

# GIRD YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH

## Ephesians 6.14a: Truth is vital in our spiritual warfare against the devil

**Theme:** We must receive the truth of God in Scripture alone and rest on Scripture alone as the truth of God.

**Remember the exhortation in our passage: (v10-13) Stand against... Withstand... Stand...**

- Last week we spent most of our time talking about the exhortation we have been given to stand.
  - ✓ We have been given an ultimate (offensive) goal in our warfare: Advance the cause of Christ.
  - ✓ But, when the opposition (difficulties, trials, tribulations, circumstances of life) are such that we cannot advance, God calls us to stand. We are not to quit. We are not to give up ground.
- Now (starting in v14) Paul is going to tell us just how to do that (in detail).

**Ephesians 6.14-20: The Armour of God shows us how to stand against the enemy.**

- (v14) “Stand therefore...”: We are called (expected) to stand against and the wiles of the devil (v11), to withstand the attacks of his demons (v12-13a), and, when we can do nothing else, to stand (v13b).
- (v14) Paul then tells us just how to do that: “Stand... having...”: Paul lists seven things that illustrate what we must have and do in our lives in order to be able to stand against our enemy.
  1. Truth (as a belt/girdle)
  2. Righteousness (as a breastplate)
  3. Preparation of the Gospel (as shoes on our feet)
  4. Faith (as a shield)
  5. Salvation (as a helmet)
  6. The Word of God (as a sword)
  7. Prayer (to watch... and advance the cause of Christ once the opposition lets up a little).

**This morning I would like to take all of our time to speak about the first piece of armour: Truth.**

- We won't likely spend one sermon on each piece of armour, but this one is the first one and therefore of utmost importance.
- Truth is vital: it is foundational, essential, and primary. Without truth, everything else falls apart.
- Think about the Roman soldier's belt (or “girdle”). It served two general purposes:
  1. First and foremost, it held in place the armour that protected the vital regions of his lower body (his loins). It can also be seen as the piece that “held everything together” (armour on top and bottom).
  2. Secondly (and we'll only be mentioning this is passing this morning), it held the soldier's sword. He would hang his sword from the belt as he marched for to battle.
- If we do not have truth, we have no protection for our “loins,” the whole armour cannot be “held together,” and we have nothing on which to hang our sword (the Word of God) as we go to battle.
- Truth is essential. Truth is vital. It is of utmost importance that we know where to find truth, and that we know what to do with the truth once we find it (gird our loins with it!).

### **I. Truth holds in place the armour that protects the “loins.”**

- A. Paul says that, first and foremost, we are to have our loins girt about with truth.
- B. (Gen 35.11, first mention of loins) The word loins refers to the area of vital organs of life-giving force, the organs vital for reproduction and procreation (cf. Heb 7.5, 10; loins refers to the passing on of life).

- C. This is the first piece of armour Paul mentions because it is of top priority in our spiritual warfare.
1. This is the piece that not only protects our procreative/reproductive capacity (we are call to sow the seed of the Gospel to see new sons of God born by the Spirit of God).
  2. This is also the piece that holds all the other pieces together. Without truth, you cannot keep the breastplate of righteousness in place, you have no shield of faith... nothing works without truth.
    - a) In the heat of battle, when circumstance of life become difficult or when doubts assail you, you rest on truth. You rest on what you know is true (God exists, Jesus died, He saved you, etc).
    - b) And this is why the Christian can have peace that passes all understanding even in the midst of life's most difficult tribulations and trials. We know what is true, and that is an anchor for us.
- D. If truth is therefore vital (and it is!), where can we find it...?

