

## TRUTH & LOVE SGD GUIDE

### TRUTH & LOVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE **CHAPTER 1 // THE DIFFICULTY WITH TRUTH**

Leader's Introduction:

Welcome to the Small Group study on the book Truth & Love by Pastor Jordan Biel. I'm SO GLAD you're here and that we get to study God's Word together!

I want to open up this discussion with one of two key verses that this book, Truth & Love, is based on.

Eph. 4:15-16 *"Instead we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of His body the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly."* NLT

We can see from Scripture that the Holy Spirit makes us more and more like Christ, this is the high calling on our lives as people on the earth to give glory to God and to become more and more like the person of Jesus. The problem is in today's America, it's becoming harder and harder to speak the truth in love. In fact, many have chosen to not speak at all, afraid that their truth will be received as "hate" when in reality, the *truth* is what sets people free therefore it is an act of *love* to give the truth - just like we read in this passage from Ephesians. Let's watch this video then we'll talk about it.

#### **WATCH VIDEO 1: THE DIFFICULTY WITH TRUTH**

At the end of each chapter you'll find the "APPLY IT" section with the picture of the wrench and hammer. These are the questions that we'll be discussing in our small group if you happen to read ahead. I want to read James 1:22-25 so we know why this is so important to really ask questions of ourselves and of each other after we've been taught.

*"But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. 23 For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it."*

I want to encourage us all to allow the Holy Spirit to apply the message to *your* life.

*THANK YOU for coming to this Bible Study! I pray God speaks to your heart through this! I also want to give two quick guidelines for a great small group:*

- 1) *Be honest and vulnerable. Transparency breeds more transparency which leads to real healing.*
- 2) *Because we want everyone to be able to share what God is speaking to them, let's make sure we all keep our comments brief and just leave time for everyone to be able to share.*

#### GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever bought into the lie that you've got to earn your righteousness or somehow be good enough for God to accept you?

What's wrong with this way of thinking? What can that belief lead to?

2. What scriptures can we hang on to so that we don't get "off-balance" in this important subject?

Romans 3:23, 1 Corinthians 15:10

3. Have you ever been tempted in some way and in the moment, believed the lie that "Well, God will forgive me later."?

What's wrong with this way of living?

Do you think it's easier, the longer you're a Christian, to start taking advantage of God's grace? If so, why?

4. So how is it that we actual do have right-living? How is then that we become holy as God commands us to do? What is grace?

Read the Word of God and be in relationship with other believers and pattern our lives after the life of Jesus. We can ask the Holy Spirit to lead us and make us Holy. He's happy to do so.

5. What's wrong with just believing that once God has given me grace, I can do what I want?

James 1:26-27 says "Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight reign on their tongue deceive themselves and their religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after the orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

What are the two main concepts here?

1. If we are to claim to be forgiven, we must make an effort with our lives now to please God with everything – our speech, our actions...
2. As we grow as believers, we'll learn that a true relationship with God is evident by us serving one another. If we say we love God, yet never serve others,, we are deceived and don't actually follow Christ.

*PRAYER: God, I need your wisdom. I need your Spirit to guide me into all truth and keep from believing Satan's lies that tempt me to trample your grace. Forgive me for the times I've hurt your heart and forgotten the price you paid by dying on the cross to free me from my sin. Give me the strength to live a holy life that is "pleasing and acceptable" in your sight and give me the childlike heart to receive the grace that You alone can give. Father, help me to walk in the balance of grace and holiness. Help me to know that when I repent, You completely forgive me and remember it no longer. Help me to know that every day I'm given another chance to give You glory with my life. In Jesus' name, Amen!*

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### TRUTH & LOVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE **CHAPTER 2 // BELIEVERS OR DISCIPLES**

#### Leader's Introduction:

Jesus came in truth & love and He came to make disciples, not believers. Let's watch this video and then we'll talk about what is shared. By the way, you can pick up the book TRUTH & LOVE on Amazon, [WestBowPress.com](http://WestBowPress.com) or your local Barnes & Noble.

We can see from Scripture that the Holy Spirit makes us more and more like Christ, this is the high calling on our lives as people on the earth to give glory to God and to become more and more like the person of Jesus. The problem is in today's America, it's becoming harder and harder to speak the truth in love. In fact, many have chosen to not speak at all, afraid that their truth will be received as "hate" when in reality, the *truth* is what sets people free therefore it is an act of *love* to give the truth - just like we read in this passage from Ephesians. Let's watch this video then we'll talk about it.

#### **WATCH VIDEO 2: BELIEVERS OR DISCIPLES?**

#### GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. How do you feel about Pastor Jordan's statement "Believers agree, disciples obey." Is that true? What did Jesus say about this?
2. Has there been times in your own life when you were tempted to simply agree and not actually follow through in obeying?
3. What areas right now is God asking me to step out in faith and ACT upon? What has the Holy Spirit already asked me to do?
4. How will it change my life if every day I were to ask God "Holy Spirit, what do you want me to do today? Who do You want me to reach? Who do You want me to love? What's Your will for my life today?"

