

## Chapter One

# KNOW YOUR FOUNDATION

## Think Like Christ

It had been a full Saturday. After meeting with my dad at a coffee shop early in the morning, I spent most of the day working at the Bright Lights office. In the afternoon I met a friend for a Bible study. Then my mom texted me and invited me out to dinner, and afterward we stopped at a store. Finally, I arrived home after being gone for the entire day. But there was nothing unusual about that.

My mom and I walked in the door. I didn't see anyone as I walked through the living room, but I heard someone moving around in the kitchen. Everything seemed perfectly normal. However, as I flicked on the light in my bedroom, I found myself staring inside, stunned. It took me a few moments to process what I was seeing. All the furniture was moved around, my bed had a new comforter, and there were new wall hangings and curtains. The color of the walls was different. I just stood there, disoriented, noticing one new thing after another.

"Wow! ... my room!" I exclaimed.

Out of the other room hurried my sister, Grace, and my friends, Nickie and Haley. They were laughing and smiling. It took a few minutes for everything to sink in. *Oh, this is why my dad asked me out for coffee this morning, I realized; and this is why my mom invited me to join her for dinner at a restaurant, and why Grace encouraged me to get together with a friend who lives 30 miles away for a Bible study. Everyone was trying to keep me away from home!*

I learned that Grace, Nickie, and Haley had spent the entire day emptying my bedroom, painting it, and redecorating it. They know me well and picked out exactly what I like. This was something I had wanted to do for years, but never got around to it. My room turned out beautifully, and I

love it! I am still surprised sometimes (two months later) when I walk into my room and see it.

I think back to that very ordinary evening when I walked into my house. Everything seemed perfectly normal and I did not suspect anything unusual. I had no idea that a big surprise was just around the corner. Literally.

Now think of this. Let's say that tomorrow you experience the biggest surprise of your life—one much bigger than a change of bedroom decor. Let's say you hear the trumpet and, in one instant, you know that it has actually happened—Jesus has come back for His bride. You realize that the day which the church has been waiting and longing for has occurred. You are ushered into Jesus' presence and you stand before Him.

This event could happen at any time, and it is hard to imagine the emotions we will experience when it does. We do not know *when* it will occur, and that's what makes it a surprise. But one thing is for sure. It *will* happen. If you are a Christian, a believer in Jesus Christ, then one day you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account of your life (2 Cor. 5:10). This judgment is not a time of punishment for sin—Jesus took care of that on the cross. Rather, it is a time of reward, or loss of reward (1 Cor. 3:13-15). It is a time when our lives will be personally evaluated by Jesus Himself. When we stand before Jesus on that day, what will matter to us? It won't matter what our friends thought of us. Earthly success or popularity will mean nothing. We will long for only one thing—to be found pleasing in His sight! If we will desire to please Him then, we should make it our pursuit to please Him now!

### **Goal: To please Jesus**

Colossians 1:10 sums up our goal in one verse: “That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

### **Problem: We lose sight of our goal**

We easily become preoccupied by the things of this world. That which ought to be our all-consuming desire—to please Christ—can quickly be choked by the cares of this world, alluring temptations, or a desire to please people more than Jesus. Our life passes rapidly and soon it is gone. The Bible refers to our life as “a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away” (Jas. 4:14). That is why we cannot afford to be consumed by lesser things—not even for a day!

### **Solution: Abide in Christ and in His Word**

How can we best prepare for the day when we will stand before our Savior? Jesus has given us the answer: we must abide in Him, and His Word must

abide in us (John 15:4-8). When our eyes are fixed on Jesus, and our heart rests in Him, no worldly ambition can allure us. When we continually fill our minds with the truth of God's Word, we will not be sidetracked from our ultimate goal, but will walk in a way that pleases our Savior.

"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28).

