust God will provide fresh insight and you will see a new found freedom experienced in your life and in your relationship with him.

**The Process**

We will spend 3 weeks on each Truth and Lie.



	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>TRUTH</b>	God loves you	The work is finished	God is Changing You	You are significant
<b>LIE</b>	I am not fully loved	I must do more	I cannot change	I have nothing to offer

Before we discuss the love of God we need to first understand the anger of God. This may seem like a strange starting point, but until we understand the wrath of God, we will not fully appreciate his love.



## THE WRATH OF GOD

Do you think God gets angry? If so, with whom does he get angry and why?

Do you think God gets angry with you? At what times and why?

Read the following verses:

***Psalms 7:11 (NIV)***

*God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day.*

***Psalms 78:49-50 (NIV)***

*He unleashed against them his hot anger, his wrath, indignation and hostility-- a band of destroying angels. <sup>50</sup> He prepared a path for his anger; he did not spare them from death but gave them over to the plague.*

How do these verses make you feel? Do they bring you comfort or tension?

In each of the verses below, underline what it is that evokes the anger of God.

***Romans 2:5 (NIV)***

*But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.*

***Deuteronomy 6:13-15 (NIV)***

*Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. <sup>14</sup> Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; <sup>15</sup> for the Lord your God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land.*

***Isaiah 13:9 (NIV)***

*See, the day of the Lord is coming --a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger-- to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it.*

In summary, what is it that evokes the anger of God?

God's anger is always evoked by sin. Sin is the evil rejection of God and his righteousness.



**Romans 3:23 (NIV)**

*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

**Ephesians 2:3 (NIV)**

*All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.*

**Romans 6:23 (NIV)**

*For the wages of sin is death*

**Since we have all sinned, we are by nature under God's wrath and face judgment and death. Have you ever argued with God that you "deserved" better than what you were presently experiencing or that you felt someone else deserved better than what they were receiving? Share with the group.**

**What is wrong with that line of thinking?**

If I argue for what I deserve, all I will get is death. I cannot with integrity argue that I deserve anything from God except his full wrath and judgment. The "deserving" mindset is rooted in a sinful self-focused life that has lost touch with the reality of my spiritual state before God.

**How are we to understand God's love when these passages seem to indicate that, in our natural selves, we are under his wrath? How do wrath and love co-exist?**

God hates sin, all sin. He will punish and destroy even the slightest sin with the full extent of his holy wrath. Yet, even though he hates sin with all his being, he still created us as an expression of his love. Because God is love, he must keep on loving. God cannot stop loving even when we behave sinfully. Because God is love, in the midst of his anger he finds a way to turn his anger aside and draw us back to relationship with himself.

**Romans 3:25-26 (NIV)**

*<sup>25</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- <sup>26</sup> he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.*

**How did the sacrifice of Jesus remove God's wrath from us?**

God allowed Jesus to be a substitute to pay the death penalty on our behalf. In the Old Testament God continuously held off judging sin until the New Testament when he unleashed the full fury of his wrath... on Jesus. As a result, there is no wrath left for anyone who is in Christ Jesus.

**Romans 5:8 (NIV)**

*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**If Christ died for us while we were still in the process of fully embracing sin, what does that have to say about the nature of God's love for you?**

God's love for you is not conditional upon your behaviour. You do not need to measure up to God's expectations in order to receive the greatest blessing he could provide.

**Why do we find this so difficult to believe?**

We are so conditioned to think we must earn someone's love or blessing, that we cannot even begin to grasp the concept of unconditional love. We believe that when someone fails, they deserve to be condemned for their actions. They do not deserve to be shown love, but receive some form of judgment. Often we express this judgment through anger or withdrawal.

**1 John 2:2 (NIV)**

*He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.*

**If Jesus died for the whole world, does that mean God has removed his wrath from everyone? Why or why not?**

**1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 (NIV)**

*For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*<sup>10</sup> He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.*

**John 3:36 (NIV)**

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.*

God's forgiveness is applied only to those who embrace the Spirit of Christ in their lives. It is at that point that the death and resurrection of Christ is applied to us. If someone has not embraced Jesus, then there is no covering over them declaring that the death price has been paid. They are still responsible to face judgment and pay the full price for their sin.

**If you are in Christ, then there is NO BARRIER between you  
and the full expression of God's love.**

**Isaiah 12:1 (NIV)**

*In that day you will say: "I will praise you, O Lord. Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you have comforted me."*



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Because God's wrath has been removed from us, we are fully acceptable to God. Read the following verses and briefly discuss the implications of his acceptance.

