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LAYING THE *Foundation*

IN A NUTSHELL . . .

The introduction, prologue, and chapter 1 of *Lies Women Believe* lay a foundation for understanding the power of Satan’s lies in our culture and in our personal lives, and for discovering the powerful Truth found in God’s Word.

Jesus came to give us abundant life. So why do we sometimes find ourselves living defeated, lonely, fearful, stressed-out lives? The problem is that we’ve believed a lie—or lies—from Satan’s arsenal. Not all of them, of course. In fact, we might be tempted to pride ourselves on not believing the Enemy. But there may be just one little lie hanging like a luscious piece of fruit that we have picked and eaten. Perhaps we didn’t see that it was a lie. It looked so innocent, even helpful. Or perhaps it was so tempting that we just couldn’t resist. In any case, we’ve discovered that even one “simple” lie can place us in bondage and keep us from experiencing the joyous, confident, peaceful life Christ offers.

If you’re experiencing bondage in any area of your life, I pray that this book will help you identify any lies you may have believed and the corresponding Truth from God’s Word. I hope you will come to see that none of Satan’s lies is harmless. We can’t give in to them and come away unaffected. We need to learn to discern those lies when we encounter them, to replace the lies with the Truth, and then to help others do the same.

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

“I’m not talking about a magic formula that will make problems vanish; I’m not offering any shortcuts to an easy life, nor am I promising the absence of pain and difficulties. Life is hard—there’s no way around that. But I am talking about walking through the realities of life—things like rejection, loss, disappointment, wounds, and even death—in freedom and true joy.” (pp. 18–19)

EXPLORING THE TRUTH . . .



THE POWER OF THE TRUTH (pp. 15–24)*

DAY ONE

REALIZE

1. Read John 10:10. As you think about your life, would you say you are experiencing the abundant life Jesus came to give? Or do you find yourself just coping, surviving, or struggling along? Explain.

REFLECT

2. Look at the list of words on page 16 of *Lies Women Believe*. List below any of those words that describe your current season of life. Add other words of your own if needed. (If you are not currently dealing with these kinds of feelings but you know someone who is, describe how you think she is feeling. You can use this study to learn how to help her and others who are struggling.)

3. Look at the list of words on page 18 of *Lies Women Believe*. Write below the words (or any of your own) that you would like to describe your life.

4. Read John 8:31–36. What do you think Jesus meant when He talked about being free? How do you know He did not mean being free to do anything we want to do?

5. Read Galatians 5:1 and John 14:6. What (Who) is the Truth that sets us free?

*Unless otherwise indicated, page numbers correspond to pages in *Lies Women Believe* (updated and expanded version, 2018).

RESPOND

6. The woman whose story begins on page 21 said she had “given up hope” that she could ever be completely free from the moral habit that had kept her in bondage for years. Is there any area of your life where you have given up hope that you can be set free?

7. How would you like for your life to change as a result of this study?

Lord, I want to grow through this study. I pray that You will show me any areas where I'm in bondage and reveal any lies I've believed that are holding me there. Show me the Truth I need to know so I can be truly free. Amen.



KNOWING YOUR ENEMY (pp. 27–32)

DAY TWO

REALIZE

1. What do the following verses tell you about Satan and the way he operates?

John 8:44

2 Corinthians 4:4

2 Corinthians 11:14

Ephesians 6:11–12

1 Peter 5:8

2. Which of these characteristics do you see in the Genesis 3 account of Satan's temptation of Eve?

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

"Regardless of the immediate source, anytime we receive input that is not consistent with the Word of God, our antennae should go up. What we read or hear may sound right, may feel right, may seem right—but if it's contrary to the Word of God, it isn't right." (p. 32)

REFLECT

3. Why do Satan's lies often appear good and attractive?

4. What are some of the forms Satan's deception takes in our culture?

5. How can you discern the difference between Truth and deception? How can you keep from being deceived by Satan's lies?

RESPOND

6. We will be more vulnerable to deception if we're not regularly meditating on God's Word. What "good" things can keep you away from consistent study of the Word?

7. How can you raise your awareness of the Enemy and his attempts to deceive you?

Lord, I know that Satan is a real enemy and that he would like to make me ineffective for You and Your kingdom. Help me to stay in Your Word and to remember that no matter how powerful Satan may be, You are infinitely more powerful! Amen.



OPENING YOUR EYES (pp. 32–37)

DAY THREE

REALIZE

1. Read Genesis 2:15–17 and 3:1–13. What seemingly good thing did Satan offer to Eve? Why did she think it was a good offer?

REFLECT

2. Make a list of the primary sources of input you have coming into your life (e.g., movies, books, friends, social media, a counselor).

3. How careful are you about evaluating that input and seeking to discern Truth from error? Check the statement below that best describes you:

- I have been heavily influenced by the culture and other “voices” around me and don’t generally stop to evaluate what I hear and see in light of God’s Word. I am not discerning when it comes to Truth and error. (If this is true, you may not even realize that it describes you!)
- I am careful in some areas but not in others. I need to grow in spiritual discernment.
- I evaluate the things I hear and see through the grid of God’s Word and carefully consider the consequences when tempted with wrong choices. (According to Hebrews 5:14, the ability to discern between good and evil is a mark of spiritual maturity.)

