

# THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

**About the Series:** In a confusing world, finding and discerning truth is of vital importance, especially to followers of Jesus who are to share the truth of Christ to others. We are to always speak the truth and share truthful things, so that our trustworthiness will not be compromised.

## PART 3

### BIAS & PROPAGANDA: The Packaging of Truth

2 Samuel 15:1-14 | Dr. Stephen G. Tan

#### Discussion Questions

1. What news have you heard recently that you think is outrageously unbelievable? What makes the story sensational?
2. In our world right now, lies are packaged as appealing truth and the basis for belief. And so it is important to know biblical principles that warn us of what we should look out for when people try to present lies and falsehoods convincingly packaged as truth or reality. Read 2 Samuel 15:1-14.

**Principle #1: Realize that diversions are often used to draw our attention away from the internal flaws to focus on superficial virtues (v. 1).** Who was Absalom? How did he draw the attention of the people to himself? Why did he do it? How can looking at someone's outward appearance lead you to ignore the flawed character of that person? What does 1 Samuel 16:7 warn you about focusing on the outward appearance of a person? Share examples of how Satan's lies are masked through outward diversions that make you focus on the positive aspects of a sinful lifestyle and ignore its negative angle or consequences.

**Principle #2: Understand that not everyone who pretends to be your friend, validates your feelings, or empathetically affirms your concerns has your best interest at heart (v. 2-6).** How did Absalom manipulate the hearts of the people to win them over? Why would the feelings of fear, anxiety, and need for validation make a person susceptible to easily believe in misinformation or conspiracies? As a Christian, how can you help others avoid being susceptible to believe in lies and misinformation around them?

**Principle #3: Recognize that simply because some people believe something to be true does not make it true (v. 7-12).** What further conspiracy did Absalom create to fool not only the people, but King David, his father himself? Why would people believe that Absalom was the new king even though it was not true? How does being biased contribute to lies becoming "truth"? With so many lies being spread every single day, what do you need to do so that you will not be misled to believe that they are the truth?

#### Reflect & Respond

Take a look at verses 13-14. How did King David respond to the manipulation of Absalom? From this biblical account, how do lies packaged as truth easily win over the hearts of men and women? How can you discern and use wisdom to favor only what is true?

#### Prayer

Heavenly Father, You once again reminded me of the lies, conspiracies, biases, and propagandas going on around me. I must admit that there are times that it's hard for me to tell which is the truth and which is a lie. Lord, I need to be wise and discerning. Help me focus on what is right to be able to tell which ones are pretending to be my friend. Help me recognize that just because some people believe something to be true does not mean that I would believe it as such even when it is not. I need Your help, Lord, to deal with all these things. I ask all these in Jesus' name. Amen.