

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Purpose

The purpose of this time together is to help each person to understand more about the nature of truth and how it applies to our relationship with God.

Key Scripture

But everyone who lives by the truth will come to the light, because they want others to know that God is really the one doing what they do. John 3:21 (CEV)

Consider & Prepare

The question that we consider in this all-age worship is a difficult one. Keep in mind that we are not trying to answer every question that people might have about truth. What is most important is that we create safe spaces where our people, young and old, can explore their questions together and create deeper foundations for their faith.

Read John 3:1-21 and reflect on what God is saying to you about truth through these verses.

You will need

Call to Worship

Prepare in advance 5 people to read a verse each of Psalm 33:1-5. The verses are short enough to give to children to memorise if they do not yet read.

Activity 1

You may choose to do one or both of the following Options

- **Option 1**

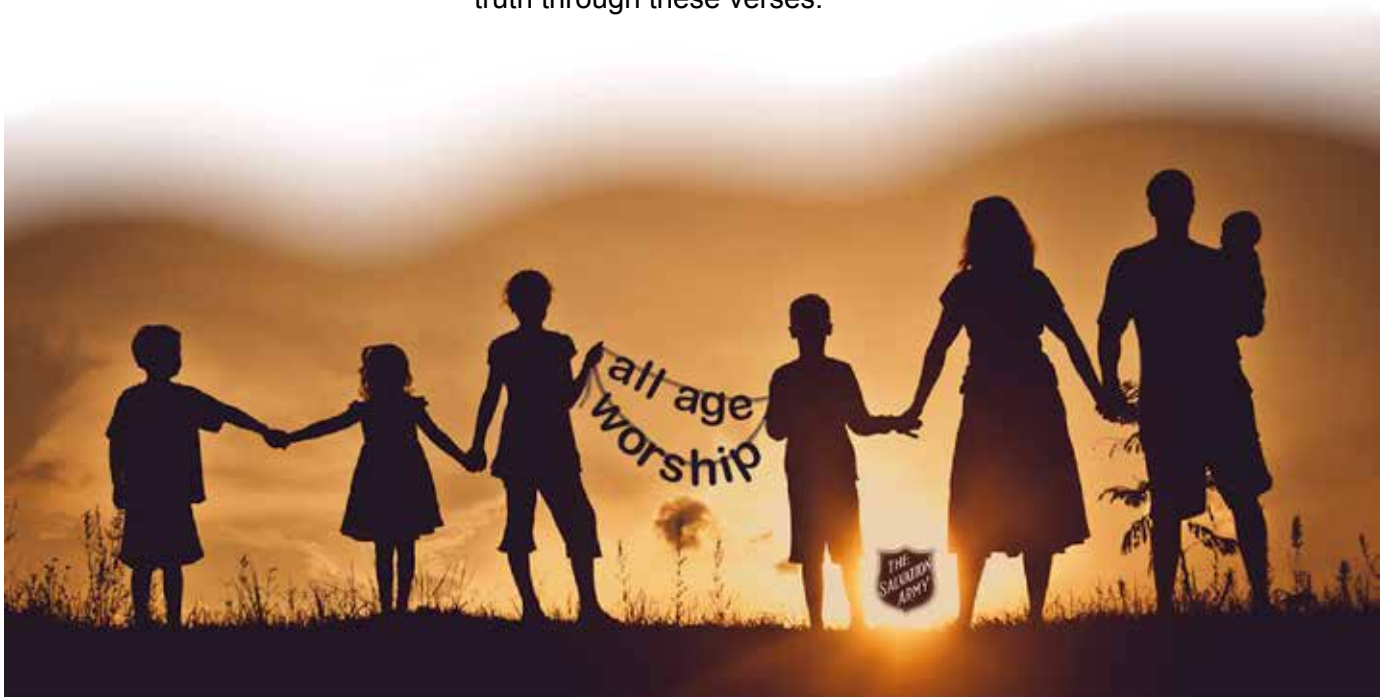
A list of facts that can be classified as true or false – some examples are given

- **Option 2**

Prepare several people (of different ages) to share three facts about themselves, 2 of which are true and one which is false. For example, My favourite food is...., my favourite colour is, my favourite team is ... or I once travelled to, I once worked as, I once tried to.....

Link 1

A picture of the board game 'Balderdash' on a PowerPoint



Activity 2

- ❖ Print definitions from Appendix 1 and cut into strips
- ❖ If you have a large group then you could print several sets and divide into groups or hand out a copy to each person (uncut) with a highlighter
- ❖ Blank strips of paper
- ❖ Pens or markers

Activity 3

Option 1

- ❖ Poster paper
- ❖ Markers, pencils or crayons

Option 2

- ❖ Purchase a copy of the 'The Skinny on Truth and Grace' by the Skit Guys
- ❖ 15.99 from skitguys.com

Song Suggestions

Choose songs that speak about the truth of who God is and the truth of God's word. For example:

- The way the truth the life - planet shakers
- The battle hymn of the republic
- Where the Spirit of the Lord is
- Light of the World
- Tell the World- Hillsong
- Kingdom Come - Hillsong
- Reflection time – the voice of truth- Love you with the truth – casting Crowns

Outline – Living in truth

Call to Worship – The Lord is Truthful

Activity 1 – True or False

Link 1

Activity 2 – What does truth mean?