## II. Ultimately, truth is found in Scripture alone.

- A. (John 14.6) Jesus Christ, God Himself, is truth.
1. If we want to know truth and gird our loins with truth so we can stand in the evil day against the wiles and attacks of the enemy... we need God (Jesus Christ) because He is truth.
  2. To know truth, therefore, we must know God.
  3. (John 8.44) Understand this (the opposite, the enemy): Our enemy is the father of lies and in him is no truth.
- B. (Eph 4.21) The truth is Jesus and the truth is in Jesus. Therefore, what proceeds from Jesus is truth.
1. (John 8.40) What Jesus tells us (what He speaks) is the truth.
  2. (2Sam 7.28) This is why we can say with certainty that the words God says are true.
    - (Titus 1.2 cf. Heb 6.18) God cannot lie. It is impossible for God to lie.
  3. God is truth. God cannot lie. Therefore, every word that proceeds from God is true (truth).
- C. Psalm 19: The Revelation of God
1. (Ps 19.1-6 cf. Rom 1.19-20) God has given general revelation through creation. We can know certain things about God by looking at what He made.
  2. (Ps 19.7-14) However, if we want truth that will gird out loins, we need God's Word, His specific revelation—what He tells us (because He always tells the truth):
    - a) God's Word (the communication that proceeds from God to man) is perfect, sure, right, pure...
    - b) (v9) ...it is "true and righteous altogether" (no error, all truth).
- D. Psalm 119: (v142) You cannot gird your loins with truth if you do not have God's Word.
1. (v137) God's judgments are upright.
  2. (v138) God's testimonies are right (the are righteous and very faithful).
  3. (v139) To forget God's Words is to become God's enemy.
  4. (v140) God's Word is pure (no taint, no impurity; only truth because God cannot lie).
  5. (v141) We must never forget (never separate from) His precepts—His Word.
  6. (v142) God's Law is Truth—to gird our loins with truth is to gird our loins with God's Word.
  7. (v143) God commandments must be our delight.
  8. (v144) God's Word never changes—truth is everlasting because it comes from God.
  9. (v151) All God's commandments are truth (there is no error in them).
  10. (v160) God's Word was true when He spoke it (in the beginning) and they will remain true forever.

E. In order to gird our loins (our life) with truth, we must have God's Word.

1. (John 14.6) Jesus Christ, God Himself, is truth.
2. (John 17.17) Therefore, God's special and specific revelation given to man in His Word is truth.
  - a) If God is truth, then what He says is truth.
  - b) (Ps 12.6) Every one of the words of the Lord, therefore, is pure. No taint. No lie.
  - c) Two illustrations of the importance of God's Word (all of it, every word) being pure:
    - (1) Water: Two bottles of water. They both look the same. One, however, has a small amount (an eye-dropper full) of water from a toilet bowl. Which would you like to drink?
      - (a) Even the smallest amount of impurity corrupts that which is pure.
      - (b) Why would we have a different view of the Word of God?
    - (2) Joshua 9: The deception of the Gibeonites
      - (a) (v1-5, esp. v4) The enemy is going to work his "wiles" (subtle deceit to trap).
      - (b) (v6-13) How much of what they said is true? There are only one or two lies.
      - (c) (v14 cf. 1.8) What was the error of God's people: The did not gird their loins with the truth, found only in God and God's Word!
3. (Prov 22.21) God's Words are words of truth.
  - a) (v21a) You can know them—truth is available to you.
    - Error is not of God! If God exists, truth exists (because God is truth).
  - b) (v21b) But you have to chose to rest on God's words as truth (you have to put your trust in God's Word that it is the "certainty of the words of truth"; you have to gird your loins with it).
    - Doubt is not a virtue! It is a wile of the devil. God wants you to be sure and certain.
4. God is truth, therefore when God speaks He speaks only truth. And when that truth is written down...
  - a) (Dan 10.21) We have the "Scripture of Truth."
  - b) (2Tim 2.15) The whole of Scripture, then, is the "Word of Truth."

F. And this would lead us, then, to the wiles of the devil to attack us in this vital area of our lives...

### **III. The implications of truth as a belt/girdle: Error destroys the truth!**

- A. Understand the implications of this (what truth is, where it comes from, where we can find it): Satan's first and fundamental attack is to tamper with truth.
  1. In doing that, he not only leave us without protection (truth hold everything together)...
  2. He not only leaves us without a sword (the soldier carried his sword to battle hanging on his belt, and our belt is truth!)...
  3. But, he also destroys future generations because truth protects our loins (the area vital to reproduction and procreation).
  4. If Satan can taint truth... if he can insert a little impurity (a lie, an error), we are exposed and will not only lose the battles we wage... we will never reproduce as God has called us to in our Mission.

