

## **Straight Talk For Tough Times Breaking The Power of a Lie**

### **Introduction:**

Play Dove commercial [“Evolution.”](#)

I would like to speak to you this morning about a subject that’s been on my heart for a long time. I want to talk about lies today. Specifically, in this message I’m going to be speaking primarily to all of you ladies out there. In a couple of weeks it will be the men’s turn.

I’ve mentioned before that each of us have messages that have been imprinted in our minds, often since childhood. Some call it internal dialogue; some call it a psychic recording, but it’s very real, and it has a huge impact on our lives. I’m finding this to be more and more of an issue as our society becomes more and more complicated. If I asked the question, “what is normal?” we’d probably have a hard time coming to a consensus.

We live in an age of blended families, step-parents and siblings, homosexual marriage, children conceived through artificial insemination, increasingly complex assisted reproductive technology. Add to that the almost complete media saturation of our lives with its accompanying message about what is normal, and the power of advertising and pop music to influence trends and behaviors and we have a very confusing world. So maybe the question is no longer, “What is normal?” It’s “What is true?”

I do a lot more Pastoral counseling these days than I ever have in my ministry just because the demand is there. What I find is that there are two kinds of people, those who admit they need a little help, and those who don’t. The truth is that we’re all needy, we’re all broken to some degree. We live in a fallen world, with fallen people, and each of us is on a journey home to the heart of Father God. You see, God is in the business of restoration. He loves taking people out of the mess that they’ve made, or been thrust into, and transforming their lives in ways they never thought possible.

Let’s look at one of our key verses this morning. Romans 12:2 says: *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

## **Before**

What we have here is a before and after picture. The before picture is that of a person whose thought patterns and opinions about themselves have been shaped by their environment. Some of those messages that have gotten through may be positive, but for the vast majority of people I've dealt with, there are some dominant negative messages that have a profound influence. Let me explain what I mean.

It's almost like someone took a spray can and wrote messages all over the inside of our minds. What kind of messages? See if any of these are familiar to you.

You will never be good enough for someone to love you.

You are stupid.

You are fat and ugly.

You will spend your life alone.

You are worthless.

You're a lousy mother.

You're a lousy wife.

There are many others, perhaps you can write yours down and put it in my mailbox anonymously so I can use it next time. Those messages are placed there by the cruel or insensitive words of people who have been in our lives. Or perhaps they were seared into our minds because of events that happened that we've interpreted that way. Or maybe we've just absorbed them from the culture through the unrealistic expectations presented.

I've talked with many women who are children of divorce. When they were at an early age Dad or Mom left home. Though it's not their fault, subconsciously they think it is, and carry a fear into every relationship that they will be abandoned again. They can't trust anyone. Sometimes their fear of abandonment makes them so anxious or fearful that they push away the ones they love or hold them at arms length, and end up creating the very thing they fear.

Others have been victimized by some form of abuse and have blamed themselves. It's left them with emotional scars and a looped message in their mind that says, "You are worthless, no-one will ever want you." So, even as adults, they put up with men who are abusive because somehow they feel

that they deserve it, or that they can't find anyone better or they believe that all men are that way.

Many others have fallen into the trap of believing that they have to look like Barbie, or the model in the dove commercial we saw. The problem is that it's an artificial standard that no-one can live up to. I've spoken with many beautiful women who honestly believe they're ugly or fat or usually both. I've visited with them in hospital after their anorexia or bulimia almost took their lives. It's hard to compete with an airbrush, computer editing software and plastic surgery, isn't it?

So we have a plague among women – and men, remember, I'll get to you in a couple of weeks. It's a plague of faulty thinking that manifests itself in low self-esteem, eating disorders, obscene materialism and sexual promiscuity. I cannot tell you how many stories I've heard of young women who have given in to pressure from a guy or even from girlfriends who have believed the lie that casual sex has no consequences.

It has been projected by Health Canada that 75% of the population of Canada will contract HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) in their lifetime (Yes, you heard me right). Remember that it is almost always spread through sexual contact with an infected person. An estimated 4 ½ million Canadian women suffer from Chlamydia, which helps to explain the increase in the need for reproductive technologies. This doesn't even speak about the long-term emotional scars that come from giving yourself away a piece at a time. The only safe sex is that which conforms to God's plan - one man and one woman for one lifetime. It might not excite Hollywood, but it will certainly save you a lot of grief.

By the way, ladies, if you're with a guy and you're not married to him, and he's expecting you to have sex with him, kick him to the curb and find somebody who will treat you like a lady. And don't ever allow a man to call you filthy names and expect that he's going to have a relationship with you. You're better than that.

So I've painted an ugly picture – the before shot. It's not pretty. What I've talked about is the mold into which the world has tried to stuff women. It doesn't matter who you are or what you look like, or what you want, the world says that you must conform. You must look like this, dress like this and perform like this. But God's Word for you today is this: "...Be

*transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

### **After**

The word that Paul uses for transform is the same root from which we get the word metamorphosis. The Bible here is speaking of a totally new creation. It's like a caterpillar, which wraps itself up in a cocoon only to emerge some time later as a beautiful butterfly. What does that look like in a person who has spent their entire lives believing in lies about themselves?

It's expressed in a confidence that is based on the knowledge that they belong to God the Father who loves them. They can be free to express themselves; to be graceful to others because they feel good about who they are. It opens the door to healthier relationships because they are no longer afraid, and they're no longer willing to settle for less than God's plan for them. It gives them permission to be the person God created them to be.

How does this happen?

Paul says it clearly: “...*by the renewing of your mind.*”

It has been said that the battle for your soul is fought in your mind. Our minds have been called the most complicated computer system on earth. But, as with any computer, if the programming is incorrect, the results will also be incorrect. So, we have to do some reprogramming. We have to begin to feed in the right information, and stop letting Cosmopolitan and MTV tell us how to think.

The first step is to acknowledge our need of God. If we have not come into a relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, the Bible says that we're in a position of rebellion against Him. God will not help those who are willfully pushing Him away. The Bible tells us that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. We must acknowledge our sin and ask for His forgiveness.

The next thing we need to do is to take charge of our thought life. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 Paul writes, “*We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*” You are in charge of how you think. John 10:10 tells us that we have an enemy whose goal is our destruction.

When he begins to feed you messages that drag you down, learn to respond with the truth.

Jesus did this when He was tempted in the wilderness. For every temptation Satan brought Him to think incorrectly, Jesus responded with the truth of God's Word. So make a point of memorizing Scripture to help you deal with those areas of your wounding.

If the message in your head keeps telling you that you are fat and ugly, seize it and toss it out. Quote Psalm 139:14: *"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."*

If your message is that you will spend your life alone, remember that God said *"I will never leave you, nor forsake you."*

If it's that you will never be good enough for someone to love you, and you don't know what the future holds, remember Jeremiah 29:11 - *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"*

If you feel like you're worthless, remember Romans 8:15 - *"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"*

When we come to Him, He willingly adopts us into His family, at great personal cost. He purposefully chose you; He loves you, and wants to spend eternity with you. You can believe that and take it to the bank. How's your thinking today?

Show Video ["Reverse"](#)

### **Conclusion:**

If we're going to win this battle, we have to feed ourselves the right information. Use the brain that the Good Lord gave you to do the right thing. Get into His Word, make sure you pay attention to your relationship with God; make sure the influences in your life are taking you where God intends for you to go, otherwise you'll be surprised by the destination.