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2 John 1:1-3 Begins with Truth

2 John 1:1-3: “The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth, for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.”

Well, if we were to title this book, it would be “*True Love*,” and the message is clear throughout the book that love is always anchored in truth. In fact, it might be said that love means nothing without truth. Now, that’s kind of surprising really, when you think of the way that the world perceives what love is. But John will clarify for us by the power of the Spirit, that if you have love but you don’t have truth, it means nothing. There’s nothing of any value in that. The world would like to convolute this thing called “truth,” but we know that it is the hallmark of our faith.

So, as we come to this book, as it’s interestingly written to a “chosen lady,” we realize that the tendency is oftentimes going to be to be coddling, to cave in, to acquiesce, to give in to those around us, and perceive that in some twisted way it’s love; but Scripture’s going to clarify that’s not love. True love is truth, and it always begins that way. John has already established this in 1 John. Once again, just a way of reminder, if you go back with me into 1 John 1, you begin to see this emphasized, as he starts off talking about relationship, and more specifically fellowship with God. Where does relationship and fellowship begin? Well, his point in chapter 1 is that it begins with truth. You have to be truthful. So, if you look in 1 John 1:6,

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.”

Now, the reason why he starts off the book this way is because he’s going to ultimately emphasize the love of God. God is love. He’s going to say that in particular in chapter 4, but he must establish at the very beginning that you can’t have a relationship with anybody if there’s no truth; and he says again, in verse 8,

“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

You then go to chapter 2, and it’s clarified in verse 3,

“By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

(1 John 2:4) “The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

I mean, saying things, saying to people that you love them, saying to people that you care, saying to people that you think they're wonderful, or whatever you say that seems loving, if it has no truth behind it, means nothing.

This is the emphasis, if you look with me in 1 John 3:16,

"We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

(1 John 3:17) But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

(1 John 3:18) Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

Love means nothing if there's no truth, and it is fundamentally the foundation that we build upon, the reason why John starts off the book the way he does.

As we come into this book, we could probably define "love" in many ways. If you were to go out into the world, they would have their own definitions, but if you were to ask most Christians, they would, I think, gravitate towards 1 Corinthians 13. As you look at 1 Corinthians 13, it talks about many of the attributes and characteristics of what love is. One of the phrases that is placed in 1 Corinthians 13:6 says that "love rejoices with the truth." That phrase "rejoices" deals with a sense of gathering together. It actually begins with the Greek word "syg," where we get the word "synagogue." A synagogue is a gathering together of people that affirm each other and affirm their beliefs together. So, therefore, it's called a synagogue. The word "rejoice" is a gathering together in rejoicing. In other words, what unites us in the things that we rejoice? What is it that brings us together? We rejoice in the same thing. What is that? Truth.

So, true love always rejoices in the truth, and it is the fundamental point that John is going to bring. Now, if you look with me in 2 John 1. Now, as he writes to the women, here again, there is a tendency I believe, of women to go more the way of emotional rather than the truth. So, by virtue of the elder man within the text, your position, men, is to direct in truth, not in emotion. Emotion is a wonderful thing, but it has to be led by truth to be correct. When you consider some of the passages of Scripture that actually tell us to do things that would go against us emotionally. For instance, "consider it all joy when you encounter various trials." (James 1:2) That goes against what my emotions feel when I'm going through trials. I don't feel happy when I'm going through trials, but you now consider it all joy because of what Christ is doing. He's actually building your faith, strengthening your faith, and you begin to think in terms of what truth is rather than in terms of how you feel. "Be anxious for nothing." Well, there's a lot of things I could be anxious about. There's a lot of things that make me anxious. However, Scripture says, "be anxious for nothing," and then it says, if you have a problem, turn to God, and the peace of God will guard your hearts. The point of the matter is that we can't be led by

our emotions. We must be led by the truth, and truth is that which brings us into a loving relationship with anybody.

So, as we come to this passage, 2 John 1:1, we talked about this last week, dealing with those that are called out for a particular reason, and in a particular relationship.

