

Leader's Guide

Standing with Jesus: Receiving the Truth

John 8:31 - 59

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What if the biggest barrier to freedom isn't doubt but the lies we've quietly accepted as truth? This message wrestles with the stunning reality that the God of the universe doesn't just deserve our worship, He personally says, "I love you," and invites us to actually live like that's true. Walking through Jesus' confronting words in John 8, it exposes the subtle ways faith can stay in our heads while never fully shaping our lives, and how deception about God, grace, forgiveness, and even ourselves keeps us stuck. It's an honest, challenging invitation to move beyond surface-level belief, recognize the battle for truth, and discover the freedom that comes when faith is practiced, not just professed.

1. When you hear the statement "God loves you," what thoughts, emotions, or resistance immediately surface for you? What might that reveal about what you truly believe versus what you say you believe?

Follow-Up Questions:

- Where do you think that reaction comes from? Past experiences, disappointment, guilt, comparison?
- Does your reaction say more about God's character or about what you believe is true about yourself?

Leader's Note:

Many people intellectually agree that God loves them but emotionally struggle to receive it. Resistance does not mean a lack of faith. It often reveals places where truth has not yet fully taken root.

Additional Scripture:

- Romans 5:8
- 1 John 3:1
- Zephaniah 3:14-17

2. Jesus says that the truth sets us free, yet many of us remain stuck. What are some lies you've recognized in your own thinking about God, yourself, or faith that may be keeping you from living in freedom?

Follow-Up Questions:

- How do those lies show up in your decisions, fears, or relationships?
- What usually triggers those lies to feel especially believable?

Additional Scripture:

- John 10:10
- Genesis 3:1–5
- 2 Corinthians 10:3–5

3. In what ways can faith become something we hold in our heads but not in our daily actions? Where do you see a gap between belief and practice in your own life right now?

Follow-Up Questions:

- Are there areas where faith feels theoretical rather than practiced?
- What fears or assumptions might be keeping faith from becoming active?

Leader's Note:

Jesus speaks directly to “believers” in John 8, challenging shallow belief that does not lead to obedience. This is not about shame, but about growth and depth.

Additional Scripture:

- James 1:22-25
- Matthew 7:24–27
- Luke 6:46-49

4. The message describes a real spiritual battle for truth. What does it look like to replace lies with truth in everyday life, not just during church or group time?

Follow-Up Questions:

- What practices help you hear truth more clearly?
- Who helps remind you of truth when you forget it?

Leader's Note:

Truth is not only learned, but it is also rehearsed. Scripture, prayer, worship, and community are tools God uses to reshape what we believe at a heart level.

Additional Scripture:

- Psalm 119:105
- Ephesians 6:10–18
- Romans 12:1-2

5. If you were to take one concrete step this week to “practice” your faith rather than just believe it, what would that be? Who could you share this step with or invite to help keep you accountable?

Follow-Up Questions:

- Is there a relationship where God may be inviting you to love, forgive, or speak truth?
- How can this group support or pray for you as you take that step?

Additional Scripture:

- Micah 6:8
- Colossians 3:12–17
- Matthew 5:14–16

Closing Prayer Idea

Invite group members to silently name one lie they've been believing and then read John 8:36 aloud together. Close by thanking God for truth that brings freedom and asking for courage to live it out this week.