



**REVIEW:**

**God was angry with you:**

**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.*

**God's love is not dependent on your performance:**

**Romans 5:8 (NIV)**

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

**Jesus took God's just anger on himself:**

**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.*

**Through Christ, God is free to express the full extent of his love to you:**

**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.*

**There are circumstances that we face that tempt us to question God's love for us.**

**1) When you perceive your needs are not being met, BUT God promises to meet your needs**

**Philippians 4:19 (NIV)**

*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*

**2) When you experience loss,**

**BUT God comforts you**

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

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*

**3) When you fail,**

**BUT God loves you despite failure**

**Romans 5:6 (NIV)**

*You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*

**How can we begin to spot when we believe a lie about God's love? What are some indicators in our life that something is amiss?**



We can often begin to see the lies we embrace when:

1) We experience negative feelings of:

Anger

Anxiety

Fear

At these times, we feel we are threatened in some way and are no longer safe. As a result, these emotions get raised to put us on alert and we put up defences to protect us from the perceived threat.

2) We act in an ungodly manner.

Can you spot any times through this past week when you gave into the lie that you are not fully loved by God?

- Did you condemn yourself at any point in time for personal failure?
- Did you withhold love from someone else because of their failure?
- Did you feel unlovable or unloved at any time?
- Did you harshly criticize yourself or anyone else?
- Did you feel compelled to pay someone back wrong for wrong?
- Did you talk negatively about a person to someone else?
- Did you at any time affirm the negative opinions of others (parents/bosses) about yourself?
- Did you avoid anyone this week?
- Did you express anger toward someone this week?
- Did you look down on anyone this week?
- Did you get angry with someone in traffic and devalue them in your thinking?
- Did you shy away from time with God due to a sense of shame and unworthiness?
- Did you find it hard to love someone who wanted to cause you harm or discredit you?
- Are you a perfectionist trying to earn God's favour?
- Did God seem like a critical judge?
- Do you have low self-esteem or sense of worth?
- Did you worry about anything?
- Did you feel abandoned or alone?
- Did you start to take control and manipulate your personal safety or needs?
- Did you change your behaviour to gain someone's acceptance and love?
- Do you fear the future?
- Did you do something sinful, not trusting God to meet your personal needs?
- Did you refuse to step out in faith and surrender control to God in any way?



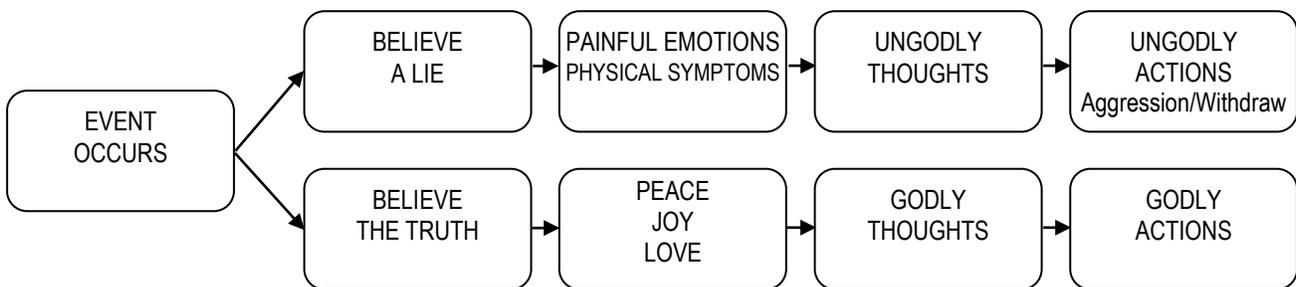
Each of the above thought patterns or behaviours are ultimately rooted in a distrust of God's love for you. Some are very subtle. Are there any statements where you do not see the connection to the lie? Discuss these as a group.

Spend time sharing one of the ways you distrusted God's love for you this week.

If you trusted God's love for you how might you have acted differently?

The more you are able to identify the lies, the further you will be on the path to FREEDOM.

**THE FREEDOM PROCESS**



**What are some possible ungodly actions that might stem from the lie that you are not fully loved by God?**

- If someone insults you...
- If someone cuts you off in traffic...
- If you failed at something...
- If you were abused...
- If someone does not like you...

The key to spiritual freedom is to:

- 1) Identify the LIE
- 2) CONFESS IT to God
- 3) Affirm the BIBLICAL TRUTH
- 4) Correct any UNGODLY ACTIONS
- 5) LIVE OUT the truth



## **1) IDENTIFY THE LIE**

Identifying the lie is a critical step in becoming free. If you can't see where you are living the lie, you can't make changes to live in the truth.

At the end of each day, reflect on your behaviour throughout the day and the various feelings you experienced. You may even want to keep a journal so that you can begin to see patterns.

**Start with:**

### **a) Ungodly Actions and Thoughts**

**Did you at any point act in an ungodly way?**

**AGRESSION:**

**Did you act out of aggression toward self, others or God?**

**What are various ways we might do this?**

**Did you strive to control an environment or relationship out of fear?**

**WITHDRAWAL:**

**Did you withhold love from self, others or God?**

**What are various ways we might do this?**

**Did you allow fear or insecurity to make any decision today?**

**There are times when we “think” certain ways even though we do not act on those thoughts. But the thoughts reveal what is in our hearts.**

**As you reflect, be sure to consider what thoughts you allowed to go through your mind, even if you did not act on them.**



b) Painful Emotions and Physical Symptoms

**What are some examples of painful emotions we might experience as a result of embracing the lie that you are not fully loved?**

Anger, Anxiety, Worry, Fear

Painful emotions are the indicator lights that something is not going the way God originally intended. Events or people have a way of touching the buttons in our lives that expose our weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and inadequacies. When this happens, these painful emotions rise to the surface and remove peace and joy from our lives.

