

Four Gifts Devotional

Week Four- Truth

Day One

Verse: “Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth,” Ephesians 6:14 NLT.

Do you ever get funny feelings in your stomach? I get butterflies there when I’m nervous or angry. Lots of times we feel stuff in our gut. Have you ever heard someone say, “I’ve got a gut feeling about this?” Athletic trainers call it our core. Core strength is important for health.

Core strength is important in our Christian life too. Spiritual core strength is what you believe about God. We call those core beliefs. We base those beliefs on Bible verses and the adventures we have with God. He thinks that our spiritual core strength is so important that he gives us a weapon to protect it. He calls it the Belt of Truth. Why is it a belt and why is it truth?

We need truth to fight Satan who God calls the father of lies. Satan lies all the time about who we are and who God is. He wants to get our feelings and guts all mixed up. He wants to make us feel sad and weak. You know how a belt holds your pants up? Our Belt of Truth holds our feelings up, so they don’t droop either. God wants us to wear our Belt of Truth so that we can say, “No, that’s a lie!” when Satan tries to do that. Here are some of the lies Satan tries on us. Next to each one is a core belief, or truth, that cancels out that lie.

Satan Says	God Says
You are weak.	You are strong and mighty. Exodus 15:2
You are ugly.	You are beautiful. Psalm 139:14
No one likes you.	I will love you forever. Lamentations 3:22
You are too scared to do that.	I will give you courage. Deuteronomy 31:6

Every time you read your Bible or memorize a verse, your Belt of Truth gets bigger and stronger. It will protect you more from Satan’s tricks. It will help you to speak truth when others are lying.

When we walk and talk truth about Jesus, that brings light into the lives of others. There are lots of lies and mixed-up things in our world. We can be light bearers when we wear our Belts of Truth. We can help others see Satan’s lies and say no to him also. Wear your belt every day.

Prayer: Thank you for my Belt of Truth, God. Help me to make it stronger by reading and memorizing the Bible. I want to be a light bearer of truth.

***Just for fun:** I think we have gotten lazy about memorizing the Bible. Here are some links to ideas that will help us make scripture memory a habit.*

[For kids](#) Another one [For kids](#)

[For grown-ups](#)

Day Two- Week Four

Verses: “I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life,” John 14:6 ESV. “And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free,” John 8:32 NLT.

To Think About

My dog Bella loves to chase rabbits and squirrels. When she sees a critter in our yard, she runs after them until they climb a tree or escape under our fence. This is big fun for Bella. When we first brought her to live with us, we almost lost her. Someone left our front door open. Bella spied a rabbit across the street, ran out of the house and disappeared to chase it.

We ran all over our street looking for our new dog. Bella is part Beagle. We knew she would chase that rabbit as far as it could run. Rabbits can run far. How would we find her? Praise God, Bella found a dog down the street and stopped to play. From then on, we have been careful to keep her on a leash or safe in our fenced in backyard.

Where do you think Bella has more freedom? In our backyard or running through the neighborhood? Outside our fence she is free to chase critters as far as she wants. That is a kind of freedom. She is also in danger of being lost with no one to take care of her. Or hit by a car. Inside our yard, she can still chase critters, but she is also free from all the dangerous things that could happen to her if she ran away.

Bella has more freedom in our backyard because she is safe. She does not have to worry about fast cars or finding food or a safe place to sleep or water to drink. God’s truths are like that backyard fence is for Bella. They keep us safe. They give us more freedom than people who do not obey God’s laws. How do they that? Here are a few ideas.

God’s Law	How does obeying it give us freedom?
Do not steal.	Keeps us out of jail.
Do not lie.	We don’t have to muddle our brains trying to keep track of lies we have told. Truthfulness also causes people to trust us which means we are given more privileges and freedoms.
Do not worship other gods besides me.	Saves us from doing a lot of weird stuff false gods demand, like chanting one word all day or crawling on our knees to worship a statue.

God’s laws, his truths, make fences that keeps us safe when we obey them. They give freedom from bad things that happen when we sin. I want to run free in God’s yard. How about you?

Prayer: God, help me to know and obey your truths so that I can be free. Let the freedom and joy of my life be a light to lost people.

Just for fun: Here are the rules for a fun card game our family loves to play called, “I Doubt It.” It’s a good lesson in what can go wrong when you lie. [I Doubt It Rules](#)

Day Three- Week Four

Verse: “Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth, “2 Timothy 2:15b NLT.

To Think About

“How do you know there is a heaven?”

“If God loves everyone, then why do Christians say some people are going to hell?”

“How do you know the Bible is true?”

Have you ever heard questions like this? Many people in our world do not believe in God or the Bible. They think Jesus was just a nice man. They think the stories in the Bible are fairy tales. They think that if there is a heaven, you can get there just by being good. Are we ready to talk to these folks about God’s truth? I think that’s what the Apostle Paul meant when he said, “correctly explains the word of truth.” He means we should be able to answer lost people’s questions without feeling scared or embarrassed.

I was not ready for those questions when I was a kid. I accepted Jesus as my Savior when I was five years old. I didn’t discover a lot of answers until I was in my twenties. That means that I missed a lot of chances to share the light of Jesus with my childhood friends. I think that some Christians have the idea that there is always someone older and smarter than them that should handle hard questions. There isn’t.