“The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth...” That’s a great way to start out because what he’s actually conveying is that truth is how we love. One of the reasons why we come before the Lord, we do this thing called “repentance,” which means to think differently about; and I know that it’s not natural to think in this particular term but the best way you love is in truth. In fact, love really can’t be conveyed appropriately unless it’s in truth.

So, he starts off really establishing that truth is how we love. There’s a great passage in 1 Peter 1, that gives this wonderful picture of what loving somebody should look like in truth. If you read with me in 1 Peter 1:22, Peter writes this,

“Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love.”

It’s one thing to say, “I love somebody.” Do you truly love them? Well, somebody’s trying to get to the heart of it, isn’t he?

“...for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.” Ah, that’s what it looks like. That’s what true love looks like.

It actually, within the passage, is telling us how John loves this person, and there is clear sincerity and devotion, intensity in this. In other words, he’s not just throwing out rhetoric. It’s not just words, as John has also clearly established to begin with. Not just in words but in deed and in truth. So, let’s put some truth behind this.

He goes on and says, in 2 John 1:1,

“... and not only I, but also all who know the truth.”

Literally the phrase “who have come to know the truth.” That’s an interesting point that he brings out within this passage, and that is that truth has an uncanny way of drawing us together. Once again, it goes back to that which unites us. We are united in love through truth, and we’re drawn together. He actually makes it very inclusive,

“...but also all who know,” or have come to know this truth. There’s a uniting, there’s a bounding, there’s a binding of hearts together. I think of that wonderful passage in John 10, where Jesus says, “My sheep hear my voice and they come.” But one that we oftentimes skip over is found in John 18:37, and the declaration is everyone who is of the truth hears His voice. That’s a great phrase, isn’t it? Everyone who is of the truth hears His voice. What is it that draws you to Christ? The truth.

The fact of the matter is that the world has a lot of messages that are going out there, but there's something that should be in all of us that says, "No, but that's not true. That's not really true." Now, the world wants you to accept it as truth, but there's just something inside of you that just goes, "You know what, that's just not true." According to John 3:21, there's a sense of hunger for something more. "That's not right. That's not true. That doesn't settle with me."

So, ultimately us coming to salvation is described in 2 Thessalonians 2:10, that we received the love of the truth so as to be saved. What is it that you received? The love of the truth, so as to be saved. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." We were drawn to the truth of Christ. It was that which draws us. Unfortunately, man tries to marginalize the truth, and I think that's how it starts off. One of the great passages in John 18:38, is where Jesus is having the conversation with Pilate, and the question, Scripture refers to it as a statement, that Pilate raises is "What is truth?" The point of the matter is, if in fact you can blur the lines of truth and make truth ambiguous, then you can celebrate sin. In other words, you can celebrate sin because, "What really is bad? It's hard to define." So, you erase the absolutes of what is true.

The whole reason why God is angry with man is because, according to Romans 1, he suppresses the truth in his desire to want to do unrighteousness. So that's what separates us from what is love because as John has already clearly said, God is love and we have allowed this to come in and blur the lines of that which actually would bring us great peace. Unfortunately, as Romans 1 continues to go on, it says, "they exchanged the truth of God for a lie." they refused to obey the truth. He actually tells the reason why within that chapter; it's because of selfish ambition that we suppress the truth. In other words, it doesn't fit in to what we want to do or what we want to get so we suppress it.

In all of this, John is saying truth is paramount, and it must be first in any relationship. So, it's how we love, and it's the very thing that brings us together. It's the very thing that unites our hearts. It's the very thing that draws us together. In fact, coming to understand what truth is through Christ is what begins to happen, and we draw closer as we do that. To give you an example, Ephesians 4 conveys this truth as well. You can see this taking place in this chapter as he talks about the world being in darkness and they walk "in futility," (Ephesians 4:17)

(Ephesians 4:18) "being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart."

I don't know, does that sound like love to you?

(Ephesians 4:19) "having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness."

Watch verse 20,

"But you did not learn Christ in this way,

Ephesians 4:21) if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as..."

How does yours read?

“...truth is in Jesus.”