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### **CHAPTER 3 // SNAKES & DOVES**

#### **Leader's Introduction:**

Today's discussion is for the most part on the importance of sharing your faith with the lost. We'll talk about why it's important, how to share your faith and some obstacles that stop of us from doing so.

#### **WATCH VIDEO 3: SNAKES & DOVES**

#### **GROUP QUESTIONS:**

1. Has there ever been times when you knew God wanted you to befriend someone who wasn't a Christian and to tell them about Jesus?
2. What was it that held you back from doing that?
3. What are some things we can do to strengthen our boldness and desire to reach the lost?
4. What are some practical ways we can reach people with the love of Jesus Christ?
  - \*Have them over for dinner    \*Truly befriend them
  - \*Tell them our story – how we came to know Jesus Christ
5. What does the word "ambassador" mean? And how then are we to be Christ's ambassadors?
6. Do we have to be rude to tell the truth? Or can we be gentle and yet firm in our beliefs?

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#### **CHAPTER 4 // CONFIDENCE & HUMILITY**

\*Leader: Feel free to share a quick testimony of you sharing your faith this last week or finally speaking the truth in love to someone. Your faith will lift their faith.

#### **Leader's Introduction:**

Last week, we learned what Jesus taught in sending out His disciples, telling them to be snakes and doves - to be both bold and yet gentle. Today, that conversation continues in chapter 4's study, Confidence & Humility. Let's watch this video then we'll talk about it together.

#### **WATCH VIDEO 4: CONFIDENCE & HUMILITY**

#### **GROUP QUESTIONS:**

1. Have you ever put on that whole "false humility" routine and shrunk into the distance so as "not to draw attention" when in reality, you were disobeying God?
2. Have you ever wanted to step out in faith, trusting God that He wanted to use you? Tell the group about it.
3. Have you ever operated in your own strength, not taking the time to pray and ask God for wisdom and direction?
4. Have you ever taken the time to pray and then seen God do amazing things? Tell the group about it.
5. Have you ignored the call of God to do something specific in life? Have you given your personality as an excuse to ignore God's leading?

PRAYER: "Heavenly Father, thank you for teaching me. Please forgive me for the pride that's been in my heart, the pride that's kept me from obeying you. God, give me the humility it takes to obey Your every word. Help me to be confident that You really are sovereign and know what's best. Help me to see that You can do the miraculous through me if I'll only listen to Your Spirit's leading and humbly step out in faith."

## **TRUTH & LOVE SGD GUIDE**

### **TRUTH & LOVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE** **CHAPTER 5 // GIVING THE TRUTH IN LOVE**

#### **Leader's Introduction:**

I want to welcome you back to our small group book study of Truth & Love. We're taking a close look at why the church has been silent the last few decades and how that has changed our culture significantly here in America. And we're discussing how to speak up and how to do so in love, the way Jesus did. Let's watch this video based on Chapter 5: GIVING THE TRUTH IN LOVE

#### **WATCH VIDEO 5: GIVING THE TRUTH IN LOVE**

#### **GROUP QUESTIONS:**

1. Have I ever "swept something under the rug" because I was afraid to confront my friend about it?
2. What does God's Word teach us about these sticky situations that involve conflict? (See Matt 18)
3. How do we "Take God's Word to heart and God's heart to our words?"
4. When someone corrects me, how should I respond?
5. Has there been a time when we were corrected by a Pastor or friend and looking back, we're thankful they had the courage to talk to us?
6. Is there someone in my past that I need to forgive?

How can I be intentional about forgiving them?

TIP: Meeting that person face to face is best, if that's not possible, writing a letter is often a great way to finally get what you want to say out of your heart and onto paper and into the heart of the person who hurt you. If you do meet face to face, still write a letter, then read that letter because this way, you've allowed the Holy Spirit to guide your words and you've taken the time to say things the honorable way. Facebook or Text is NOT the right method for this.

7. Is there a someone in my circle of influence who is not yet a Believer but I could love enough to tell the truth? Is there someone I work with or even in my family that I could share the truth about Heaven and Hell and the love of God with?
8. Is there someone in my life that I can share the Gospel with? Someone I can share my story of coming to Christ?

## **TRUTH & LOVE SGD GUIDE**

### **TRUTH & LOVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE** **CHAPTER 6 // POVERTY & RICHES**

#### **Leader's Introduction:**

Welcome back to our study on Truth & Love by Pastor Jordan Biel. We hope you're all growing more and more into the image of Christ. That's why we meet! Today's topic: money! Is it dirty? Is it wrong to be rich as a Christian? Is it godly to be poor and in debt? This has been one of the most controversial subjects facing the Evangelical church for decades. Let's look at what Jesus had to say about money.