## MY PRAYER FOR YOU

You may have picked up this book because there is a specific struggle you are dealing with. Or maybe you are simply looking for some encouragement in your walk with Christ. Perhaps you feel joyful in the Lord, but have unanswered questions and painful doubts that you are not sure how to address. Maybe you want to press toward higher ground and deeper intimacy with Christ, but feel unsure how to get there. Or maybe you are so discouraged by your shortcomings that you feel you are barely able to stand up—let alone run forward in the race with perseverance and encourage others spiritually. My prayer is that the following pages will provide clear answers from God's Word for whatever situation you are in.

Sadly, many Christian young ladies in this generation are floundering, and some are failing. Many are discouraged and distracted. Others are trapped in sin. In an effort to mend their ways, girls may try to change their wrong *actions*, but often they never learn to discern the wrong *thinking* behind the actions. As a result, they continue to struggle. Many are oblivious to the fact that they are being influenced by the deceptive lies of the enemy. They forget that their lives are a mere breath and they will stand before their Creator soon.

Although the *timing* of Christ's return will be a surprise, the Lord has not left us guessing as to what pleases Him—He has shown us His heart in His Word. As we soak in Scripture, allowing it to saturate and transform every part of our mind, our life will begin to change by leaps and bounds! But it starts with drenching our mind with His Word so that it changes our *thinking*. My prayer is that you would not simply be content to read God's Word, but that you would dig into, feast upon, and *live out* God's Word—so that you are a walking picture of it to all who see your life!

Jesus told us that a city set on a hill cannot be hidden. My prayer is that the light of Christ would shine so brightly through you that it would not, *could not*, be hidden.

The world holds many tempting pleasures in front of young ladies. But the Lord calls you to something much greater—something above and beyond what most Christian young ladies even dream possible. Many, distracted by

their own struggles and desires, miss out on God's great calling for them. Preoccupied by a gnat flying around them, they do not even notice the mountain peaks beyond.

God has put you on this earth at this particular time for a reason—and it's not to chase the world's dreams. It's not to live an easy, comfortable life. It's for a far greater purpose than that—it's to be an ambassador for Christ in this dark world (2 Cor. 5:20).

Perhaps you are currently dealing with questions such as *How can I overcome bad habits? How can I get along better with my parents? How can I get over a crush that is plaguing me? How do I deal with a lack of joy in my life? How can I trust God and not be so anxious? or How do I deal with negative thoughts about myself or others?*

Those are good questions, and we will discuss answers from God's Word. But you must understand that Jesus is calling you to something so much more than overcoming your current problems. He is not calling you to merely *survive* in this warped, sinful world—but to be His victorious daughter, equipped for every good work!

## DAUGHTER GREATLY BELOVED

Jesus does not simply desire our *service* for Him. He can do His work without our help. He desires *us*! He wants our devotion. He knows that it is a close relationship with Him that will satisfy our longings, and He is grieved when we embrace lies and trade Him, the “fountain of living waters,” for “broken cisterns that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:13).

I believe many girls do not even realize the rich, fulfilling relationship that they could have with Jesus if they would only set their whole heart to seek Him. Think of Daniel and how intimately he walked with God. He was called “O man greatly beloved” in Daniel 10:19. We might think, *Yes, but that's Daniel. He was on a whole different level than us.* But we have the same God! Did God do greater things in the past than He is doing today? Not at all. In fact, we have privileges in this generation which Daniel did not have. We have the New Testament, the indwelling Holy Spirit, the church, and a much fuller understanding of the gospel.

As Charles Spurgeon said, “If we are not Daniels, at least we should desire to be, and we should remember that there are possibilities of our being such. Daniel is not set up far above us as one who cannot be imitated, but he is an example whom it should be our joy to follow.”<sup>1</sup>

Spurgeon continues by explaining that in every age, the Lord raises up people “of the class to which Daniel belongs.”<sup>2</sup> Enoch walked with God. Abraham was “the friend of God.” David was “a man after God's own heart.”

Mary was “highly favored.” John was the “disciple whom Jesus loved.”

