



A Half-Truth Is a Whole Lie

*Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.*

Psalm 25:5

The half-truth has been around since Satan and Eve met for lunch in the garden. And it wasn't the snake who first danced around the truth. It was Eve. Sweet, innocent Eve. The crown of creation, the helpmate of all mankind. (At least all mankind of that day!)

It's not that she really *lied* or anything. She just kinda stretched the truth. Made it a little more exciting. After all, a great story must have a *wow* factor. And the fact that God said not to eat the fruit just wasn't *wow* enough. So she invented another rule: They couldn't *touch* the fruit, either.

Minor point. Major problem.

In the time it took Eve to invent her story, she was seduced into the world of half-truths and wouldn't have recognized reality if it had slithered up and bit her on the big toe.

It must run in the family.

The Queen of Half-Truths

Eve and I are sisters. She started the half-truth way back there in the garden, and I've done my part to continue it. As a matter of fact, there was a time in my life when I was the queen of half-truths. And it all started when I was nine years old.

As a creative little girl growing up on the poor side of a South Carolina town, I discovered that an impressive half-truth was often preferable to a boring whole truth. Like the time my mother took the four of us kids and moved away, leaving my daddy behind. I didn't understand the intricacies of such a move or the pain that led to it. All I knew was that I missed my daddy and would do anything to make him—and me—look good.

Standing in the lunch line at the new school, I couldn't help but compare my faded hand-me-downs to the bright, trendy wardrobes of my peers. I listened in as the girls discussed their latest fashion purchases and planned what they would wear the next day.

My hopes for acceptance plummeted. As one whose second-hand wardrobe had been delivered in a tattered Kash-and-Karry grocery bag, I couldn't imagine actually *shopping* for clothes. My experience with purchasing new items was limited to necessities, like economy-sized boxes of off-brand cereal and generic toilet paper with the consistency of cardboard. I could see this was going to take some major damage control. I needed a *wow* factor.

Snaking my way into the circle, I announced, "My dad's in the oil business."

Silence.

I forced a casual smile, as if shopping sprees and fashion plates were a routine part of my day. Sophistication oozed from my pores.

Betty, the leader, scanned the group, searching for the alien who had insinuated herself into the inner sanctum. Her radar eyes locked in on me, her aloof once-over speaking volumes. "Really?" she said.

"Yes. And I used to live near Paris, too."

To this day, I have no idea where those words came from. I just opened my mouth and out they came. Big, fat, ugly lies.

But wait! I thought. *Maybe they aren't really lies!* After all, my daddy *did* drive a heating oil truck. And I *did* live near Paris Mountain at the foot of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

My affinity for the half-truth was born that monumental day. It didn't take me long to learn that a plausible half-truth was often more exciting than an ineffective whole truth—and the payoff was much greater!

My newly discovered system of partial truths was a boon to my less-than-ideal existence. Honesty—once the goal of good girls like me—was now conveniently dismissed to the back burner of relativity. And guilt—the bane of all us good girls—was now eliminated by the credible half of half-truths. It was a liberating discovery!

But unmerited liberty comes with a price.

My parents' differences were soon mended, and we started a new life in a new town. Friends came easily, and I found myself less dependent on the half-truth. But one bright Sunday afternoon my parents announced they were going to take a nap, giving us kids strict orders to stay inside and watch TV. (This was back when flipping through channels wasn't tantamount to strolling through a morality minefield. It also required you to actually get up from the sofa and walk across the room in order to select one of the three stations.)



“After all, what is a lie?
'Tis but the truth in masquerade.”



LORD BYRON¹





Being the uninformed 10-year-old that I was, I assumed my parents' need for a nap meant they needed sleep. And—as an astute observer of my daddy's sleep habits—I was sure I could use it to my advantage.

I ran to my friend's house and challenged her to a game of Monopoly. Before the afternoon was over, I was the undisputed champion, reveling in all my board game glory.

Ten minutes after my victory, standing before judge and jury, I was fighting for my life.

My plan had been simple enough. All I had to say was, “I came into the bedroom while you were sleeping because I wanted to ask Daddy if I could go to Lynn's house.” Half-truth. I did *want* to ask Daddy if I could go to Lynn's house.

“Maybe he just doesn't remember. Maybe he wasn't really awake.” Another half-truth. My daddy had been known to carry on

conversations in his sleep and have absolutely no memory of them when he woke up.

Two half-truths. And everybody knows two halves equal a whole—right?

Wrong.

There was one little problem. The bedroom door had been locked.

That was the day I discovered that a half-truth is a whole lie. (Years later after I got married, I developed my own affinity for the half-truth of Sunday afternoon “naps.” With the door locked.)