See, the more you understand about who Christ is, the more clearly you see truth and the better you love; but you can't love when you're in a lie, and whoever's lying to you isn't loving you. So, it doesn't matter what they say, it doesn't matter even some of the gestures that they make. The bottom line is: Is this sincere? Is it true? More specifically now, is this the love of God? Now, I just want to emphasize, this is what unites the body of Christ. So that if somebody is saved within this church but they're not sincere in their love and devotion for God and for His people, then that's not going to draw us together, even though we're in the same building; but what's going to draw us together is our love for genuine, sincerity, and more specifically that which look like Jesus. We're drawn to truth, therefore we come to the light, and it unites us.

So, John wants to put in that particular, “not only I, but also all who come to know the truth.” In other words, he's making this pretty exclusive in the sense of those who come to know the truth are united in the truth. Obviously, those who have not come to know the truth are not united in this. He then piggybacks on this, verse 2 says, it is all “for the sake of the truth.”

The conversations that we oftentimes have are that truth is kind of a side note when we dialogue about love. “Everybody needs to love one another.” What does that look like? “Oh, well that's not important.” Truth has become a non-issue. I mean, we tell a lie, and we use an interesting phrase. Instead of saying, “I lied,” we say that we stretched the truth. We say things when we talk with one another that we don't mean, but you know, we call that “polite.” That's “polite” because it's what they want to hear, so we put on faces. Of course, Scripture calls that “hypocrite,” but hey, we just call it “acting.” We do things that we know aren't right. We know they're not right but hey, the end justifies the means. Right? I mean, it can't be really about truth. So, you can go to church. You can read the Bible, but you don't have to actually do what it says. Yeah, but that's not true. There's nothing true in it.

So, all the way through Scripture, it's trying to bring us back to that which is genuine and true. Truth is how we love. Truth is what draws us together. Truth is what motivates us. Look at verse 2, it's “for the sake of truth” that we do these things. As we've oftentimes mentioned from Timothy, the church is the pillar and support of the truth. Why doesn't God say, “The pillar and support of love?” Because truth is the foundation of love. You can't have love without it. I know that there are associations and people get together, and we have family, and we say that we love one another; you don't love one another if there's no truth in the relationships. If that truth isn't Christ, there is no love because God is love. When you take Christ out of the picture there obviously is no love in that realm because we don't know how to love, we just know how to use people. We use people to feel good or to get what we want, and maybe even it's just to look good, but there's no truth in it; and it can't be love.

It's “for the sake of truth which abides in us...”

Now, watch the phrase here, “and will be with us forever.”

That’s a great phrase because really what he’s saying within the passage is that it’s this truth that sustains us in eternity. It is an abiding force within us.

Let me show you one of the passages that make reference to this and will probably clarify it even more in John 17, where Jesus prays over His disciples, if you remember the passage. It reads this way in verse 15,

“I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.

(John 17:16) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

(John 17:17) Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”

Now, we know that Christ is the living Word. So, we’re not just simply talking about the words of Scripture. We’re talking about the words of truth lived out the way they were meant to be lived out. You know how people can take Scripture and they can twist it and distort it, so if you’re ever confused about what Scripture actually means just go to Jesus and say, “What does it look like in Him?” Whatever it looks like in Him, it defines what He meant by that particular Scripture.

All the way through, what we see is Christ defining that truth, and the point of the matter is that which sanctifies us sets us apart. That which distinguishes us, and that which keeps us is truth. I think one of the interesting points of the book of Hebrews is that if you anchor your soul in shadows, that is to say you do things externally, outwardly, you have a cross in your bedroom, you have the Bible open on the table, things like that. None of those things are bad in and of themselves, but if in fact you perceive that’s your faith, then you deceive yourself; because it’s an external shadow of what’s real. What is the real? Well, Christ must be Lord of your life, and more specifically, Hebrews emphasizes without faith it’s impossible to please God. You must first believe that He is. He says, “Now faith is the substance.” In other words, his point is faith is the real, all these other external things are the fake, they’re just shadows. He’s calling us to be real with our faith. He’s calling us to be real with our love in all of these things. Hebrews emphasizes that, get out of the shadows, get into the real, now you have an anchor for your soul both sure and steadfast.