Did these individuals have greater possibilities of being close with the Lord than we have? Not at all. I love the way Spurgeon reminds us of this truth: “Now, if there is one John produced under the gospel, why not another? If two, why not two thousand, or twenty thousand? ‘And why may I not be one among them?’ each Christian may ask. The Spirit of God is not stinted; the dew from heaven is not exhausted ...”<sup>3</sup>

In each generation the Lord is raising up Daniels, Esthers, Johns, D. L. Moodys, Hudson Taylors, Amy Carmichaels, and Elisabeth Elliots. What can God do through a life that is devoted to Him? Can He use one girl to change her neighborhood or circle of friends? How about her town? What about her nation? Can He use one individual to reach to the remotest area on earth with the gospel? Can He use the smallest act of faithfulness in a way that brings forth such a ripple effect of fruit that it cannot be fathomed until eternity?

Is this what you desire for your life? Do you want to be one of the few in this generation who forsakes all for the sake of Christ?

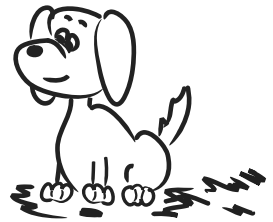
Understand this: It is not by human effort or vision that we accomplish great things for the Lord. Rather, it is by abiding in Christ. Jesus said it clearly: “Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit” (John 15:5 ESV).

Who are those who run most fervently after God? They are the ones who know Him best. The more we get to know Him, the more we will long for Him to reveal Himself to us. The more we are captured by His love, the more our hearts burn for closer fellowship with Him. And the more time we spend in His presence, the more fruit we bear for Him.

If your desire is to bring forth much fruit for God’s glory and to be found pleasing to the Lord on the day you stand before Him, then take seriously Jesus’ words: “Abide in Me.” Abide in Jesus, and let His Word abide in you.

## WHERE IT ALL STARTS

Imagine the following scenario: you walk into your kitchen and see that the white tile floor is covered with muddy footprints. Looking out the window, you see that there is a sloppy pile of mud right outside the side door. You quickly get out the mop and begin to wash the floor. Soon it is sparkling and clean. But a few minutes later, your dog comes running inside and leaves a muddy trail all over the floor again. For the second time, you pick up the mop and start cleaning. Next, your dad comes home from work and—once again—muddy



footprints are everywhere! You are going to be cleaning up mud over and over again, unless you do what? Unless you come up with a solution for the problem. You need to clean up the mud pile outside. Otherwise, you are going to have a frustrating, recurring mess!

This same thing often happens in our lives: we deal with surface issues, rather than with the underlying problems. Then we wonder why we are having the same struggles over and over again. But, you see, we will continually be cleaning up “messes” in our lives if we merely try to change our actions, but do not change the thinking and beliefs *behind* those actions. This is why we must learn to recognize and eliminate lies which we believe.

Everyone knows that when pulling weeds, you need to get down to the roots. It’s not very helpful to simply pull off the tops! In the same way, if we try to remove bad habits without correcting our wrong thinking, we are simply going to be dealing with the same recurring struggle.

Let me illustrate this by telling you about a young lady named Karly. As she looks in the mirror before heading to her friend’s birthday dinner, she sighs in frustration and discontentment.

“I don’t know why I can never get my hair to look like Megan’s,” she complains to her sister.

The words coming from Karly’s mouth are merely an overflow of the beliefs in her heart. You see, Karly believes a lie that many young ladies believe. In essence, it is this: “My value is dependent upon how I look.”

Yet God’s Word tells us something very different. Proverbs 31:30 says, “Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.” Karly isn’t thinking about God’s Word though. Instead, she is believing what the world says: beauty is top priority.

