



live like it's  
*true*

W O R K B O O K

shannon popkin



# Live Like It's True Workbook

live the story  
\*  
share the story  
\*  
know the story



## Hi, I'm Shannon,

On the Live Like It's True podcast, I'm inviting you to open your Bible, drink deeply of its Story, and live like it's true!

Do you want your life to be shaped by the false narrative of the world, or by the true story the Bible tells?

God offers us the truth—not in a theology textbook, but rather in a book filled with interesting, astonishing, true stories, which collectively tell the story of Him. Do you know any of these stories? Have you stored them up in your heart?

I like to think of each story like a velvet pouch, which holds together the theological gems, found within. When you know the story, you can retrieve these rich truths, reorient yourself to the True Story, and share it with a friend.

With "Live Like It's True", I'm helping you grow your collection of these jaw-dropping true stories which go against the grain of this world. My goal is for you to know the story, share the story and live like the overarching Story is true!

This workbook is an extension of that goal, and I pray that it will serve you well.

Livin' like it's true,

Shannon



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# True Story Worksheet

The true narrative is what helps us recognize the false one. The Bible helps us to see the lies.  
This worksheet helps you place the two side by side.

Know the story, share the story, and live like the story is true.

---

## Read the story.

What is the story and where is found? \_\_\_\_\_

Print the story, and mark all of the elements you see (which are listed on your bookmark, included in this printable). Record what is most interesting, surprising or compelling.

## Retell the story.

Write the story here in your own words. Summarize what happened, and why:



# Reject the world's story.

Consider which false narratives this story corrects. (See the list in this printable.)

## **This particular story from the Bible reveals or teaches the following...**

- a truth about God or Jesus:
- a truth about God's ways:
- a truth about human beings:
- a truth about what's important:
- a truth about the future:

## **The world overtly, or the enemy covertly, teaches the following...**

- a lie about God or Jesus:
- a lie about the world:
- a lie about human nature:
- a lie about what is important:
- a lie about the future:

**The most important false narrative that this story corrects is:**

## (be) Reshaped by the story.

How have you failed to live like this story is true (or lived according to one of the world's false narratives)?

What would change if you live like this story is true?

How can you align yourself in the coming days, with this true story?

## Recall the story.

Check off the following to practice recalling (not necessarily memorizing) this story:

- ☐ Practice telling the story out loud. Try walking while you practice.
- ☐ Picture the scene, with placement of the characters as you tell it.
- ☐ Draw it with stick figures as you tell it.
- ☐ Use hand motions or movement, as you tell it.
- ☐ Pray through the story, agreeing with the Lord about its truths.
- ☐ Retell the story to yourself as you're falling asleep, or first thing when you wake up.
- ☐
- ☐

In which situations will it be particularly helpful for you to remember the truths of this story?  
Perhaps when you're **anxious, afraid, disillusioned, brokenhearted, tempted, angry, jealous?**

## Retell the story.

Who needs to hear this story from the Bible? Make a list and pray that God would give you opportunities to share this particular story with those particular people:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Consider what "keywords" or conversation topics might offer you an opportunity to retell this story.  
Here are some ideas to get you started:

- ☐ Fear or worry about sickness, pain, or death
- ☐ Hope or longing for something to happen
- ☐ Frustration with something that isn't right
- ☐ The mindset of having to get ahead
- ☐ The need to be in control or worry about losing control
- ☐ Guilt, shame, regret
- ☐ Holidays or celebrations
- ☐



Here are a few phrases that might help you get started with sharing this story from the Bible. Mark which one might work for you, or create your own:

- ☐ That reminds me of a story from the Bible. Have you ever heard...
- ☐ Are you open to hearing a story from the Bible about that very thing?
- ☐ Would you ever consider reading a story from the Bible, and then talking with me about it? It's a story about..
- ☐

What are your fears or inhibitions about sharing this story with someone else? What would your motive be if you did share it? Share these with the Lord, through a written prayer:

## Live the story.

One way to share the story is to live like the story is true. The whole point of the Bible is to introduce us to God, who is writing this story that we're all part of. He doesn't just want us to know the story; he wants us to live like the story is true. Finish by stating:

**Today, I will live like it's true that:**

*know the story   share the story   live the story*

# True Story (Short) Worksheet

Here's an abbreviated version of the four-page worksheet, in case you'd just like to keep it simple.