#### **WATCH VIDEO 6: POVERTY & RICHES**

#### **GROUP QUESTIONS:**

Friendly reminder to the small group leader: It's often helpful to answer the question out loud yourself in front of the group; it'll help get the ball rolling.

1. Is there something that I have that I can learn to share?
2. Am I spending more money monthly than I'm earning?
3. Am I robbing God of tithes and offerings?
4. Am I investing in the Kingdom when God's Spirit prompts me to give?
5. Am I receptive to the Love of God in my life? Or have I believed that I'm not worth it? We said that our sense of greed or hoarding money can come from not being secure in God's love. Can anyone comment on this? Has this been true in your life at all? If so, in what way?
6. Am I walking in victory and optimism because of God's great love for me? If not, why?
7. Am I giving & treating money as God teaches me to and living in joy or am I in control and unwilling to allow God's Spirit to teach me to be generous?
8. Have we ever spent money we don't have to impress people we don't know? If so, would anyone want to be candid enough to share what happened and the lesson learned?

If you're in deep debt, here a few first steps toward financial freedom:



1. Read some great Christian books on finances like “The Storehouse Principle” “Your Money Counts” by Howard Dayton, I Was Broke, Now I’m Not, Crown Financial has a great ministry at [www.crown.org](http://www.crown.org) There are many others!
2. Pray – ask God for direction. How much extra you can pay on your debts. Ask Him how much He’d like you to set aside for savings. Ask God.
3. Get a financial advisor – whether this is someone you pay for financial help and advice or whether it’s a friend you’d just like them to help you. By the way, if you pay someone for financial advice, it’s probably the best money you’ll ever spend.
4. Get accountability. This is similar to step 2 but not the same. This is a friend – maybe an accountability partner you already have. Maybe you have an accountability partner but you’ve never discussed finances at all. I encourage you to start. Tell them your goals and your strategy to reach them, then ask them to hold you accountable to reaching those goals.
5. Make a written plan to pay off your debt. This is NOT paying the minimum amount required each month. This is a thought-through plan of paying more than the minimum pmt. Each month so you can eliminate your debt.

A. List your liabilities – everything you owe

B. List your assets – everything you own – see if there’s anything you can sell.

Howard Dayton, author of Your Money Counts, says “Getting out of debt is hard work but the freedom is worth the struggle.” I liked that and I thought you would too.

6. Renew your mind in God’s Word daily. Doing this will put your trust in God and not your money. Renewing your mind with God’s way changes your paradigm, your way of thinking and that will change how you manage your money!
7. Make an audible choice to be thankful, in front of your spouse, in front of your kids, your friends... This thankfulness will drive out the felt-need to have more and spend more. If you’re really serious, list what you’re thankful to God for and go over it as a family, repeating in often through nightly prayers together.

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#### **CHAPTER 7 // GIFTS & FRUIT**

##### **Leader's Introduction:**

Today, we're going to watch our last video in this book study Truth & Love and this is probably the funniest one of them all! GIFTS & FRUIT! We'll learn that the gifts of the Spirit are powerful and are given to every believer and how to begin to walk in them. We'll also learn how important it is to have the fruit of the Spirit to compliment the gifts. Let's dive in!

##### **WATCH VIDEO 7: GIFTS & FRUIT**

##### **GROUP QUESTIONS**

1. Has it ever been hard for you to believe that you've been given spiritual gifts by God?
2. How can better cultivate an understanding that Father God is the GIVER of good gifts?
3. What can we do to begin to walk in our gifts and passions?
4. Have I lost my fear of the Lord at all? Have I forgotten that I'll stand before King Jesus and give an account as to how I've used the gifts He's given me to use? Is there any area in my life in which I need to be submissive and helpful – my workplace, my church, my school?
5. How can I bless those teacher and managers who are in authority over me this week?

LEADER: One practical and fun you can do to strengthen and awaken those giftings within the people in your group is to have them put their chairs in a circle and one at a time, put someone in the "hot seat" in the middle and each person will go around and share a word of encouragement starting out like this "NAME, I believe God has give you a gift of \_\_\_\_\_. Whenever I see you, I see that you are always \_\_\_\_\_ and God has given you that gift and it blesses me."

\*If your group is over 20 people, have them split up into smaller groups to do this excercise.

##### **PRAYER:**

God, we ask that today, You'd help us discover our gifts that You've given us! We pray that Your Spirit would fill us and that you would activate those gifts that are within us! We want to serve you, our Master, and we want to be found faithful when You return!

God ,we also ask for your wisdom to be Christ-like, to be submitted to Your plan and to those whom You've placed in authority over us. I want Your blessing on my life and I recognize that is only possible when I'm willing to submit to You and Your ways. I chooser to live in the truth and walk in Your love.