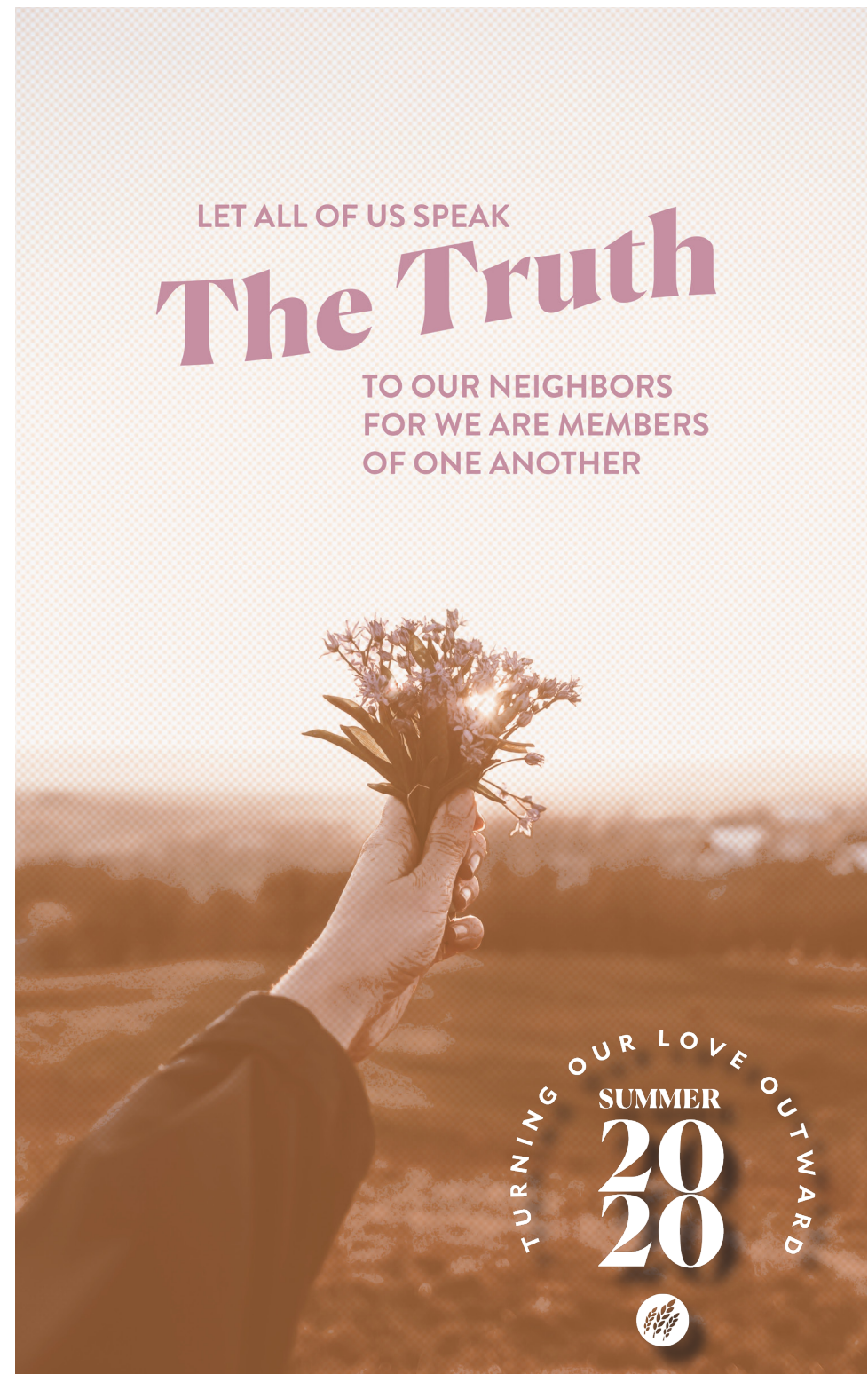




*EXPLORING REAL WAYS
TO LIVE IN AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY*

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STUDY GUIDE
.....





SPEAK TRUTHFULLY TO ONE ANOTHER // *Ephesians 4:25*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Greek word for truth literally means “nonconcealment.” Truth is what really is, not concealed nor falsified. The word in Greek translated “members” carries the idea of close relationship and interconnection, like a limb of a body.

Falsehood is the mark of the “old self,” a nature corrupted by evil desire and motivated by selfishness. Since the old self seeks to satisfy itself, it separates and breaks trust between one another and between people and God. Paul tells followers of Christ to put on the “new self” guided by relationship with God and one another in truth. In fact, Paul states that we will only “grow up” spiritually as we practice “speaking the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15). We mature in Christ by using speech that is edifying; that is, words that build up and offer grace to one another. The people of God’s Spirit are a people who are known for their gracious candor. Further, Paul warns that false and corrupt speech grieves the Holy Spirit.

Scripture describes Jesus as full of grace and truth. The mark of a Christ-follower is truth and grace, truth in love. God calls us to live by truth and grace and to speak truth in love. This means that truth without grace and love is not God’s truth, and love or grace without truth is not God’s grace.

PRAY:

Ask God to reveal something meaningful through this time of reflection.

READ:

Offer your full care and attention to reading the provided scripture passages.

DISCOVER:

Ephesians 4:14-16 We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.

Ephesians 4:25-27 So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil.

Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its old practices.

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with God and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.



DISCOVER, CONTINUED:

1) Most people tend to respond to life either by relationships or tasks; by feelings or facts; by a subjective or objective view of truth. People who are guided by relationships tend to emphasize love over truth. They are more likely to be passive or evasive – to not say something or to lie, rather than hurt someone. People who are objective tend to emphasize truth over love. They are more likely to speak defensively or aggressively, stating facts without regard for the feelings of others. Which do we tend to be? Share whether you tend to emphasize love over truth, or truth over love. Why is this so?

2) What about the culture of our church? Are we a church that speaks the truth in love? Or do we tend to emphasize either truth or love over (and even at the expense of) the other?

3) A follower of Jesus is to “put off falsehood” and to “speak truthfully to our neighbor.” What does this mean exactly? What would it look like, especially when we have been wronged or are angry?

4) Paul states that holding on to anger gives the devil a foothold, and unwholesome talk grieves the Holy Spirit. How have we given Satan a foothold or grieved the Holy Spirit in our church?

5) What specific practices do we need to begin to learn how we can “speak the truth in love?”