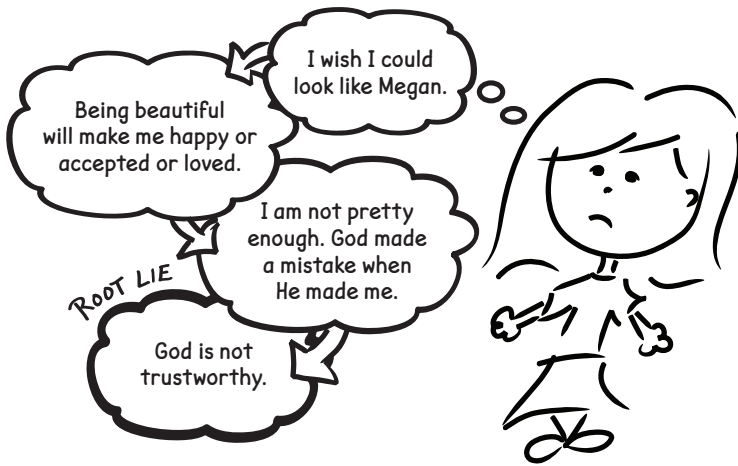
As Karly continues to believe this lie, it brings increasing discouragement into her life. For example, one day someone at her church was doing a photoshoot for a new brochure. Karly’s friend was asked to be in it, but Karly wasn’t. Karly felt awful, saying to herself, *I know why. It’s because I’m not pretty enough. I will never be good enough.*

Karly was jealous of her friend, and she spent the rest of the day feeling discontent and thinking about new hairstyle options. Karly’s sister consoled her, telling her how pretty her thick hair was, and gradually Karly began to feel better.

However, two weeks later, Karly attended a wedding, and she couldn’t find an outfit to wear. She finally just picked something, but once she got to the wedding, she felt embarrassed about it. *All my friends look so stylish and put together. Why didn’t I go shopping for a new dress?* she complained to herself. It bothered her for the whole day, and she was so concerned about

her outfit that she missed several opportunities to talk with and encourage others at the wedding. That night she went to bed feeling upset and dejected.

You see, Karly's discouragement will continue to resurface until she addresses the lie in her heart. It's like mud that is continually creating a mess in the house. Her sister's reassuring words are only "cleaning up the mud" recently tracked in—not actually removing the mud pile from the entrance. The fundamental problem has not been taken care of. The underlying issue is that she needs to submit to the truth of God's Word—not just mentally agree with what the Bible says, but truly act upon it. Let's trace Karly's "surface" thoughts to the deeper lies she is believing. Look carefully at the following thought process.



Karly does not actually realize that she is believing lies. From her perspective, she is simply complaining about her appearance, and wishing she could look like Megan. But, whether she is aware of it or not, she is, in essence, doubting God's faithfulness and wisdom.

Here is a second example: When Jessa's family moved to a new town, Jessa was afraid that she wouldn't be able to make any friends. However, on the very first Sunday at their new church, a girl named Talitha took the initiative to get to know Jessa. Talitha was a year and a half older than she was and seemed to be very popular. Her kindness meant the world to Jessa.

Even though it was a good thing to have a friend, Jessa had a problem—she was believing a dangerous lie: "Finally, I have the friend I have always wanted! It feels so good! *Now* I will be happy! We'll do everything together."

Jessa was finding her security in having a popular friend, rather than in



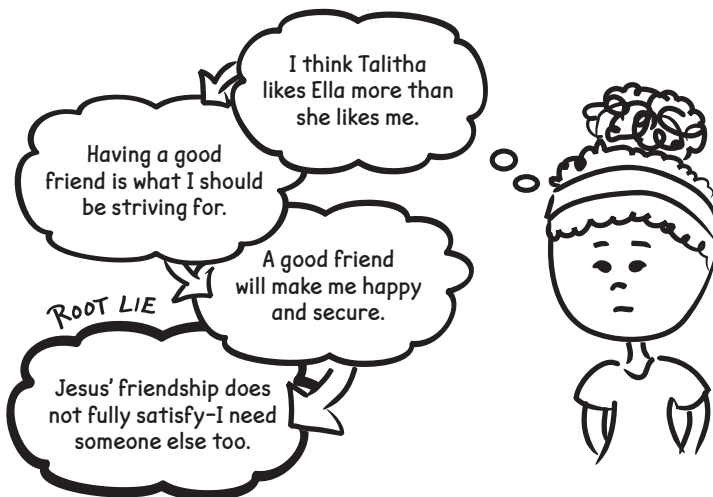
the Lord. Jessa had yet to learn that if we look to a person to fulfill us, we are setting ourselves up to be hurt and disappointed. No person will ever be able to fulfill our needs in a way that ultimately satisfies. Friends will never be able to meet all of our expectations.

