

Opening—

Begin by opening in prayer.

Next, answer the following question in your large group:

If the story of your life were made into a movie, what genre (or genres) would it be and why? (romance, comedy, drama, horror, thriller, western, musical, documentary, etc.)

Everything this series has addressed up until this point—insecurities, idols, family patterns, past wounds—tend to weave themselves together into destructive and **false narratives** in our lives. These narratives, as we'll see, aren't *shaped* by our circumstances, as much as our narratives are actively shaping how we interpret our circumstances and how we view the world around us.

This week's teaching has three segments. As prompted, pause the video and answer the question in your process groups (2-3 people) before continuing the next segment.

Video Teaching—**1. Play part 1, then respond to the first question:**

In which aspects of God's original story are you most prone to believe a false narrative? (Review "True Story" vs "Fake News" Comparison on back of page)

2. Play part 2, then respond to the following prompt:

Conceiving of your life as an episode in God's larger story, when your life is through, what do you want to be said of your "episode"? For example, "it's the one where _____."

3. Play part 3, then answer this last question:

What specific personal narratives or beliefs have become clear for you during this time? Share with your process group.

Closing Discussion—

Move back into your large group and take a moment to share one aspect of your personal narrative that is false (this is just a quick summary of what you've discussed in your process groups). Next share one way you want God to write a new story for you life based on the truth of His Good News.

Pray for one another based on what you shared, asking the Holy Spirit to bring that transformation to you mind, heart, and life.

“True Story” vs “Fake News” Comparison—

1. **TRUE STORY: God is the generous provider of everything I need.**
Vs. FAKE NEWS: “God doesn’t care about what I need.” “God is withholding his best from me.” “God may provide what I need, but not when I need it.” “God has more important things to do than pay attention to me.”
2. **TRUE STORY: This is God’s story and I’m here to find my place in it.**
Vs. FAKE NEWS: “This is my story and God is here to bless my plans.” “I’m ultimately in control of what happens.” “It’s more important to find your own way than to obey everything God says.” “Our main purpose in life is to be comfortable and happy.”
3. **TRUE STORY: God can be trusted with everything I am—including my shame.**
Vs. FAKE NEWS: “I believe God loves me, but I think most of the time he just tolerates me.” “I’m scared to get close to God because of what he might say.” “I believe God redeems, but there are things in my life that can’t be redeemed.” “Hiding failures and shame is the best way to maintain relationships.”

Personal Reflection Questions—

Use the prompts below to help identify and address false narratives in your life. Choose one, two, or all three (for you over-achievers) to practice this week.

3 practices to identify and re-write False Narratives in your life—

1. **Relating to your struggles...** It’s been said that “tormentors are our mentors.” Our struggles can help identify false narratives and misplaced identity. With this perspective ask yourself: *What’s one area of relational tension or dysfunction that repeats itself that might be revealing a false narrative?*
2. **Relating to someone close to you...** One of the most effective tools for identifying false beliefs is asking someone close to you. As scary as it can feel, the payoff can be worth it to ask questions like: *“What false narratives (or lies) do you **hear me verbalizing** or **see me living out**?”*
Another good way to invite feedback is to “check” false narratives with someone. For example, if you have a sense that *people are always against you*, approach a trusted friend and share this struggle with them. Then ask: *“Are you always against me?”* It’s a powerful way to not only “debunk” false and destructive narratives, but also receive much-needed affirmation and truth.
3. **Relating to God...** Being “made new in the attitude of your minds” involves reflecting on what God says. This week, revisit one of the passages from the teaching (1 Peter 2:4-10, Ephesians 1:1-10) and read it slowly. Meditate on its truths. *Visualize yourself as the person God says you are.* Finally, thank God for what he says about you and what he’s done for you.

Group Preparation Questions—

Considering that false narratives are often comprised of a *mix* of insecurities, idols, family experiences and past wounds, can you connect any dots and identify any of these factors that have woven together to form a false narrative in your life?

Ex: “My dad was very demeaning (family) and often made fun of me (wounds), so I do everything I can now to avoid feedback (insecurity) and spend lots of money on things that make me feel successful (idols).”