---

Read the story found in:

Retell the story.

Reject the world's story.

Be Reshaped by the story.

Recall the story.

Retell the story.

Live the story.



# Idea-Connecting Words

found in this True Story

## words that compare

Words that connect ideas or compare with similar examples:

**like, as, just as, so also**

"**Just as** iron does not mix with clay..." Dan. 2:43

"**So also** it will be with this evil generation." Matt. 12:45

## words that contrast

Words that signal contrast between

dissimilar ideas or examples:

**but, yet, rather, however**

"**Yet** I have borne him a son in his old age." Gen. 21:7

"**Rather** decide never to put a stumbling block..." Rom. 13:5

## purpose words

Words that connect an intention or purpose with an idea, action, or result:

**because, so that, that, in order that**

"**So that** they may not understand one another's speech." Gen. 11:7

"**In order** that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17

"**Because** you have listened to the voice of your wife..." Gen. 3:17

## explanation words

Words that connect an idea with an explanation for why it's true or why it happened.

**because, since, for**

"Immediately they sprang up, **since** they had no depth of soil." Matt. 13:5

"To this you have been called, **because** Christ also suffered..." 1 Pet. 2:21

"**For** the word of God is living and active..." Heb. 4:12

## "in conclusion" words

Words that connect an idea with a

logical conclusion, summary or next steps:

**therefore, for this reason**

"**Therefore**, a man shall leave his father and mother..." Gen. 2:24

"**For this reason** the Father loves me..." John 10:17

## conditional words

"**If**" connects a condition with a conclusion or outcome.

"**If** anyone kills Cain..." Gen. 4:15

"**If** anyone would come after me..." Luke 9:23

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# Story Elements

in this True Story

## get the story

Read the story aloud,

Read from different translation(s)

Print the verses triple spaced (so you can mark up the pages)



## 3 contexts

- **between** context: what comes before & after?
- **book** context: who is writing this story & why?
- **big** context: how is this story rooted in, or how does it offer insight into the Bible's overarching story?

## characters/ setting

- real time setting: "At the beginning of barley harvest.."
- story setup setting: "A certain sower went out..."
- make a list of those present in the scene
- above each pronoun, note who is referenced

## important words

- mark key words or repeated words
- mark verbs, and consider tenses
- mark connector words (see reverse side!)
- mark lists included in the text
- mark quotes from the Bible (read whole passage)

## hidden meanings

- simile – "like a treasure hidden..."
- metaphor – "I am the door."
- parable – "a farmer went out to sow seed..."
- irony – the blind man saw that Jesus was from God

## story elements

- Who is the antagonist? Protagonist?
- What is the obstacle or conflict?
- Where is there tension or confrontation?
- What is surprising or suspenseful?
- What is resolved or overcome?

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# false narrative watchlist

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Our world is filled with popular, but skewed, narratives. We are spoon fed these false ideas as babies, and force fed them as adults. But when we encounter and embrace the True Story, we have opportunity to live like it's true. So it's the True Story of the Bible that helps us recognize the lies playing on loop throughout the world, and in our minds.

Use this (abbreviated) list to identify the false narratives around you. Then as you open your Bible and encounter the stories that introduce us to the one true God, ask, "Which false narrative does this story correct?"

---

## *False narratives about me and about you...*

I decide what is right for me. You decide what's right for you.  
I can be good on my own.  
I should trust my feeling above all else.  
My purpose is to discover and express my true self.  
I have to rely on myself to take control.  
Bigger is better. I must move "up" in the world to be great.  
If I do good things, the universe will take care of me.  
I am only accountable to myself.  
People who make judgements are in the wrong.  
I can attract and make good things happen for myself.  
If I have more, I am more.  
I shouldn't feel any shame unless I'm not being true to myself.  
Health, wellbeing, and safety are ultimate.  
Humans only exist as physical beings.  
Death is terrifying, since I only live once.  
Death is the end; there is nothing more.  
Death is natural and something to be accepted.