A few weeks later, after a Sunday evening church service, Talitha invited two of her friends to get some ice cream with her and share their thoughts about the evening. When Jessa saw the three of them walking out to their cars together and realized that she was not included, she felt like a knife had gone into her heart. *Talitha must not care about me as much as I thought she did*, Jessa told herself. Her emotions went from feeling hurt, to feeling resentful, to feeling empty and alone.

When Talitha texted Jessa a few days later to ask how she was doing and invite her to meet for coffee, Jessa's spirits rose. She figured that maybe Talitha had something else on her mind Sunday evening at church. *Maybe Talitha does really want to be my friend*, she said to herself.

But when Jessa saw Talitha hanging out and laughing with Ella on the following Sunday, she felt hurt and jealous again. Since the mud pile was still there, that mucky dirt kept being tracked around in Jessa's heart.

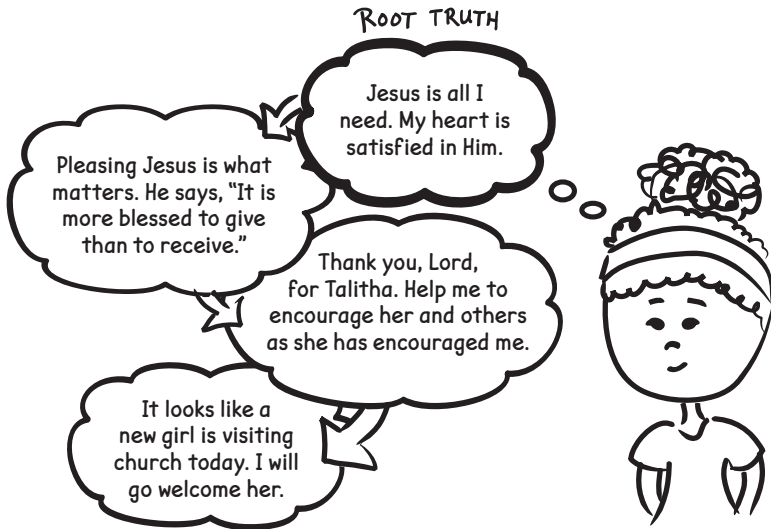
What are the wrong thoughts that Jessa is allowing? Once again, let's try to identify the lies that are the root of the problem.



Of course, Jessa is not actually going around saying, "Jesus is not enough for me," but she is saying it in her actions and believing it in her heart. She needs to replace the lie with truth: Jesus is the one friend who will not let her down, and He will always be enough for her. Next, Jessa needs to build her



thinking upon this truth. In the same way that one lie will produce a string of more lies and disappointments, so one truth will generate much good fruit. Look at the following illustration and consider the long-term results that might occur from Jessa embracing truth, instead of lies.



What a difference! In the first illustration of Jessa, we see a sad, insecure, and jealous girl who is focused on herself. In the second, Jessa is joyful and victorious, serving the Lord and reaching many others. And it's all because of what she is choosing to believe in her heart. Each of you young ladies has questions and struggles of your own. There are areas in your lives you would like to see change. Yet it is not enough to merely identify wrong actions—you need to learn to identify wrong *thinking*. When we replace lies with truth, we will see how God's Word transforms each area of our lives and the truth sets us free. I am excited for you to experience this firsthand!

## SPEAK TO YOUR HEART

Let's turn our attention now to a phrase in Psalm 15 which I adopted as one of my theme verses for this entire book: "Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and **speaks the truth in his heart**" (Ps. 15:1-2).

