

Transformed: Made New By Connecting With God

Introduction

“From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.” [Acts 17:26-27 \(NIV\)](#)

God created you for relationship with Him, and He loves you deeply. But many people feel separated from God; they may know intellectually that God loves them, but they don't FEEL like God loves them. The enemy is a master at planting doubt in our hearts. He distracts us with lies that leave us disconnected from God. And when we take control of our lives, it typically results in a mess.

Fortunately, God pursues us, even in the worst of circumstances. God's story of humanity is one of redemption, restoration and transformation. God reaches down into the mud to reclaim what is His. He picks us up, cleans us off and puts us in a better place. God takes our mess and turns it into something of value. He does not require us to change on our own but transforms us through the power of His Spirit alive in us.

Lies We Believe

Genesis 3:1-8 reveals the following four lies that Satan uses to disconnect us from God. Under each one are variations that feel true to many people.

Don't trust.

I have to fix this.	God's not there for me.	No one will meet my needs.
If I don't do it myself, it won't be done right.	I'm not sure I'm going to heaven.	People are fake.
God's trying to keep me from something good		

I'm not enough.

I'm too fat.	I'm not smart enough.	I should be more like <u>(name)</u> .
My best isn't good enough.	I'm ugly.	I'm too short.
I'm not in their league.	People don't want me around.	God's disappointed in me.
I can't get someone that attractive.	I'm not important.	

I'm bad.

I'm a screw up.	I don't deserve good things.	I'm worthless.
It's all my fault.	Something's wrong with me.	I'm so bad God doesn't want me.
My sins are worse than ____.		

I'm not safe.

I'm going to get blamed.	They're going to be mad at me.	Someone's going to find out.
Something bad is going to happen.	I have to keep ____ happy.	I'm going to get yelled at.
I'm in trouble.	I'm going to get caught.	

Place a mark next to any statements that **feel** true to you.

Circle the ones you struggle with the most. For how long have those circled statements felt true?

Is there a particular voice you hear telling you that message? If so, whose voice is it?

The Truth

Jesus referred to Satan as “the father of lies” (John 8:43 NIV), but Jesus taught that His “truth will set you free.” (John 8:32 NIV) From everything you know about the nature of God and the truth revealed in His Word, identify the truth that counters the lies Satan uses to disconnect you from God.

A lie that feels true is _____ but Jesus tells me _____ .

Now, take off your “logic hat” for a moment and stay connected to what **feels** true. From 0 to 100 percent, how accurate does the truth **feel** to you (heart not head)? _____ %

Place your “logic hat” back on. How confident are you, from a purely cognitive perspective, that Jesus’ truth is accurate? _____ %

Any difference in the two percentages indicates transformation that needs to occur. It may be a process, or a moment of healing, but God can heal the gap between the truth in your head and the struggle of your heart! Consistently remind yourself of the source of the lie and focus on the truth. Truth brings freedom.

Power of Truth Speakers

The world (the enemy) bombards us with lies every day. We all need people to surround us and remind us of the truth. Who are people who speak spiritual truth in your life?

How often do you interact with these people in ways that truth is communicated? In your judgement, is that often enough, or do you need to be more proactive in making time to connect with them?

What words or actions do you need from your truth speakers to combat the lies you identified in the sections above?

God Moments

Are you aware of God ever working in a moment or situation to reveal truth to you? If so, describe what happened. What lie would you most like to see God set you free from, if He were going to work a “God moment” in your life today?

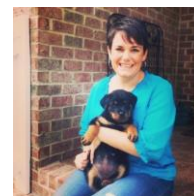
On your way to bed tonight, God appears to you. He embraces you and speaks softly in your ear. What does your heart long to hear Him say?

Is there any connection between what you want to hear from God and the lies noted in the section **Lies We Believe**?

Conclusion

In the summer of 2013, I drove from TX to NC and picked up a 100 lb., 16-month-old Rottweiler from a breeder. The dog’s registered name was Eternal Moon National Treasure, and she was called “Treasure.” My wife, Holly, and I renamed the dog “Legend.”

Although Legend had willingly hopped into the car to go home with me, there was no connection between us. Holly and I recently had lost a puppy we both loved, “Kaimana,” to parvo. Legend was a “replacement;” she was not our puppy of choice.



Holly and
"Kaimana"

Legend was in a state of anxiety for weeks! She panted constantly, was afraid of every noise and creature (she literally jumped when a squirrel ran past her on a walk one day), and she would not even bark. After a month I was ready to return Legend to the breeder. I wanted a Rottweiler that acted like a Rottweiler! I wanted a dog that was confident, that would guard her house and protect her family. I wanted Legend to serve the purpose for which I got her.

Holly encouraged me to be patient with Legend and give her time to adjust. I reluctantly acquiesced. Over the weeks that followed, Legend began to change. The constant



Legend the lap dog!

panting subsided and she grew less skittish. Legend became a constant companion in daily walks and frequent car rides. She even developed the habit of jumping on the couch and nestling in between me and Holly. Legend had become a 110 lb. lap dog! And I'll never forget the first time Legend barked. I think the house literally shook, and Holly came close to having a heart attack! That bark was exciting to hear, and quite impressive!

As Holly and I nurtured our connection with Legend, an amazing transformation occurred. Legend developed into the Rottweiler she was supposed to be - confident, protective, loyal and loving. The potential had been there all along, but the connection created the environment for the process to take place.

You can learn a lot about God from a dog. It's all about connection! God loves you because you are His. He knew you before you had a body, knit you together for a purpose, knows you inside and out, has plans for your life, and has made arrangements for you to be with Him for all eternity. You are infinitely valued by God not because of what you **do**, but because of who you **are**. He accepts you regardless of your present condition, and will transform you into who He created you to be.

The enemy wants to keep you separated from God. God wants you connected with Him. I hope the information in this study is helpful in your journey. More importantly, I hope you experience the transforming power of God and wholeheartedly embrace His immeasurable love for you. If I can be an encouragement in the process, please contact me.

Because of God's amazing grace,

Steve Holladay
UltimateESCAPE