## *False narratives about God...*

I don't need God to be happy.

My life is fine without God.

There is no Creator.

Having God in my life wouldn't make anything better.

God is distant and uninterested in me.

God doesn't matter. He is irrelevant to me.

Jesus is only for good people.

If I do good, God will give me what I want.

My safety is in my own hands, not God's.

I can fly under God's radar and avoid his wrath.

I can get God's attention with my pious life.

I don't answer to God. My life is my own.

Natural disasters are as surprising to God as me.

There is no coming judgment.

God is inaccessible to me.

God has surely forgotten about me.

God made a mistake when he made me female (or male).

God's ideas about marriage and gender are restrictive.

God is mad at me so I should hide from him.

God can't help me overcome my sin.

God isn't for me, He's against me.

God and the devil are equally matched rivals.

God doesn't care what I do or how I live.

God is demanding, and will never stop taking from me.

God doesn't have a plan to right what has gone wrong.



# false narrative watchlist

## FROM THE TRUE STORY OF THE BEGINNING

Listen to "Eden's Grand Potential, The Colossal Fall, and Our Solid Hope"  
with Nancy Guthrie

The **World says**, "If I can just make the right choices and do the right things, I can be completely satisfied and happy in this life."

The **True Story** says: We can't expect unending, deep contentment and satisfaction until we enter the New Creation and see Jesus face to face.

The **World says**, "This life is all there is." And even as a forgetful Christian, I think, "The story ends when I die and go to heaven."

The **True Story** says: "God will re-create everything. I'll live with an eternal body and soul, with God and with purpose and flourishing."

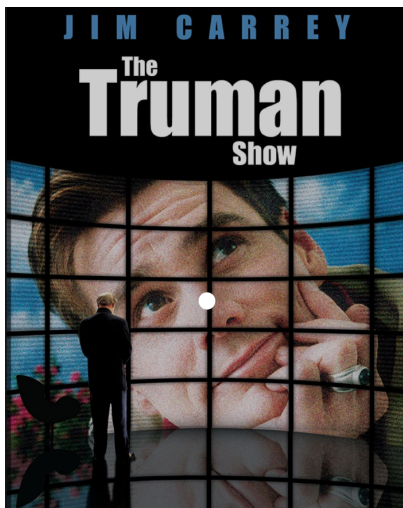
My **flesh says**, "You can't change. Your body is wasting away and you're dead on the inside, too. There's no hope."

**God says** Creation has begun inside of me.

Listen to another episode and record some  
false narrative vs. true story observations:

# awakening to the

# false narratives



## **The Truman Show** is my favorite

depiction of living by a false narrative. Have you seen it? In one of the film's opening scenes, a movie light (the kind used on a studio set) falls from the sky, and lands on the sidewalk out in front of Truman's house. Truman runs out and cautiously examines the smashed piece of equipment, then peers up in the sky in astonishment. Moments later, as he's driving to work, the announcer on the radio mentions that an airplane began "shedding parts" as it flew overhead that morning. Truman then shrugs the situation off, thinking, *Case solved*. For the moment, at least.

Truman doesn't realize it, but he lives on the largest set ever constructed. It's a dome-shaped studio the size of a small city, full of hidden cameras. The show broadcasts twenty-four seven and centers on the life of Truman. He's the show, but he doesn't know it.

Truman has no idea that the producer of the show cues the sun and can produce a rain cloud over Truman's head. He isn't aware that his wife is an actress, and his neighbors head home each night to the real world. Truman lives according to the false narrative that has been presented to him. But gradually, as Truman encounters other equipment-falling-from-the-sky type events, he begins awakening to what's real. Truman begins pursuing the truth and we love him for it.

I wonder if God ever feels about us the way we feel about Truman, as he awakens to what's real and begins rejecting the lies that he has been fed him since birth.

## **AWAKENING TO LIES**

Like Truman, you and I were also born onto a "set". We've grown up believing a false narrative that has been carefully constructed by a deceiver, who doesn't want us to escape any more than the producer wants Truman finding the hidden door leading out of the set.