How do we do this? We all know what it means to speak the truth to our friends and family, but what does it mean to speak the truth *in our heart*?

Let me give you an example. A godly preacher once said that he not only preaches the gospel to others, he preaches the gospel to himself. Now, why

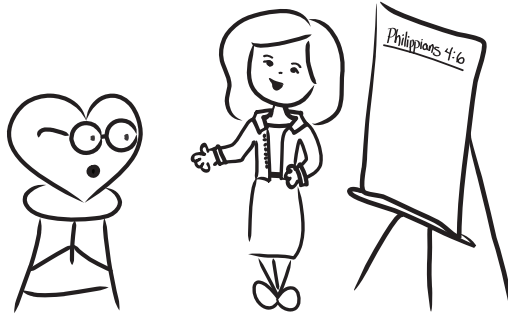
would he do that? Doesn't he already know the gospel? Yes, he does. But in order to keep living with joy in Christ's salvation, he needs to remind himself often about what God has done for him.

Our problem is that we easily do the exact opposite. We make a mistake similar to the one Anna made when a crisis hit her family. Anna's whole life darkened when her parents began fighting incessantly. She was overwhelmed with grief when they divorced. She prayed and cried, and prayed and cried. During this time, instead of finding comfort in God's love, she began to doubt God's love. Instead of seeking comfort in His Word and discovering that God is near to the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds, that He sympathizes with our weaknesses, and works all things together for good for those who love Him,<sup>4</sup> Anna began to tell herself the opposite. *If God really loved me, He wouldn't let this terrible thing happen. Maybe He doesn't care about me in the way I thought He did.* She kept repeating this to herself until she eventually began to believe that God did not care about her.

Do you see Anna's problem? She allowed her heart to harbor a belief about God that is clearly false when compared with Scripture. She should have quickly rejected that little seed of doubt and started preaching God's Word to her own heart! I'm not saying that this would have made her pain disappear. But it would have led her to draw near to Jesus, the One who could provide hope and comfort in the midst of the pain. When Anna doubted God's love, it simply caused her pain to increase.

Perhaps Anna was saying all the right Christian answers with her tongue to her friends and family, but the question is, what was she speaking *in her heart*? If she would have applied Psalm 15:1-2, things could have been dramatically different.

**LORD.**  
 who may abide in Your tabernacle?  
 Who may dwell in Your holy hill?  
 He who walks uprightly,  
 And works righteousness, And  
**Speaks the truth in his heart.**



## "DIRECT YOUR HEART IN THE WAY" (PROVERBS 23:19).

### TO CONSIDER

- \* According to Jeremiah 13:25, what did the people of Israel forget?
- \* What did they trust in instead?
- \* Read the verses below and circle the word heart each time it occurs. Underline the words that stand out to you.

"Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You" (Ps. 119:11).

"The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide" (Ps. 37:31).

"... out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34b).

"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23).

"Direct your heart to the LORD and serve Him only" (1 Sam. 7:3 NASB).

### HOW TRANSFORMATION OCCURS

Have you ever kept a caterpillar in a jar and watched its metamorphosis into a butterfly? When the little creature emerges, it is entirely different than what it was before! It spreads its wings, adorned with shimmering color—and takes off soaring. Forever gone is the old life of crawling around

as a caterpillar. The butterfly now glides on the wind in beauty. Talk about transformation! Now look closely at the words of Romans 12:2.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Circle the word “transformed” in the verse above. It means to change or transfigure. The Greek word is μεταμορφόω (*metamorphoo*) from which we get the English word metamorphose. As a caterpillar goes through a remarkable metamorphosis, so in a similarly astonishing way, we are being changed to become more and more like Jesus Christ. The question is, *how* does this transformation occur? Let’s look at the verse more closely.

Underline the words “renewing of your mind” in the verse above. As this verse states, in order for transformation to occur, our minds must be *renewed*. But how do we renew our minds? To renew means to “renovate” or to “begin again.” Our thinking must be changed. It should not be aligned with the world, but with God’s Word. We need to think the way God thinks.