Some painful emotions are not ungodly. For instance there is such a thing as godly or righteous anger. However, the majority of time anger is rooted in our own personal, unmet expectations more than it is based on the holiness of God. **The key here is to reflect to see if a lie is at work.**

**What are some possible physical symptoms we might experience as a result of believing the lie that we are not fully loved?**

When we are under sustained stress...

When we worry...

When there is tension in relationships...

When we do not like ourselves...

When we feel shame or guilt...

Obviously physical symptoms may have many different causes. However, it is wise when we experience what medicine calls stress-related illness, to examine our lives to see if there is some way in which we are buying into a lie regarding our value and significance.



## **2) CONFESS THE LIE TO GOD**

### **Why is it important to confess the lie to God?**

It is one thing to identify the lie; it is another to view it as a sin against God that hinders your relationship with him. Confession, in this case, also implies repentance; you see the damage of the lie and you want to make things right with God. You want to be rid of the lie permanently and free from the hold it has on your life.

Confession is a way of saying we assume responsibility for our actions and desire to live according to God's word.

- a) Confess the lie
- b) Receive God's forgiveness
- c) Renounce any spiritual hold on your life that may exist due to the lie.

Whenever we embrace a spiritual lie, we open ourselves up to being put into spiritual bondage to Satan. It becomes a foothold of influence and control in our life. This is especially true if we have held onto this lie since childhood.

### ***Ephesians 4:26-27 (NIV)***

*"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold.*

## **3) AFFIRM THE BIBLICAL TRUTH**

### **Why is it important to identify and affirm a specific Biblical truth?**

You have to replace the lie with the truth. If you just acknowledge the lie and try to avoid it, you will continually fail because there is nothing else to hold on to. You will keep falling back into the old pattern. **It is the TRUTH that sets you free, not an absence of the lie.**

**Find a scripture passage that speaks loudly to you about the truth you need to embed in your life.**

### **What are some ways you can embed that truth in your mind?**

- Memorize the verse (highly recommended.)
- Put the verses on paper in places where you are most tempted to believe the lie.
- Have others hold you accountable for that lie/truth.
- Teach it to someone else.
- Etc.



**What will ultimately happen if you do not replace the lie with a biblical truth?**

We continually return to what we know. If you know the lie better than you know the truth, your mind will always revert to the lie. **It is important to drown a lie under a flood of truth.**

#### **4) CORRECT ANY UNGODLY ACTION**

Now that you traced ungodly actions and painful emotions back to the lie and replaced the lie with truth, now you need to return to the ungodly action and correct it.

Why is it important to go back and correct any previous, ungodly action from the past day or week?

a) True conviction and repentance obligates us to correct a wrong if at all possible.

What are some types of things you may need to do?

You may need to:

1. **Go back to some person to apologize and ask for forgiveness.**

This is a humbling thing to do but goes a long way to embedding that truth in your mind. If you do this a few times, it won't be long before you're avoiding that lie altogether.

2. **Stop doing something you had started that wasn't part of God's plan for you.**

3. **Stop pursuing certain things, positions, or relationships that are not part of God's plan for you.**

4. **Let down certain defences that protect you from others and God.**

Defences could be cloaked as "proving yourself", needing to be right, shyness, humour, being "peaceful", self sufficient,

b) The more you "correct" any lie-based action, the more you will program your mind to not respond that way again.



## 5) LIVE OUT THE TRUTH

**DO WHAT YOU DIDN'T DO, HAD YOU BELIEVED THE TRUTH.**

**What are some other specific things you personally may have to do in the next week to live the truth?**

- You may need to take a step of faith you had refused to take.
- You may need to stop judging someone who has offended you and offer forgiveness.
- You may simply need to trust God to meet your needs in some area of your life.
- You may need to show love to someone who doesn't love you.
- You may need to sit back and take a day of rest each week.
- You may need to tithe on your income as a statement of dependence on God.
- You may need to draw closer to Jesus Christ and spend more time enjoying God.



### **TIME LINE:**

Just because you have discovered the truth, doesn't mean you will automatically apply it to your life. Your brain has been pre-wired over many years to respond to circumstances in a sinful way. These are so deeply programmed that your mind will not even consult you on many of these issues, but will simply react subconsciously the same old way. Don't get discouraged; Paul struggled with the same thing in Romans 7.

**As you go through the steps of freedom, the timeline between buying into the lie and correcting the behaviour will keep getting shorter and shorter.** Eventually, you will have re-programmed your mind to respond in a godly way and you will be free at last. You will no longer believe the lie, experience the painful emotions, or act out in a sinful manner. Will you be perfect? No, because there are so many different ways we believe the lie. But, one by one we can start removing the chains from our lives. This can take days, but usually weeks, months, and years to renew.

**Don't give up; it is the process of becoming like Jesus Christ.**