Our enemy doesn't want us to find the truth. However, God does. That's why he gave us the Bible. He wants us to know and live by the true story about him, and about ourselves.

continued...

**The truth is, we're already part of the true story, whether we recognize it or not.** Many people just shrug at the message of the Bible—thinking it's irrelevant. Or they reject it, convinced that the Bible is full of lies.

But for some people (and I hope you're one of them) the story of the Bible rings true. It's compelling. It makes sense; more sense than some story about the world randomly falling into its complex order and design by chance. Believers allow the Bible to shed light on the world, and as they do so, they become wise to the false narratives of the world.

## PULLING THE BLINDS

Picture a house full of windows with the blinds pulled. The people living inside the house are used to the dark. Their eyes have adjusted and they're used to seeing everything coated with shadows. But then, someone walks into the room and pulls one of the shades. After the blinking and eye-shielding, the people in the room begin to see things they haven't before. They notice what was always there, but hidden from their sight.

Each story of the Bible pulls open another blind, and gives us insight into how things truly are. **The true narrative is what helps us recognize the false one. The Bible helps us to see the lies.**

On the Live Like It's True podcast, my hope is to create a place for us to gather and pull the blinds together, then look around in wonder. Often, the new light in the room shows us something that seems outlandish at first, but slowly shifts into a new, brighter reality. We learn that sinful people can be forgiven. That our past doesn't have to define us. That death isn't the end; new life is possible!

As our eyes open to the true story, we realize that there's no going back. We don't want to live in the darkness after the shades have been pulled. How could we?

Can you imagine Truman learning that there is a whole world beyond his movie-set existence, then turning back to his claustrophobic, dome-shaped reality? No! Of course, not. And in the same way, we cannot go back to the false narratives, either.

As we come to know the story, we realize that we must share the story with others, and we must live like the story is true.

THE TRUE NARRATIVE IS  
WHAT HELPS US RECOGNIZE  
THE FALSE ONE.



# Why do we believe a false narrative?

## 4 possible reasons

Let's think through why so many people don't know and/or don't believe the true story that the Bible tells. Beneath each section is a space for you to journal about your own experiences.

### 1. We don't actually know the true story.

- Perhaps I've never read the Bible.
- I've never been exposed to church or Christianity.
- Maybe I doesn't know any Christians (or at least not any who talk about their faith).
- I'm not directly influenced by any Christian organizations or churches.
- For whatever reason, the true story remains hidden from my sight.

***When has this described you, personally?***

***Does this describe anyone you know?***

***How will you pray for her?***

***Which story from the Bible will you pray for an opportunity to share with her?***



## 2. We assume we know the true story.

- Perhaps I've been taught false teachings about God or myself. (For instance, I believe that Jesus was not God.)
- I'm missing key elements of the true story, and therefore my understanding is skewed. (For instance, I believe God created me, but I also believe it's my purpose to discover my true self.)
- I was hurt by a Church or person who was part of the Church, and my heart is hard toward God's true story.
- I know the basic storyline of the Bible, but I don't myself as part of it. (For instance, I believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again, but I can't understand why this matters.)

***When has this described you, personally?***

***Does this describe anyone you know?***

***What would you love to share with her?***

***Is there a Bible story that comes to mine?***

***What would you like God to do for her?***

### 3. We choose to ignore the true story.

- I know the story, but I refuse to let it penetrate my life—often because I want to continue in my autonomy, without God "imposing".
- I put off studying the Bible or attending church, even though I say that I should.
- I continue in sinful patterns, even though I say I believe that sin is harmful and hurtful.
- I don't think about the true story. My mind is consumed with the cares of this world, and I never consider the life to come.

***When has this described you, personally?***

***Does this describe anyone you know?***

***What would you like her to see about the true story?***

***How do you sense that God might be prompting you to share with her?***

***What story of the Bible comes to mind, when you pray for her?***

## 4. We reject the true story.

- I know parts or the full story of the Bible, but I've rejected it, either as:
  - false (those who believe it are deceived),
  - or fiction (it was never intended to be read as truth).
- I've chosen not to believe, either what I grew up with, or what I once embraced.
- I see myself as enlightened, and I think of the Bible as restrictive or offensive. I consider myself to be free, because I've cast off the Bible.
- I am not just neutral about the true story of the Bible, I'm opposed to it.
- I may even see the true story of the Bible as harmful and oppressive.