Link 2

Activity 3 – Interactive message

Opportunity for Reflection and Response

Benediction - adapted from Ephesians 4:5-16

Call to Worship – The Lord is Truthful

Begin by having five different people each read out one of the following verses from Psalm 33:1-5. You could ask them to stand out the front, around the room, or in a nearby space where they cannot be seen. This is a great opportunity to involve some very young members of your church as the verses are short enough to memorise for children who are not yet old enough to read.

Psalm 33:1-5

You are the Lord's people. Obey him and celebrate! He deserves your praise.

² *Praise the Lord with harps! Use harps with ten strings to make music for him.*

³ *Sing a new song. Shout! Play beautiful music.*

⁴ *The Lord is truthful; he can be trusted.*

⁵ *He loves justice and fairness, and he is kind to everyone everywhere on earth.*

Ask everyone to repeat verse 4 together... The Lord is truthful; he can be trusted.

Today we are going to explore the question: "What is truth?" and discover some more together about what it means to live in truth. We are going to have some fun as we investigate this question.

Activity 1 – True or False

Option 1 - Heads and tails

I am going to read out some statements. Some of these statements are true and some of them are not. If you think the statement is true I want you to put your hands on your head. If you think the statement is not true then you will need to put your hands on your "tail".

You may like to look up some of your own fun facts – true and false

- The sun is in the sky
- Cinderella went to the ball
- Jesus died on the cross and rose again
- Fairy tales are true
- Blue is red
- Your mum is always right

- The earth is flat
- Cats can't taste sweets
- Only male turkeys gobble
- Lions spend 20 hours a day resting

And/Or

Option 2 - Thumbs up, thumbs down

I have invited some people to come and share with us today three facts about themselves. Two of these facts will be true but one will be false. If you think they are telling the truth then give a "thumbs up". If you think they are telling you a false statement then you can give them a "thumbs down".

Invite the people you have chosen in advance to come up to the front. Have them share their three statements. As they give each statement the rest of the congregation gives a "thumbs up" if they think it's true or a "thumbs down" if they think it's not true.

Link 1

How many did you get right? Sometimes the truth is easy to see isn't it? Other times the truth is hidden or confusing or hard to find. Has anyone played the game Balderdash? *Show PowerPoint slide of the game*

The aim of Balderdash is to guess the true meaning of a word. These words are often ones that are rarely used. You might never have even heard the word before. Only one player has the true meaning and other players make up a meaning for the word to try and trick their fellow players. This is a fun game and usually leads to lots of laughter. Sometimes the true meaning of the word is more hilarious than the made up meanings! It is a great illustration of how wrong we can be if we don't test the truth of something.

Where would you go to find out the true meaning of a word? Where would you go to find out the answer to the question - what is truth?

There are various meanings of the words true and truth in the dictionary, famous people have talked about truth and given us some memorable quotes and of course the Bible also talks about truth.

Activity 2 – What does "truth" mean?

We have provided some of these dictionary meanings, Bible verses and quotes for you this morning.

In a moment you are going to have a look at these

and choose some that represent what truth means to you or you may prefer to write your own definition.

Don't forget to help those who don't read yet. You can ask the younger children to tell you what they think truth means. You might like to write this down for them.

You will find these ...

(direct people to where you have placed the strips of paper in the worship space e.g. on tables, along the mercy seat or on the Holiness table – if you have a large number of people you may want to set up a number of places so that everyone can spread out)

Take a moment to find one or two that help explain truth as you understand it and share with someone else what you chose and what it says to you.

Note: if you have decided to hand out sheets with all definitions, quotes and verses you can just ask people to use their highlighter on the ones that resonate with them or to add their own definition to the list.

Allow time for movement and discussion.

Link 2

It's important for us to understand what truth is and to be able to recognise truth if we are going to live in truth.

Jesus says 'I am the truth'. Many times in the Gospels Jesus says: "I tell you the truth"

What does that tell you about truth? What does that tell you about where we find truth?

Let's say this together: "Jesus tells us that he is the truth"

Why is truth important? The answer is in the Bible.

When we are living our lives by the truth of God's word, not only are we living a life that is pleasing to God but we are showing who God is and bringing others to Jesus.

3 John 1:4 - Nothing brings me greater happiness than to hear that my children^[b] are obeying the truth.

Teaching / activity 3

Option 1 – Video Clip

The skinny on truth and grace – skit guys \$15.99

Option 2 – Interactive message

Divide everyone into small groups and give each group a large sheet of cardboard or paper and

coloured markers. Explain that the words and pictures drawn on the posters will help each person to remember the messages about truth. Invite them to work on their posters as you speak.

