The Character of God

- **God is truth.** (See Deuteronomy 32:4, Titus 1:2.)
- **Jesus is truth.** (See John 1:14, 17.)
- **Jesus proclaimed that He is truth.** (See John 14:6.)
- **The Holy Spirit is truth.** (See John 15:26, 1 John 5:6.)
- **All Scripture is true.** (See I Thessalonians 2:13, John 17:17.)

The Opposite of Truthfulness

**Deceit:** Concealing or distorting facts to deliberately mislead or create a false impression of the truth.

**Exaggeration:** Embellishing the truth to give a more favorable impression.

**Fabrication:** Deliberately inventing a lie.

**Redirection:** Deflecting blame to another person in order to avoid personal embarrassment or responsibility.

**Omission:** Leaving out key information intentionally. As Benjamin Franklin said, “Half the truth is often a great lie.”

**False Recognition:** Stealing the credit for someone else’s hard-earned success.

**Hypocrisy:** Saying one thing and then choosing to do another. Words and actions do not agree.

**Cover-up:** Protecting the misdeeds of others. This makes you as guilty as those who are doing wrong.

The Bible relates truth to pieces of armor. Ephesians 6:14 explains truth as a soldier’s belt. The belt holds the sword and strips of leather to protect the lower body. Psalm 91:4 describes truth as our shield and buckler. The truth is our defense and protection against confusion, doubts, and the lies of the enemy.

Truthfulness in My Life

- **Exodus 20:16 and Ephesians 4:25**—What is God’s command about telling the truth?
- **Proverbs 12:22 and John 8:44**—Satan is a liar and the father of lies. Whom am I pleasing when I tell lies?
- **Proverbs 14:25**—How does my truthfulness affect others?
- **John 14:6**—If Jesus is the Truth, can I tell lies and still be loyal to Him?
- **Ephesians 4:15**—How should I speak truth?

Key Concepts

Many people want truth to be relative; they assert that truth is always subject to change and is a matter of one’s perspective. This belief gives the self-gratifying illusion that they have the power to make their own decisions of what is right or wrong. Satan deceived Eve into thinking she was the judge of what was truly good in the Garden, and he continues to deceive people today. (See Genesis 3:1–7, John 8:44, I Timothy 2:14, Revelation 12:9.)

Truthfulness requires accuracy. A truthful person double-checks the facts and presents them clearly so others understand what really happened. When asked, he says what he was doing and where he was. If he breaks something, a truthful person admits it and makes it right. Truthful people do not cheat on tests because that does not give an accurate representation of what they know. Truthful people do not steal, acting as though they own something they do not. Truthful people humbly accept the facts and live honestly before God.

Truth is absolute for all people at all times and in all places. It is true whether or not we believe it. President Lincoln once asked, “How many legs would a sheep have if you called its tail a leg?” The answer quickly came back, “Five!” The President then said, “No, it would only have four legs. Calling a tail a leg doesn’t make it one.”
Truthfulness Memory Verse

Ephesians 4:25
“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”

Memory Verse Game:
Pass the Ball: Say the verse a few times together before playing this game. Then, while saying the verse together, have the children pass a ball around the circle. For each word of the verse the ball is passed to the next person. Whoever has the ball at the end attempts to say the whole verse by himself with as little help as possible.

Doers of the Word:
Have the children write about a time they applied this verse and spoke the truth. For example: “I was hungry. But when I came to the dinner table, I realized we were having food I did not like. I almost said, ‘I’m not hungry.’ By saying that, I wouldn’t have to eat it. But the Lord reminded me of this verse, so I didn’t lie.”
Read I Samuel 1:5–28, 3:1, 10–20 as a family and answer the following questions:

1. **What would it cost Hannah to keep her promise?** “And she vowed a vow, and said, O L ORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the L ORD all the days of his life…” (I Samuel 1:11). **When is a time where you kept your promise, even when it was difficult?** (See Psalm 15:4.)

2. **What message did God give Samuel?** “In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house…” (I Samuel 3:12). **How might fear of man affect your desire to be truthful?**

3. **Was Samuel an adult or a child when the Lord spoke to him?** “And the child Samuel ministered unto the L ORD before Eli” (I Samuel 3:1). **Telling the truth is for all ages. Have you ever had a time that your age made it difficult to tell the truth?**

4. **How do you think Samuel felt when Eli called him?** “And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the L ORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision” (I Samuel 3:15). **Why would you tell the truth, even when it may be difficult?**

5. **How would Samuel’s respect for Eli make it awkward for him to be truthful?** “Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. And he said, What is the thing that the L ORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee” (I Samuel 3:16–17). **What should our attitude be when our authorities ask us for information?**