***When has this described you, personally?***

***Does this describe anyone you know?  
What do you want God to show her or  
do for her? How would you like God to  
use you in your friend's life?***

# podcast content

## storytelling

One of the things that makes Live Like It's True unique is our focus on storytelling. Imagine if you tried to read a comic strip as a recipe. Or you read song lyrics, hoping to get how-to steps for building a lego set. You'd probably get frustrated, and end up being more confused, not less.

In order to understand the Bible, we must consider it's various genres. In this podcast, we're particularly focused on stories (or narratives). We're looking at individual stories, either about a character or told by a person in the Bible. And we're also looking at the overarching story, which is meant to reveal God. In the following episodes, you can find content to help you grow in your understanding of the Bible as a story that God has written, and which is still unfolding.

This isn't an exhaustive directory (since I hope to keep adding more content on the podcast!), but here's a list of topics I've covered, which I hope will be helpful to you.

### Story Theme

### Links

Why "Unsophisticated" Stories?

[Live Like It's True Trailer](#)

[Stirring Sous with the True Story\\_14:00](#)

[The Truth About Your Thirstiness for More](#)

The Overarching Story that We're In

[Live Like It's True Trailer](#)

[Jesus Found Value in the Lonely Spaces](#)

[Stirring Sous with the True Story\\_8:05](#)

[Fear Melts When You Know You'll Live Forever](#)

[Eden's Grand Potential, The Colossal Fall, and Our Solid Hope](#)

[Funeral Sorrow and the Best Plot Twist Ever](#)

[How to Endure Pain and Loss with Heavenly Hope](#)

The End will Mirror the Beginning

[Stirring Sous with the True Story\\_8:05](#)

[The Spirit's Breakthrough Power, Even in the Wilderness](#)

[Eden's Grand Potential, The Colossal Fall, and Our Solid Hope](#)

Show, Don't Tell

[Has Jesus Asked You to Participate in a Multiplying Miracle?](#)

[How to Live Like it's True that You're Forgiven](#)

Metaphors for Spiritual Realities

[Jesus's Unsurpassed Power to Stop Your Storm's Terror](#)

[Unlock the "Born Again" Mystery in a Story](#)

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Astonishment (Element of Surprise)

[Jesus's Forgiveness Friend Might Look Like a Sinner](#)

[The Truth About Your Thirstiness for More](#)

[An Absurd Story of Being Fooled by God's Enemy](#)

[The Truth About Your Hustle, When God Offers You Rest](#)

Irony

[Jesus's Forgiveness Friend Might Look Like a Sinner](#)

[How to Live Like it's True that You're Forgiveness](#)

[How to Fuel Your Faith with the Story of Judas](#)

Characterization

[Funeral Sorrow and the Best Plot Twist Ever](#)

[How to Fuel Your Faith with the Story of Judas](#)

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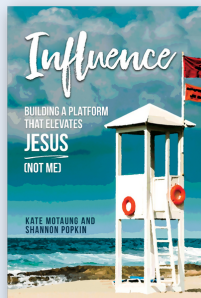
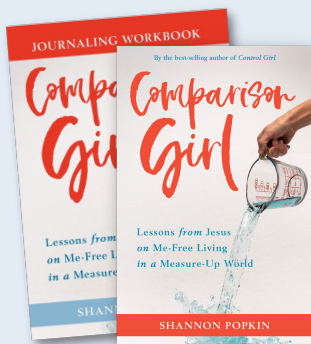
I'm Shannon Popkin. From the platform, page, and podcast mic, it's my joy to invite you to drink deeply from God's Word, then live like it's true.

My husband Ken and I live in Michigan, where we love watching our three adult kids become the people God designed them to be, and watching our two shih tzus do absolutely nothing.

Please visit [shannonpopkin.com](http://shannonpopkin.com) for more from me.

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