**Revelation 22:3 (NIV)**

*No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.*

Accepts us as His     Servants    

**Implication:** Instead of working against God, we are free to join with him in fulfilling his purposes. This is not a negative concept of servanthood, but a thrilling partnership with Christ.

**Ephesians 2:19 (NLT)**

*So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people.*

Accepts us as     Citizens of Heaven    

**Implication:** We don't belong to this world any longer. Our place is in heaven and we are simply here as missionaries until God says we can come home. Instead of feeling we have to conform to this culture, we can understand we belong to a different culture, with different values. We can proudly live out our true citizenship in this foreign land.

**1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)**

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

Accepts us as His     Royal Priests    

**Implication:** We are God's representative. We are the ones to whom God has entrusted the privilege of declaring him to the nations. We are the means by which others are to understand and connect to God. God has entrusted his "image" into our hands.

**John 15:15 (NIV)**

*I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.*

Accepts us as His     Friends    

**Implication:** God not only loves you – he likes you too! He enjoys you and enjoys spending time with you. He loves having you share your life with him. He loves doing things with you. He loves going places with you; he just likes being with you. You get to be friends with the creator of the universe. How awesome is that?



**John 1:12 (NLT)**

*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.*

Accepts us as His Children

**Implication:** As close as friends are, family (true family) is even closer. There is a bond between us that can never be severed. God loves us more deeply than an earthly parent loves their child. Implied in this type of care is God's promise to protect us, provide for us, lead us and love us intimately. We are God's treasure!

**Romans 8:17 (NLT)**

*And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory.*

Accepts us as His Heirs

**Implication:** An heir is entrusted with his Father's estate. It is given to him/her to care for, protect and enlarge. We are the ones God trusts to care for his creation. We are the ones to whom he gives the privilege of rule. We will receive "everything" that is God's and we will reign with Christ, as co-heirs, throughout all eternity. We are given a role of great significance because God views us as significant.

**Ephesians 5:30 (NLT)**

*And we are members of his body.*

Accepts us as His Own Body

**Implication:** How much more acceptance can one receive than to be declared the body of Christ himself. God does not do anything without including his body in the process. We are unified with Christ in all he does and accomplishes as he works out his purposes through us. He cares for us as his own body. What greater care could one possibly receive?

**John 17:20-21 (NIV)**

*"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*

Accepts us Into the Godhead itself

**Implication:** Believe it or not, we have been invited into an even deeper circle of God's acceptance. God is community (Father, Son, and Spirit) and now he invites us into the very midst of that Godhead community. We are invited to join and share in the love and acceptance that flows between the Father, Son, and Spirit.



**2 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV)**

*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup> Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

Though we do not become “gods”, we get to share in God’s very nature. We become unified with him as he is unified with himself. This is too far beyond our ability to begin to comprehend.

**Which of the above verses or descriptions of acceptance speaks the loudest to you? Why?**

**If God accepts you fully, does that mean you don’t need others?**

**Genesis 2:20-22 (NIV)**

*So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup> So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.*

**Was Adam wrong in needing Eve?**

God never rebuked Adam for feeling alone. He never said, “Adam, that’s a wrong perspective. All you need is me.” He supports Adam’s realization and creates Eve in response to the obvious need. One might guess that God specifically delayed creating Eve so that Adam might realize his deep need for her and not take her for granted.

We need community, because God is community (Father, Son, and Spirit). We do not necessarily need to be married, but we do need to be part of a community of love. The church is to fulfill that community role for everyone.

**If you fully believed and accepted the love God has for you, how might it affect your life?**

**TRUTHS TO REFLECT ON:**

- 1) God will judge all sin with the full extent of his wrath.
- 2) Through Jesus’ sacrifice, God redirected his wrath for our sin.
- 3) Through repentance and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Christ’s death is applied to our lives and we are completely forgiven.
- 4) In Christ, we are fully accepted by God.



**AT HOME:**

Each day take one of these verses and spend time reflecting on all its implications. Ask God to help you understand the full extent of his love and to point out areas where you have difficulty accepting it.

**John 3:16-17 (NIV)**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

**1 John 4:10 (NIV)**

*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

**Romans 5:8 (NIV)**

*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)**

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Ephesians 2:4-5 (NIV)**

*But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*

**1 John 3:1 (NIV)**

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!*

**Jeremiah 31:3 (NIV)**

*The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.*

**Which verse speaks the loudest to you? Why do you think that is?**

**Try to memorize that verse over the next week**

It will be essential in conquering the lies we will face next session.

**Try to start each day this week affirming the fact that God loves you and wants the best for you.**

This is very key. If we are to defeat the lies in our life, we have to embed the truth of God's word.

Strongly encourage each one to memorize one verse declaring God's love. This will become more critically important as we start exposing the lies.