It is the girl who speaks the truth in her heart who is transformed. As she presents herself to her Savior as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1) and aligns her thinking with God’s Word, He changes her—just like the caterpillar changes into a butterfly. He sets her free from her selfish, sinful ways so that she might soar—bringing glory to her Creator and Redeemer, who does such wonders for one so undeserving.

## SUBTLE BUT DEADLY

We have identified our plan of action: speak God’s Word in our hearts. What is the enemy’s strategy to prevent this? Lies.

Every one of us encounters lies—probably much more frequently than we realize. We hear them from social media, television, school, movies, friends, and other worldly sources. Sometimes we even hear them from “Christian” sources. Most of all, we face them in our own minds and hearts. These lies are often subtle and difficult to recognize.

Can you think of any lies that you are believing? Probably not. You see, if you *knew* they were lies, you probably wouldn’t be believing them! In reality, most girls are clueless when it comes to discerning lies which have infiltrated their own minds.

Satan is crafty and subtle. He is the father of lies. Deception is his area of expertise! He even disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

Some of his most dangerous lies are his subtle half-truths, because they are tough to detect. Through these lies, he wants to distort our view of God, ourselves, others, circumstances, and so on. This is why it is so important for us to know our Bibles well and replace lies with the truth. In John 17:17 Jesus says, “Your Word is truth.”

We adopted my brother, Stephen, from Korea when he was four months old. My mom said that people used to ask her, “What language is he going to speak—English or Korean?” We thought this was very funny, because of course he would speak English! Speaking a language is not inherited. It is not a genetic trait you are born with—it is something you must learn.

The language of “speaking truth” is something we must learn as well. It doesn’t happen automatically. As our mind is renewed through God’s Word, we replace thinking patterns of fear, doubt, selfishness, and pride with patterns of faith, humility, thankfulness, and praise.

Each of us struggles with many kinds of wrong thoughts. Which of these do you identify with?

- ☐ Thoughts of fears and doubts (distrusting God or His Word)
- ☐ Anxious thoughts (worrying about the future)
- ☐ Bitter thoughts (allowing anger toward God or others)
- ☐ Irritated thoughts (being critical or negative toward others)
- ☐ Prideful thoughts (thinking too highly of yourself)
- ☐ Impure thoughts (dwelling on what is inappropriate or unclean)
- ☐ Self-condemning thoughts (feeling condemned vs. forgiven)
- ☐ Distracted thoughts (daydreaming about boys, marriage, etc.)
- ☐ Fear of man (desiring to impress people or the fear of rejection)
- ☐ Materialistic thoughts (desiring riches or possessions)
- ☐ Worldly thoughts (fantasizing about worldly success or pleasure)
- ☐ Thoughts of despair (allowing a hopeless or defeated attitude)

These thought categories may seem very different, but did you know that lies are actually at the root of each of them? No matter which ones you struggle with, victory is found in speaking the truth to yourself. This is why the key is to focus on God’s Word. Our goal is not to take a magnifying glass to every corner of our mind trying to discover wrong thoughts to eliminate.

No, our strategy must be to flood our minds with Scripture, knowing that, in doing so, the lies will be washed away.

When you see a girl reading her Bible (like on the cover of this book), what do you see? A mere girl with her Bible? Or a raging battle? Do you think very often about the unseen spiritual forces that wage war against you? Each of us faces a battle every single day. The enemy shoots fiery darts of doubt, fear, temptations, and lies. But God has equipped us with the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit (His Word), and the full armor of God. The battle is fierce, but by God's strength we can stand. "Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:13).

Are you ready to take a stand against Satan's lies? Are you willing to speak the truth in your heart? Then keep reading!

*And you shall*  
 · KNOW · THE · TRUTH ·  
 · and · THE · TRUTH ·  
*shall make you free*

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 JOHN 8:32
 

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