6. **Did Samuel tell the whole truth when he was asked by Eli to share everything?** “And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the L ORD: let him do what seemeth him good” (I Samuel 3:18). **What is wrong with leaving out details and only telling part of the truth?**

7. **What other position of trust did God give Samuel?** “And Samuel grew, and the L ORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the L ORD” (I Samuel 3:19–20). **What will enable others to trust you in the future?**
Truthfulness is earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts

Samuel Delivers a Difficult Message

“And Samuel told him every whit [thing], and hid nothing from him” (I Samuel 3:18a).
Truthfulness Activity

Introduction:
This month we are asking the Lord to develop truthfulness in our lives. What a privilege to respond to the work He is doing to change us into the image of His Son! Today we are discussing how to combat the lies of the enemy with the truth in God’s Word. Satan is a master deceiver and we must know the Word of God if we are to live in the truth that sets us free. As we memorize and quote Scripture, the Lord establishes His truth in our lives and we are able to overcome negative thoughts and lies from the enemy.

Activity Instructions:
Draw a line to match the truth in God’s Word to the lie it overcomes.

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (I John 4:10).

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

“These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates” (Zechariah 8:16).

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (II Timothy 1:7).

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

“I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain” (John 15:16).

- The enemy wants me to be fearful.
- The enemy wants me to think that I could never do anything meaningful.
- The enemy wants me to think that I should fit in with the world.
- The enemy wants me to think that nobody loves me.
- The enemy wants me to think that it’s okay to lie.
- The enemy wants me to think that there are other ways to get to Heaven besides faith in Jesus.
This story begins in a darkened room. All the lights have been dimmed in the best Victorian fashion, because a child is dying. Silhouetted against the faint light filtering through the curtains stands a sorrowful young woman next to a seated man. He holds the frail form of a boy who is dear to them both but now is dying. With a pale hand, the woman soothes the boy’s brow, speaking softly and gently to him, but after a time he becomes restless, and in his distress he cannot be calmed.

“Carry and rock me—like last night,” the boy faintly murmurs.

Standing up, his face weary with long watching and sorrow, the man carries him back and forth across the dingy room. In a voice rough and broken with emotion, he begins to sing to the child,

“Jesus loves me—this I know,
For the Bible tells me so:
Little ones to Him belong,—
They are weak but He is strong.”

The man’s voice gently finishes the last verse:

“Jesus loves me—He will stay
Close beside me all the way.
Then His little child He’ll take
Up to heaven for His dear sake.”

Thus, in the Victorian novel Say and Seal, little Johnny Fox dies and passes through the gate of Heaven to meet his Savior, Jesus.

The book, co-authored by sisters Anna and Susan Warner and published in 1860, became a bestseller, and the poem (which was written by Anna Warner) was widely admired. But when noted hymn writer William Bradbury read the poem, he decided to do something about this little literary treasure.

Bradbury had a real heart for writing hymns for children so that they could also understand the truths of God’s Word. How could children know that they were indeed loved by Jesus? As the poem explained so well, we can know this is true because the Bible tells us so and the Bible is true. God’s Word is the infallible, accurate, reliable foundation of truth. Seizing eagerly upon the simple poem, he added a chorus, set it to music, and published it.
The unsophisticated song spread like wildfire. Children all over the country were soon singing it. Missionaries carried it overseas, its simple tune and words making it one of the first hymns they taught converts.

The literary careers of the Warner sisters were launched by what looked like a terrible misfortune to human eyes. Their widowed father, a wealthy lawyer, died, the “Panic of 1837” occurred, and the ladies were plunged into poverty. They found it necessary to sell their lovely home and move into an old Revolutionary-War-era home on Constitution Island, not far from West Point Military Academy. As a means of provision, they started writing books—eventually writing 106 publications, 18 of which they co-authored. Through the years, they learned to trust the promises of God’s Word.

Anna and Susan conducted Sunday School classes for the West Point cadets for forty years. After the sisters died, the Academy honored their steady, Godly influence on the young men by burying the ladies with full military honors in the military cemetery at West Point—the only civilians to receive that high honor.

Bibliography:
- *Then Sings My Soul* by Robert J. Morgan, page 139.
- *Al Smith’s Treasury of Hymn Histories* by Al Smith, page 101.
Jesus Loves Me, This I Know

1 Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

2 Jesus loves me—he who died heaven's gate to open wide.

3 Jesus loves me, this I know, as he loved so long ago,

Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.
He will wash away my sin, let his little child come in.
Taking children on his knee, saying, "Let them come to me."

Refrain

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Tune: William B. Bradbury, 1861

This hymn is in the public domain.

www.hymnary.org/text/jesus_loves_me_this_i_know_for_the_bible