As we come to this passage, what he’s saying is that which binds us, that which unites us, that which we do is that which makes us eternal, and that’s what causes us to abide. One of the great problems in the book of Hebrews was that he says, “you’re losing power and you’re losing steam.” I know people get in their Christianity, and they go, “Why do I keep falling back?” Hebrews, as well as John would say you stopped being real. Somewhere along the line you stopped being real because truth will sustain you. In other words, get real about your faith, get real about your walk, get real about your relationship with God, and there’s a sustaining power that will keep you all the way to the end. As Hebrews will say, “firm until the end,” but you

begin to go into the world of fake and the world of show, of performance, and none of that will sustain you through the difficult times.

This particular passage, “for the sake of truth which abides in us and will be with us forever.”

What an amazing sustaining power the truth is. Now, he writes this letter to the woman, and we know he’s going to be dealing with issues about letting certain people into her house. We also know that part of her family is walking in truth, which means that part of her family is not. She’s going to have to make some very strong decisions. Well, that doesn’t seem loving when you think about it. I mean, the wonderful thing about mothers is that they’re always accepting. It doesn’t matter what you do. I mean, the world fundamentally has programmed us to say, “We’ll, just say this...” Your kids do something wrong, “Nobody’s perfect.” You can always count upon the mother, when the kid really has done something terrible, to maybe just sit back and be a little more silent, and non-judgmental, and sometimes even affirming; but remember 1 Corinthians 13, love only rejoices in the truth. It will not affirm a lie. The reason why this can oftentimes be confusing is because we think in terms of the more blatant and obvious lies, but we don’t think in terms of the subtle. For instance, our youngest son goes to work, and he shares some of the things that go on at work. There are times where we hear things like the boss is not being fair and they’re not doing the right thing. You hear those kinds of things. So, now my wife and I have an option. We can either proclaim the truth or we can focus on that which is not truly important. Do you hear the lie? The lie is focusing on that which is not important.

So, you come to 1 Peter 2, and I can tell you as a parent the last thing on my mind is this particular text, normally, unless the word of God is dwelling in me richly; but in 1 Peter 2 the emphasis is not on the fact that somebody is being wrongly treated, and now you got to get after them. We can hire lawyers or somebody to go get them, but that’s not the emphasis of the text. The emphasis of the text is you turn to the one that’s going through it, and you say, “Is your behavior excellent?” Keep your behavior excellent because we know the world’s not. That’s a given, but the question is “Are you doing the right thing?” Well, that’s not a natural way for a mother to come back to a child. It’s not natural for her to say something like, “Did you do the right thing today?” What’s the right thing? Well, if you drop on down to verse 18, it reads this way,

“Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

Why? Because “this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. (1 Peter 2:19)

(1 Peter 2:20) For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it...”

How does this end?

“...this finds favor with God.”

Now let me ask you something, what’s the truth of the text? The truth of the text is that you don’t sit around coddling your kid because he was treated badly, because that would be a lie. A lie would be “you’ll find comfort by my coddling,” but the truth would be you’ll find comfort by pleasing God, and you please God by submitting yourself to this authority; even though they’re unreasonable. Would you say that’s the truth? So, how hard is that? Because the first thing you want to do is to empathize, sympathize, and affirm, “Well, that mean ol’ boss. You shouldn’t have to take this anymore.” These things are coming off your lips before you even think. Scripture says, are you putting truth first? What’s really important in the scheme of all things? Getting a raise is not important. You looking good in the eyes of the boss isn’t important. What’s important is, did you please God today? That’s what is truly important. Right?

I’ll give you another example, one is found in Philippians 3. It gives this interesting foundation within the passage. Paul writes,

(Philippians 3:7) “But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.”

