

13 Truths for Living in God's Peace

13 Truths is a framework to aid Christians in applying Biblical truths in spiritual care or encouragement settings. Below, specific Biblical truths have been selected that we believe will be useful in most spiritual care settings for re-aligning emotions and distorted thoughts back onto Biblical truths, trusting that the Means of Grace will do its work. Although these truths are being presented here for called spiritual care workers, it is important to acknowledge that these truths are given by God for all Christians to help each other re-align their spiritual distortions. Therefore, this framework is designed for any adult Christian (including professional counsellors) to be able to use.

Overarching truth: God's Word is true and transformative, and so we re-align our thoughts up with his truth. [*Direction, not perfection.*]

Gospel Truths

- I am a child of God, bought by the blood of Christ. (*past*)
- God is with me, in control, and on my side. (*present*)
- It will be alright, I will make it, this will end well. (*future*)

Theology of the Cross Truths

- I am a victor, not a victim.
- God has called flawed Christians into a hard life.
- God transforms my weaknesses and suffering into good.

Law Truths

- I am a saint who sins.
- Sin has consequences.
- Placing anything above God is idolatry.

Vocation and Keys Truths

- My purpose in life is to serve, not to be served.
 - Only what God thinks matters.
 - God calls me to be quick to repent to and forgive others.
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3 GOSPEL TRUTHS

★ ***I am a child of God, bought by the blood of Christ.*** [*past*] Sometimes we tell ourselves the lies, "I have to be perfect," or "my worth in God's eyes is based on my performance" Or we tell ourselves in different ways that God's love must be earned. But the truth is God chose you and made you his child, his forgiveness is freely given, and so there's nothing we can do to make ourselves any more worthy to be with him: We're already perfect in his sight.

Isaiah 43:1 This is what the Lord says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine."

Psalms 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

1 John 4:8b-10 God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

See also Ephesians 1:4b,5,7; 2 Corinthians 5:21

God is with me, in control, and on my side. [*present*] Sometimes we tell ourselves, "I'm on my own," or "everything is out of control." But the truth is we're never alone. We have a God who is with us, in control, and using all that control for our good.

Romans 8:39 [Nothing] will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Peter 1:5 [You] are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

See also Exodus 14:14; Deuteronomy 31:6; Matthew 6:25-34

It will be alright, I will make it, this will end well. [*future*] Often we tell ourselves, "there's no way this can end well." We think the future holds bad things for us. So we turn to other things than God to give us a feeling of safety. But the truth is, if you're a child of Christ, then things will be alright. God promises life will be difficult at times, but a good ending waits for us.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

See also Isaiah 43:2,3 John 16:33; 1 John 2:8

3 LAW TRUTHS

★ ***I am a saint who sins.*** Sometimes we tell ourselves that in order to really be Christian, we won't have certain kinds of feelings or we won't struggle with certain sins. The truth is struggling with sin is a very real part of life, but because of Christ, it no longer defines us.

Romans 7:19,24-25;8:1 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing... What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! ...Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

See also 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Sin has consequences. Often we struggle with the lie that our problems or unhappiness are entirely the faults of others, or that our own sins are not that big of a deal. But the truth is God allows sins to have limited consequences here on earth, consequences we ought to own.

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Isaiah 53:5-6 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Placing anything above God is idolatry. Sometimes we like to minimize our sins and ignore the fact that anything that takes priority over our God and the lives he's called us into are idols. Breaking commandments 2 thru 10 are always breaking the 1st.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ...Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Philippians 4:8-9 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

See also Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Peter 4:3

★ ***I am a victor, not a victim.*** At times we feel like we are completely at the mercy of adversarial forces around us and within us. We can feel powerless and hopeless. But the truth is, regardless of what life looks like, Christ has conquered the forces of evil already. Sin has no hold on us. We are truly victors already, and so we can live with the confidence of victory.

1 Corinthians 15:57 Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:38 In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

1 John 2:14b You are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

God has called flawed Christians into a hard life. Sometimes we think that, because we're already victors through Christ, life ought to be easy and always fair. We may think happiness is based on things in life going our way. We might think God should protect us from all pain and suffering. But the truth is God promised us there would be troubles, pain, and hardships before we go home to heaven.

John 16:33 I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the World.

1 Peter 1:6-7 Now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

John 13:16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master.

God transforms my weaknesses and suffering into good. The world tells us that troubles, pain, and hardships aren't good for us, and that we need to avoid them at all costs. Before Christ, that might have been true. But the truth is that now, through Christ's providential plan, he promises to never waste the hardships we experience but work them all into his plans for our good. Sometimes we think there's no way God can use weak, sinful people like us in his plans. But the truth is God works his will through flawed people just like you and me, working out his full plan of salvation through sinning saints who know their Savior.

1 Peter 1:6-7 Now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Romans 5:3-4 [W]e also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.

See also 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

★ ***My purpose in life is to serve, not to be served.*** We often tell ourselves the lie that we should try to get as much as we can out of life for ourselves, and the more we have, the better. The truth is we're here to serve, as Christ came to serve.

Galatians 5:13-14 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Ephesians 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

See also Matthew 16:24ff

Only what God thinks matters. Sometimes we tell ourselves, "I have to have everyone's love and approval," and we can think that our reputation with other people is the most important thing. The truth is the only person whose opinion ultimately matters is God. We live for an audience of One, and that One already loves and approves us perfectly because of Christ. This frees us to care for others simply out of love for them, not approval. Similarly, sometimes we tell ourselves, "that person depends on me alone," or a parent might think, "I can meet all of my child's needs." We can realign these savior-complex thoughts by remembering that our neighbors can ultimately only find all their needs met in Jesus. Jesus simply calls us to be faithful with the opportunities and time he gives us.

1 Corinthians 4:3-4 I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not judge even myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

2 Corinthians 12:9 He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

God calls me to be quick to repent to and forgive others. Sometimes we tell ourselves that we're justified in never forgiving someone, or never seeking reconciliation. We feel the injustice done to us was so great, we don't need to let go. Or we feel that we cannot forgive someone until they first repent to us. But God calls us into a life where we're working on being quick to repent and quick to forgive.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Matthew 6:14-15 If you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive you.

1 John 1:8-9 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 OVERARCHING TRUTH

***God's Word is true and transformative, and so we re-align our thoughts up with his truth.
[Direction, not perfection.]***

Numbers 23:19 God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

1 Samuel 15:29 He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a human being, that he should change his mind."

John 8:31-32 To the Jews who had believed in him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

See also 2 Peter 1:19-21