There is a difference between things that are true and THE TRUTH. The truth will last forever, it is always the same and it can be trusted.

Truth lasts forever

Please give me a “Thumbs up” if you are hungry. It is true that you are feeling hungry right now.

“Thumbs up” if you think this will be true forever? So it is not THE truth.

Truth is something that we can depend on so it has to be true **all of the time**. Truth lasts forever.

Can you think of something that will last forever?

Listen to these verses and tell me what they say will last forever...

Our Lord, you are King! Majesty and power are your royal robes. You put the world in place, and it will never be moved. You have always ruled, and you are eternal. Psalm 93:1-2 (CEV)

What will last forever?

On your poster, draw some rocks and write the word ‘forever’. A rock will last a long, long time. It can help us to remember that truth will last forever.

Truth is always the same

The Truth will last forever and it will stay THE SAME forever.

Something that is true today might not be true next year.

What was the weather like when you came in today? Was it raining? Will this be true every day?

Turn to the person next to you and tell them how old you are. Will this still be true next year?

Hebrews 13:8 (CEV) says

Jesus Christ never changes! He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Everything God has done will last forever; nothing he does can ever be changed. God has done all this, so that we will worship him. Ecclesiastes 3:14 (CEV)

On your poster, draw a sunset or write the word ‘same’. The sun doesn’t change its pattern of rising

and setting. It can help us to remember that the truth stays the same forever.

Truth can be trusted

The Truth will last forever and it will stay the same forever AND truth can be trusted.

We believe what people tell us. But we can trust what God says even more, and God is the one who has spoken about his Son. God has also said that he gave us eternal life and that this life comes to us from his Son. 1 John 5:9, 11 (CEV)

Jesus is the truth – he can be trusted.

God’s word, the Bible, is the truth, it can be trusted.

On your poster, draw a picture of someone you trust or write the word ‘Trusted’. Having people in our lives that we trust helps us to remember that the truth can be trusted.

Link 3

In John 14: 6, Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. Because Jesus is the truth, we know that he will last forever, he will stay the same and he can be trusted.

When we live like Jesus, other people can see the truth in us too.

Prayer Activity

Write/draw a prayer asking Jesus to help you grow and develop the good and true things in your life so that they become a part of who you and that other people can see them in you.

Opportunity for Reflection and Response

I am the way the truth and the life

Voice of truth – casting crowns

Conclusion/ Benediction

Ask everyone to repeat the verse we started with together... The Lord is truthful; he can be trusted.

Now friends, let’s speak the truth in love as we grow in every way more and more like Jesus, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each of us does our own special work may we help others grow and together become healthy and growing and full of love. Adapted from Ephesians 4:15-16

What the dictionary says

<i>being in accordance with the actual state or conditions; conforming to reality or fact; not false,</i>
<i>real; genuine; authentic,</i>
<i>sincere; not deceitful,</i>
<i>firm in allegiance; loyal; faithful; steadfast: a true friend.</i>
<i>conforming to or consistent with a standard, pattern, or the like: a true copy.</i>
<i>exact; precise; accurate; correct.</i>
<i>the <u>true</u> or actual state of a matter.</i>
<i>conformity with fact or reality.</i>
<i>a verified or indisputable fact, proposition, principle, or the like: mathematical truths.</i>
<i>the state or character of being <u>true</u>.</i>

What the Bible tells us

Psalm 33:4 – The Lord is truthful; He can be trusted.
Psalm 15:2 – Only those who obey God and do as they should. They speak truth.
3 Johns 1:4 – Nothing brings me greater happiness than to hear that my children are obeying truth.
Proverbs 8:7 – I always speak the truth and refuse to tell a lie.
Proverbs 12:19 – truth will last forever; lies are soon found out.
Proverbs 23:23 – Invest in truth and wisdom, discipline and good sense, and don't part with them.
John 8: 32 – You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.
John 14:6 – I am the way the truth and the life Jesus answered, without me, no one can go to the father.
1 Corinthians 13:6 – love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil.
Ephesians 1:13 – Christ also brought you the truth, which is the good news about how you can be saved.

Quotes

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything. – <u>Mark Twain</u>
"Truth never damages a cause that is just." – <u>Mahatma Gandhi</u>
"Integrity is telling myself the truth. And honesty is telling the truth to other people." – <u>Spencer Johnson.</u>
"Honesty is more than not lying. It is truth telling, truth speaking, truth living, and truth loving." – <u>James E. Faust</u>
Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth. – Henry David Thoreau
Time is precious, but truth is more precious than time. – Benjamin Disraeli
For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead... – Thomas Jefferson
Anyone who doesn't take truth seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either. – Albert Einstein
Beware of the half truth. You may have gotten hold of the wrong half. – Unknown Source
Truth is its own reward. – Plato (<i>BC 427-BC 347</i>) <i>Greek philosopher.</i>
Truth is the property of no individual but is the treasure of all men. – Ralph Waldo Emerson