

MOVIE: “The Truman Show”**Sub Topic Theme:**

Everybody Lies

Lesson Objective:

To observe how disorienting and painful it can be to discover that you are being lied to by everyone around you. To appreciate and understand that overcoming the deceit and responding with love and courage is ultimately more rewarding and healing than choosing anger and revenge. By observing the character Truman



and his choices and comparing and contrasting them to the encouragement Scripture gives us to follow Christ’s example and forgive others, students can begin to apply this understanding to their own lives as they encounter the doubt and anger that being lied to bring. Also, by showing the value of responding with grace, and also the protection and sustaining love that is offered them through Christ Jesus, the students will be inspired to trust in the Lord and his peace rather than look to worldly solutions for their doubt and pain.

Intro to the Movie:*The Truman Show*

For a trailer go to: <http://www.imdb.com/video/screenplay/vi1878327577/>

According to fandango.com:

Truman Burbank (Jim Carrey) is unaware that his entire life is a hugely popular 24-hour-a-day TV series. In this real-time documentary, every moment of Truman's existence is captured by concealed cameras and telecast to a giant global audience. His friends and family are actors who smile pleasantly at Truman's familiar catchphrase greeting, "In case I don't see you later, good afternoon, good evening, and good night!" Employed at an insurance company, Truman is married to merry Meryl (Laura Linney), and they live in the cheerful community of Seahaven, an island "paradise" where the weather is always mild and no unpleasantness intrudes. This is the basic situation of the series, which has grown over the years into a billion-dollar franchise for the TV network. As an unwanted pregnancy, Truman was adopted by the network and raised in the zoolike environment of a TV soundstage. Thus, the TV audience became hooked when Truman was very young. Now, at age 30, he still doesn't know he's a prisoner on an immense domed city-size

soundstage, simulating Seahaven. Both the illusion and the ratings will collapse if Truman ever leaves Seahaven. In addition to elaborate events staged to make sure he stays put, Truman is given constant reminders of how wonderful Seahaven is compared to dangers in other parts of the world. However, his growing suspicions make him curious enough to try to leave, and the show's director and master manipulator Christof (Ed Harris) must constantly devise ways to thwart Truman's escape attempts.

(The 3D lenses) Notice the moments when truth is intentionally concealed and revealed to Truman. Think about how he reacts and what he must be feeling at those times. Consider as you watch, how bringing God into the situation would (or would not) change things.

Discussion Group Questions:

1. What moment in the movie did you identify with Truman the most?
2. What was a time he responded in a way you did not understand at all? Why was it so different than what your response would be?
3. How do you think bringing God into the situation would (or would not) have changed things?

Group input:

Leader-solicited responses from the large group on reactions to some of the questions.

Gathering of ideas and themes recognized in the discussion groups with a focus on guiding the audience toward the main objective:

*To **observe** how disorienting and painful it can be to discover that you are being lied to by everyone around you. To appreciate and understand that **overcoming the deceit and responding with love and courage** is ultimately more rewarding and healing than choosing anger and revenge. By observing the character Truman and his choices and comparing and contrasting them to the encouragement Scripture gives us to follow Christ's example and forgive others, students can begin **to apply this understanding** to their own lives as they encounter the doubt and anger that being lied to bring. Also, by showing the value of responding with grace, and also the protection and sustaining love that is offered them through Christ Jesus, the students will **be inspired to trust in the Lord and his peace** rather than look to worldly solutions for their doubt and pain.*

Bullet Objective:

Put this summary section in your own words, but here are some ideas you can use:

This movie is all about lies. Truman's entire life was a lie! There must be a lot of pain there and anger, and doubt! Just like we *all* feel when we find out that someone or a *bunch* of people have been telling us lies and deceiving us. It can make us doubt every single thing we think we know and change the entire way we look at the world around us.

Now doubting things and being disillusioned by the world is something we all experience. Unfortunately it is part of growing up. But what's important is our response to those times. You may have heard this before, but you cannot control anyone but yourself. So when we feel doubt and anger and pain, we are faced with a choice. We can get even or we can forgive. We can wallow in our pain and lie to ourselves, saying we deserve it and we are worthless, or we can believe that God created us perfectly and adores us. We make these choices every day big and small.

Maybe this is something you are dealing with right now. Doubt has clouded your vision and you are looking at the whole world differently. And maybe your entire life *has* changed because of the lies you were told; but one thing remains constant in all circumstance – Jesus, the Lord. He is always there and always willing to offer you solace and healing. He gives us the Scriptures so that we can get to know him better and use them to follow and imitate him in our day to day lives.

You see, it's when we imitate Jesus and choose to respond and live our lives according to his guidance, that we step back and away from the ugliness and brokenness in the world and all the doubt that comes crowding in around us. When we trust and obey his teachings we begin to see how perfect they are. They bring a redemptive healing, grace, and love that is not of the world – literally!

So listen to this Scripture and, as you do, I want you to think about it from two different points of view. First, I want the words of love and absolute acceptance and forgiveness that God offers you to just wash over your heart and mind. Absorb them. They are wonderful and so restorative! Then second, if you are a believer and follower of Jesus Christ, I want you to listen to this as a message from the Lord, reminding you of his purpose here on earth, the purpose that you are a part of! And hear these words as an encouragement and guidance for you. This is how you can follow Christ and bring God's love, grace, and forgiveness to the world!

Ephesians 2:1-10

In the past you were spiritually dead because of your disobedience and sins. At that time you followed the world's evil way; you obeyed the ruler of the spiritual powers in space, the spirit who now controls the people who disobey God. Actually all of us were like them and lived according to our natural desires, doing whatever suited the wishes of our own bodies and minds. In our natural condition we, like everyone else, were destined to suffer God's anger.

But God's mercy is so abundant, and his love for us is so great, that while we were spiritually dead in our disobedience he brought us to life with Christ. It is by God's grace that you have been saved. In our union with Christ Jesus he raised us up with him to rule with him in the heavenly world. He did this to demonstrate for all time to come the extraordinary greatness of his grace in the love he showed us in Christ Jesus. For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it. God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do.

Challenge:

1. Identify one person that lied to you, whom you need to forgive.
2. Take some time in the next day or two to pray and ask God to help you begin the process of forgiveness. If this is something you think you need the help of a leader to start, then talk to them *tonight* and set up a time to get together soon and pray and discuss how to dispel doubt and trust and follow Jesus' guidance.
3. Take a moment now to pray over your feelings and the doubt that is clouding your mind. Ask God to provide you with clarity and peace in the midst of your anger and pain.

Pray for God's purpose and love to put it into action and transform lives. Remind them of the online personal journey at ReZilient Life for further involvement with this topic of Doubt-Everybody Lies!