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

“It’s tempting to mindlessly accept whatever we hear and see. . . . How often do we make choices without stopping to consider the consequences that may follow? Many of us simply live our lives, responding to the people, circumstances, and influences around us. . . . It all looks so good; it feels so right; it seems so innocent. But we end up in abusive relationships, head over heels in debt, angry, frustrated, trapped, and overwhelmed. We have been deceived.”
(pp. 35–36)

4. Describe a time when you made a wrong choice without stopping to consider the cost and the consequences.

5. Identify the lie that Satan used to lead you to believe that you (or others) would not be affected by the sin.

6. What truth from God's Word could have helped you walk away from Satan's lie?

RESPOND

7. Ask God to help you grow in your ability to discern good from evil and to make godly choices. Ask Him to show you if there is any area of your life where you are currently being deceived by input that is contrary to the Word of God.

Father, open my eyes so I won't be deceived by Satan's lies. Sometimes a course of action seems right when I don't stop to think about Your Truth or about the consequences that could result. Teach me to consider my choices in light of Your Word. Amen.



SEEING THE PROGRESSION *(pp. 37-40)*

DAY FOUR

REALIZE

1. From pages 37-39 in *Lies Women Believe*, what are the four steps that take us from initial deception to bondage?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

2. Look again at Genesis 3:1–13. What did Eve do that matched each of these four steps that led her from deception to bondage?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

REFLECT

3. As long as we live in this world, we can't completely isolate ourselves so that we never hear any lies. What's the difference between "hearing" lies and "listening to" them?

4. Read Philippians 4:8–9. Why is it so important to be selective about the input we allow to come into our minds and to choose to expose ourselves and listen to the Truth?

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

"There are no harmless lies. We cannot expose ourselves to the world's false, deceptive way of thinking and come out unscathed." (p. 38)

RESPOND

5. Review the list you made on Day Three—the sources of input that you allow to come into your life. Is there anything on that list that is exposing you unnecessarily to deception?

6. What steps can you take to better protect your mind and heart from Satan's deception?

Lord, please show me any ways that I have made myself more vulnerable to Satan's lies by the kinds of influences I choose to allow into my life. Help me to fill my mind and heart with the Truth. Amen.



CLAIMING THE TRUTH *(pp. 40–43)*

DAY FIVE

REALIZE

1. What are the three steps that will help us move from spiritual bondage to freedom?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

“Satan is a formidable enemy. His primary weapon is deception. His lies are powerful. But there is something even more powerful than Satan’s lies—and that is the Truth.” (p. 41)

REFLECT

2. How does the Truth counter lies?

3. What does the Bible say about Truth in the following verses?

Psalm 33:4 _____

Psalm 51:6 _____

John 8:32 _____

John 17:17 _____

2 Timothy 2:15 _____

4. Read John 14:15–17 and 16:13. What is the Holy Spirit’s role in helping us discern and walk in the Truth?

RESPOND

5. Can you identify any specific area(s) of bondage in your life—areas where you are not walking in freedom? (See pages 40–41 in *Lies Women Believe* for examples of common types of bondage.)

6. “Every area of bondage in our lives can be traced back to a lie” (p. 40). Ask God to help you during the course of this study to discover what lie(s) you have believed that may have placed you in bondage. Also ask the Lord to show you the Truth from His Word that counters Satan’s lies.

Lord, I pray that You will show me clearly any lies I have believed. Then show me the Truth that will set me free. Thank You for Your Word and for Your Holy Spirit, which point me to the Truth. Help me to walk in Your Truth today and every day. Amen.

WALKING TOGETHER IN THE TRUTH . . .

1. Why is our understanding of Truth so important?

2. A popular theme in our culture is that there are no absolutes. “All truth is good. Whatever truth works for you is good for you, and what works for me is good for me.” While on the surface that appears quite tolerant, where does this kind of thinking ultimately lead?

3. Describe some lies that are widely accepted as Truth by our society. What are some ways these lies influence people’s choices, and how can they be destructive?

4. List three or four widespread problems in our world and discuss how each could be the result of deception.

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

“From that first encounter in the garden to the present day, Satan has used deception to win our affections, influence our choices, and destroy our lives. In one way or another, every problem we have in this world is the fruit of deception—the result of believing something that simply isn’t true.” (p. 32)

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

"[Satan] knows that if we buy into his deception we will influence others around us to sin, and our sinful choices will set a pattern for subsequent generations to follow." (p. 33)

5. Can you think of any women in the Scripture who were deceived and who then influenced others to sin? (Need some help? Take a look at Genesis 3:6 and 16:1-6.)

6. Discuss some ways women in our day have been deceived. How has that deception influenced their own choices and the choices of others?

7. Share one or more ways that you have opened yourself up to deception in the past by choosing to expose yourself to input that is contrary to the Truth.

8. What are some illustrations of Satan's offers that women today find appealing? (Keep in mind that the things Satan tempts us with are not always inherently evil. The fruit that Eve ate wasn't bad or sinful in and of itself—in fact, it was something God had created. What made Eve's choice sinful was that God had said not to eat the fruit.)

NOTE FROM *Nancy*

"The forbidden fruit was 'good for food . . . a delight to the eyes . . . to be desired to make one wise' (v. 6). If it hadn't seemed so attractive, do you think Eve would have fallen for the offer? Probably not. What makes Satan's offers so alluring and so deceptive is that they look so right." (p. 35)

9. Share a choice you were tempted to make that looked appealing and seemed right but was contrary to God's Word. If you fell for the lie, describe any negative consequences that resulted.

10. Read together Acts 17:10-12. What did the people in Berea do in order to discern the Truth? How can we avoid being deceived and become more discerning about the input we receive?