Truth Matters

The reality is, truth matters. It matters in life and love and business. It matters in issues of right and wrong, in success and failure, in living for Christ and living for the world. It matters so much that Americans spend millions of dollars a year in their efforts to discover it. And truth can be found everywhere. With god-like authority, TV talk-show hosts tout their revelations to an audience hungry for a *wow* factor . . . for enlightenment . . . for something of substance. News channels feed our insatiable need to know, while self-proclaimed experts offer their own inside tracks to truth.

But the world’s message is watered down, reformulated and infused with false expectations. Individual truth is relative, leading everybody and his relative to promote a new truth!

But where is reality in the midst of all this insight and enlightenment? It is sadly missing, hidden behind the mask of Satan’s lies.

Real truth once carried weight. It was timeless, undeniable and saturated with authority:

- God is Creator.
- Sin is wrong.
- Salvation is free.

But today’s truth is a lie. And it’s spreading—even to the Christian community:

- You're not good enough.
- You're not important enough.
- You're not beautiful enough.

The fact is, those statements are half-truths. Yes, the Bible is clear that we can't be good enough or important enough or beautiful enough to reach God. *But He doesn't leave us there.* And that's what the world has failed to tell us. That's what Satan doesn't want us to know.

Ladies, we've bought into half-truths, and consequently, we believe a lie. The prophet Isaiah described a similar condition 700 years before Jesus was born:

Truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter.
Truth is nowhere to be found (Isa. 59:14-15).

The reality is that God's Word holds the only truth.

The Mask of False Reality

Throughout history, masks have been used to deceive, disguise and hide the truth. From Greek theater to social ritual, they cloak reality and display a false face to the world. And whether the charade is staged by the culture, the media or Satan himself, it's easy for us to believe what we see.

So which mask conceals the truth from you?

Is it intellect? Technology? The culture? Your church? Is it your own expectations as a Christian woman?

There may be many answers to that question. But they all confirm one thing: Half-truths and whole lies lead us to fool ourselves with the mask of false reality. And whether the lie is positive or negative, the results are the same: *We're deceived.*

We're deceived into thinking that we're good enough . . . or that we're too far gone.

That we can do it all . . . or that we can't do anything right.

That we deserve all good things . . . or that we deserve nothing.

And the common result of this deception is disappointment. Disappointment in our lives, ourselves, our husbands, our families, our churches . . . and our God.

Who said money can't buy happiness? Why can't good mothers always have good children? When will this Christian life get easier?

Some are so disappointed that they've even abandoned the faith.

"A lie will go around the world while truth is pulling its boots on."

REV. CHARLES H. SPURGEON²

Oh, how we've been deceived!

We serve a God who loves us unconditionally, who is all-powerful, who wants only the best for us, and yet we're often disappointed—because we fail to understand His greatness.

Sisters, we can't grasp the truth by listening to the world and its lies! In John 8:44, Jesus tells us that Satan is the father of lies, that there is no truth in him. Who are you going to believe? The One who loves us and died for us, or the one who wants to steal, kill and destroy our lives?

But let me warn you—seeking God in our own strength will be equally disappointing. In Romans 7, Paul brings to light the very words we often keep hidden inside: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do . . . I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature . . . What a wretched man [woman] I am!" (Rom. 7:15,18,24).

Did you get that? Paul struggled too! He struggled with the same reality we do. The reality that we can't measure up. That we can't be all we want to be. That we can't even be all God allows us to be.

But His Word tells us He loves us anyway. His Word tells us He knows we will struggle.

He has the answers. And His answers are true.

Are You Ready to Face the Struggles?

So, girlfriends, tell the truth: Are you disappointed? Are you tired of living the lies? (My guess is that you are, or you wouldn't be reading this book!)

Has your life been one masquerade after another—seeing through one lie, only to be deceived by the next?

If so, then answer me this: Are you ready to get down to the nitty-gritty? Are you ready to face the good, the bad and the ugly truth about reality?

Perhaps I should put a disclaimer here: Some truth about reality may be hard to face. It sure was for me. I'm going to be honest and share some of the struggles I've had and some of the lessons I've learned. And sometimes I'll share the lessons I'm *still* trying to learn!

But I promise you this (Do you see I've raised my right hand?): I promise to tell you the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth—so help me God!

Jesus tells us in John 8:31-32 that if we hold to His teaching, we can know the truth, and His truth is the only one that can set us free. My prayer is that through the stories, the steps and the study of Scripture, you'll be better equipped to recognize the lies that bind you . . . and the keys that set you free.

Yep, I'm going to tell you the truth about lies.

God's Revealing Truth

Day One:	Psalm 119:1-16
Day Two:	Genesis 3:1-24
Day Three:	Matthew 4:1-11
Day Four:	John 8:1-59
Day Five:	Luke 4:14-21

In His Own Words

1. Read John 3:20-21. According to Jesus, what happens when we live by the truth?
2. Spend time in prayer asking the Father to work through this study and expose the masks Satan uses to deceive you.