Ok, let’s just think this one through. Your kid is really good at sports, and I don’t know, things have happened where he was fouled wrongly, the coach called it wrong. I mean, you could go down a plethora of things that could happen. What is it that you’re looking to convey to the kid? You’re looking to convey that the most important thing you can do today is not win but walk in integrity. So, you were mistreated. How did you respond to that? Did you fight back?

I remember, not too long ago, one of our grandchildren was playing basketball, and we could see that he was being called on different things wrongly, but we heard how he responded. The first thing out of our lips, I remember Connie and I both, “We’re really proud of you for responding the right way.” Now, we could have talked to him about how well he played; which he played a really good game, but that wasn’t what was truly important from us.

All the way through, what John is going to be asking the woman to do is to focus on what is truth and what is truly important. One of the greatest passages, just to deal with this, is found in a strange place, and you wouldn’t normally think about it because we read much of the chapter, but we don’t read the first part of the chapter, and that’s Proverbs 31. If you turn there with me, it’s a mother that is talking to her son, which is pretty interesting. It would clearly be in the context of this as well. In Proverbs 31 we have what is oftentimes referred to as the proverb woman. Once again, if you were to ask many of the Jew’s scholars, as you go through the book, one of the things that’s mentioned is wisdom is calling on the streets. It refers to wisdom as a woman. Have you noticed that throughout the book of Proverbs? In this chapter, many of the sages of the Jews actually feel that this is not a mother per se, this is actually wisdom, how she protects her family; but it should be personified in the woman in the household. Why is it so necessary? Because a woman actually influences and has tremendous influence in her family. Whether it’s to her husband or to her children, they listen to mom. I

always get a kick out of the fact that on Mother's Day there's usually more people here in church, and people I haven't seen in a while. Why are they here? Momma. Mom wants them here. It shows that they have an influence.

Proverbs 31 says, moms, that you can be an influence, and this is how you do it. Now, the way that the book is written, we don't know exactly who this son is. We would perceive that it's Solomon and his mother talking to him, but she doesn't refer to his name. She addresses him as who she wishes him to be, and that is "Lemuel." Now, Lemuel is an interesting word that is founded in a preposition, which deals with a sense of inseparable closeness. The point is "*l'mô*," being inseparable closeness, "*'ēl*" referring to God or "Elohim." So, the cry or the desire of the mother's heart is "be holy dedicated to God." That's what she wants her son to be.

(Proverbs 31:1) "The words of King Lemuel, the oracle which his mother taught him."

See, you can have an influence. I mean, the influence is powerful. Your influence can either give someone a license to sin or you can direct them in the path of righteousness and demonstrate true love. Look, we all know that true love doesn't always look loving, we know that. So, let's just put that aside. Big deal. We know why we're doing what we do, and we know that love cannot be love without truth.

The way that this passage starts is she's crying out. The crying out is seen in verse 2,

"O my son?"

You can hear the tendency of this.

"And what, O son of my womb?"

Now, the reason why she puts that phrase is you can hear the closeness, but more specifically, womb was a metaphor for passion and emotions; it's the seed of that. So, she's conveying, "Son, you know how I feel about you." When a mother directs her children into righteousness, into truth, the thought is, "Well, there's no real emotion or love in them." That's not true, but if you truly do love them with great passion and great emotion you will tell them the truth.

So, it starts off demonstrating to us that she's in this emotionally as well. Then, she declares him, "O son of my vows."

She's conveying, especially as you go back to the name "Lemuel," "I've dedicated you to God. I made a promise to God." We see that clarified in 1 Samuel 1:11, where Hannah turns, and she goes, "I give my child to God." She actually says that, "I give my son to God." Probably one of the hardest things a mother could ever do, but one of the greatest things a mother could ever do, and one of the greatest displays of love from a mother is, "I'm going to dedicate you to God." It's very important to understand, Psalm 127:3 reminds us that children are a gift of God, the fruit of the womb. The fruit of the emotions and the desires, and God is not callous. God is not hard. God will do better than you and I will, but you and I know that if we compromise what

is right, we're not loving our kids, we're dooming them. So, she says, "I'm bound to fulfill my promise to God because I love you so much." Then she begins to direct him,

(Proverbs 31:3) "Do not give your strength to women."