Your friends talk to *you* about the big questions of life. They might not talk to other people about these things. Do you think God wants us to be ready with Bible answers?

In Ephesians 6:17 Paul calls the Bible, “the sword of the Spirit.” Have you ever watched sword fights in movies and TV? It seems like one guy is always way better than the other. The one who isn’t so good usually winds up dying or wounded.

That is what happens to us when we don’t know how to use the Bible, our sword. A lost friend flashes a sword at us by asking, “How do you even know God is real?” If we don’t know the truth that answers that question, our friend wins that sword fight of words. When we don’t have a good answer, they might think to themselves, “I was right. There is no God.”

God wants us to read and study the Bible. He wants us to learn from good Bible teachers too. We want to be ready to share his truth like a skilled swordfighter is always ready for a fight.

Prayer: God, please forgive me for times when I have missed chances to share your Word. Help me to learn what I need to, so I can answer questions about you from lost people.

***Just for fun:** Here’s links to articles and sites that can help parents and kids learn basic Apologetics, so they are ready with their Sword of the Spirit.*

[For Teens](#) [For kids and teens](#) [Basic Apologetics course from C.S. Lewis Institute](#)

Day Four-Week Four

Verse: “The Word became a man and lived among us. We saw his glory—the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father. The Word was full of grace and truth,” John 1:14 ICB.

To Think About

When I was in junior high, I didn’t like my brown hair. I wanted to be a blonde. My friend gave me a spray bottle named “Sun In.” She said, “Just spray it on your hair and go sit in the sun. Your hair will turn blonde.” I sprayed Sun In on my hair. I sat in the sun. My hair turned orange.

The kids at my school had things to say about my hair the next day.

“Hey pumpkin head.” “Did ya eat too many oranges?” “Your hair looks really bad.”

Everything my classmates said to me was true. I turned my hair orange and it looked bad. Everything they said was true, but it wasn’t kind. It was mean and it hurt. Words have power.

Our verse today is about Jesus, who is also called, “The Word.” Did you ever give someone a nickname because of something they do? Like calling someone smart, “The Brain,” or a fast runner, “Speedy?” “The Word,” is like a nickname for Jesus. He came to earth to tell humans about God’s ideas and plans, God’s words of truth. Words about his love.

What if Jesus, “The Word,” had only used mean words to tell God’s truths? Something like this?

“You do not believe in God, my Father. You are going to hell.”

Is this a true thing about someone who is lost and doesn’t believe in God? It is true but not kind. Here is how Jesus said this truth when he was here on earth.

“Anyone who believes in God’s Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn’t obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God’s angry judgment,” John 3:36 NLT

See what Jesus did there? He shared the good news first. If you believe in Jesus, you get to live forever with him. After that, he says what will happen to those who don’t believe in him. This is what our verse for today means when it says that Jesus was filled with “grace and truth.”

If you want to share the light of Christ with your friends and family, you must speak truthful words with grace. People need to know that hell is a real place, not just a swear word, but they need to be told that they do not have to go there. They can choose Jesus and heaven. It can be tricky to speak truth kindly. Jesus did it every day, all day. He can help us to do the same thing.

Prayer: God help me to share your good news about Jesus with people I know. Teach me how to blend truthful and kind words together just like you did.

Just for fun: Here’s a great worship song that mixes the truth about our sin and the grace of God. A great song to share with an unbelieving friend.

[Amazing Grace by Phil Wickham](#)

Day Five-Week Four

Verse: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth,” John 16:13 NLT.

To Think About

I love movies where the hero follows a native guide through a jungle. A tiger might leap onto the path or a snake slither down from a tree. The fearless guide is one step ahead of danger. He slashes at vines with a machete. When the tiger stands in the path, the guide uses some trick to make the beast slink away. When a cobra threatens our hero, the guide hacks it in half.

I don't want to go to a jungle, but if I had to go, I would only go with a guide. A Kohl's store on Black Friday, is one of the few jungles I will enter alone. I can hunt for Micro Machines that are only on sale from 6-7 a.m. I know how to avoid the dangers of teetering stacks of shoes boxes and sliding piles of shirts. I'm not afraid of long checkout lines that snake to the other end of the store. I can be a fearless guide for shopping on Black Friday if you need one.

We all need guides for new things and places. Teachers and parents are guides. Pastors and youth leaders are guides. Most importantly, the Holy Spirit is our guide for all of life. He knows everything. He has been everywhere. This is why God sent him to live with us.

This world can be a mixed-up place. Sometimes we don't know the right thing to do.

Holy Spirit teaches us God's truth about what is right and wrong.

We don't always know the right things to say.

Holy Spirit helps us train our tongues and minds to speak truth with love.

If we are to be the light of the world, the city on the hill, we are going to need a guide that knows the way and the truth for everything. The Holy Spirit is that guide. Invite him to take control of your life every day. He won't just barge in because he is a gentleman. He waits for us to invite him. I don't want to travel this jungle life without my guide. How about you?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, please oversee my life today. Point me to the right things to say and do all day. Teach me God's truths so I know when I see lies. Teach me how to be a brighter light.

Just for fun: *Here's a short, animated video about the sad story of Ananias and Sapphira, two believers who tried to lie to God.*

[*The Sad Tale of Ananias and Sapphira*](#)