That's the last thing you would think a woman would say to her son. "Ok, you're turning on your own kind."

"Do not give your strength to women,
Or your ways to that which destroys kings."

Now, Peter will remind us that you and I are a royal people, "A people for God's own possession," a royal priesthood even, that we should display the excellencies of God. So, kings, and what do kings do?

(Proverbs 31:4) "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings..." to be diverted by any kind of substance. I mean, "don't be drunk with wine, that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." (Ephesians 5:18) In other words, let God direct your hearts, and not some substance directing your thoughts. "It is not for kings." I have people say, "well, I think it's ok to drink." Doesn't say anywhere that you can't drink, it just says that kings can't drink. So, what do you want to be? Priests can't drink, so what do you want to be? "It doesn't say it's wrong." I know. What do you want to be? It's not for kings because kings have to make decisions. Kings have to stay sober in all things all the time.

It's not for kings "or for rulers."

(Proverbs 31:5) "For they will drink and forget what is decreed,
And pervert the rights of all the afflicted."

"Son, be gracious to those that are suffering. You want to give strong drink to somebody, give it to them." I can just see a loving mother saying, "But you son are a king, and I'm going to have higher standards for you." You don't show love to your children by lowering standards; you never show love to your children that way. You're called to be a king, you're called to be the sons of God, to walk in His ways.

(Proverbs 31:7) "Let him drink and forget his poverty
And remember his trouble no more."

You need to be compassionate towards people.

(Proverbs 31:8) "Open your mouth" for the people that can't speak.

"For the rights of all the unfortunate."

You stand up for them. "But Mom, what about me?" Do you hear what the mother is doing? "Son, you be the one that sacrifices. You be the one that loves." That's love because Scripture tells us that the greatest servant will be the greatest in the heaven. It's the one who humbles

himself and it's the one who ministers to other people. You're not helping your children when you give in to the things that they want, and then encourage them to continue in that selfishness. The goal of our instruction is love, so we're trying to teach that kid to be selfless, not to be selfish. The goal of our instruction is to teach them the love of God, and might I add that's the truth.

(Proverbs 31:9) "Open your mouth, judge righteously,
And defend the rights of the afflicted and needy."

It's a great passage because it really conveys a very strong mother directing her son to do right things, no compromise. In fact, "You're the one that bears the burdens of others." Yet, it starts off with, "Do you know how much I love you?" You see, Scripture is telling us what true love is. As John will go on to say in the very next verse, it's the very thing that grants us grace, mercy, and peace, which is the love of God that has guaranteed it; but it's not just the love of God, it's the truth that He guaranteed that. Can you imagine if God said that He was going to do something and He didn't do it? What good is it if He said he's going to do something? But every word of God is true, and that to me is the greatest aspect of His love for me. I can depend on Him. This is why truth will often directly be tied with fidelity, faithful. We use the phrase "faithful and true." God's calling us to be that.

Mothers, as we go through this passage, the directives are going to be to you. Fathers, leaders, the directives are going to be that you need to direct your wives. You need to stop taking your cues from emotions, and you need to get them on truth because that's where love is going to be. Isn't it strange that men are the guardians of love? The world has twisted it and said that women are but no, no, no, men are the guardians of love. Men, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. You're the guardian of what love looks like. That's why Paul will write in 1 Corinthians 16, "Act like men, walk in love." That's why he says that, but you have to do the directing in the households. The wife, as she submits to your authority, she begins to see that maybe her emotions will get in the way and direct the child in the wrong way, rather than truly loving them, and will help them aspire to Christ's likeness. That's what love is. It's rooted in truth.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we ask that You would move our hearts to walk in truth. Your truth. The world has a lot of ways of seeing things, but we know that Your truth is immutable, it never changes, it's constant, it's dependable, it's real. Lord, help us to direct our families into real. Help us never to compromise, for in so doing we bring hurt upon the very ones we say that we love.

You have a responsibility to bring your family into faith. Faith means that you're going to emphasize truth above everything else, believing that God will be more loving than you will.