- B. The great danger we face in this area is to allow *error* (falsehood, lies, things that are not true) to creep in and taint that which is *true* (the Word of God—the Scripture of Truth).
1. Remember: (John 8.44) Satan is our enemy; he is the father of lies; there is *no* truth in him.
  2. Nowhere is Satan more active than in this area of truth. If he can win this battle, he has won them all—he has defeated not only us, but subsequent generations (because truth protects our loins).
    - a) Good example: If we stand on the truth of Scripture, preaching the biblical Gospel to the lost and teaching Scripture as truth to the saved, subsequent generations also have the truth to follow.
    - b) Bad example: If we stand on dreams, visions, promptings, hunches, voices... that is what we will pass on as the authority and guide to our spiritual children. And they will not follow truth.
- C. Here is our warning: When truth becomes tainted, we have no protection because our truth is no longer true.
1. (2Thes 2.8-12) The greatest deception of our enemy is to lead people away from *truth* (as found in the certainty of the Words of Truth, written down in the Scripture of Truth).
    - a) (v10) There are many sincere, well-meaning believers in churches today who *refuse* to *love* the *truth of God*.
    - b) They refuse to follow the words of truth found in the Word of Truth, the Scripture of Truth.
      - (1) Now, a lot could be said (and has been said) about the destruction of truth in our seminaries.
      - (2) But, I think we are facing another onslaught that is much closer to home...
    - c) There is a huge movement in the majority of churches today that *denies* ***Sola Scriptura*** (Scripture Alone) and embraces Satan's lie...
      - (1) Some deny Scripture outright and claim new vision and direction from God (cults).
      - (2) But, the more subtle, wily trick of the devil that has trapped many believers is the satanic lie of ***Prima Scriptura*** (Scripture is primary, but not the sole authority).
        - (a) These believers *say* they follow God and the Bible, but they add to that their own experiences, dreams, visions, voices, hunches, and promptings.
        - (b) They themselves (Gruden, spokesman/theologian) admit that their extra-biblical revelations are *less than true*. See Gilly, *Is That You, Lord?* pp29-31.
        - (c) But, Scripture says that God's standard is much higher! Deuteronomy 18.20-22.
        - (d) (Deut 13.1-5) And God will allow these kinds of false teachers, with their dreams and false teachings, to infiltrate among His people... *to test us*, to see if we will *reject error* and *love truth* (if we will love God: John 14.21).
          - i) (Deut 13.5b) Will you separate from lies and gird your loins with truth, only truth?
          - ii) Will you separate from everything else and accepts Scripture as the sole and final authority—the only source of specific, revealed truth from God?
          - iii) (2Tim 3.1-7, esp. v7) Because we have false teachers who do the same today!
          - iv) (2Tim 4.3-4) Their deception is no different: Satan wants to separate you from truth—he wants to get your belt off so you (and subsequent generations) will fall.
  - (3) This is what one author called the “IHOP Dilemma.”
    - (a) It's the dilemma one faces when confronted with a movement among God's people like the International House of Prayer (a movement right here in our home town).
    - (b) Believers, who have a lot of truth (!), claim direct revelation from God: “God told me...”, or a dream, vision, prompting, voice, hunch, etc.

- (c) Once that comes out (another source of truth outside Scripture), then you are faced with a dilemma...
- i) If the person claiming direct revelation is actually speaking *revealed truth from God* (because God is truth and cannot speak anything but the truth), then you are bound to listen to that revelation, submit to it, and obey it.
  - ii) Or, if the person claiming direct revelation from God is wrong and not speaking 100% truth from God, he is a false prophet. And the Bible speaks very clearly about what God expects of us in regard to false prophets.
- (d) Sincerity is not enough. You must also be right!
- (4) The dilemma is this: You cannot remain neutral about God's revelation.
- (a) If what they say is God's Word (truth), you must obey it as you would Scripture.
  - (b) If what they say is not 100% true, it is not from God. And you cannot remain neutral about false prophets preaching lies as if they were God's truth.
- (5) (1Jn 2.21 cf. Deut 18.20) NO lie (not even one word!) is of God.
- (a) If the prophecy, dream, vision, prompting, or hunch is not 100% *truth*, it is not from God.
  - (b) (2Thes 2.8-12) And if it is not 100% truth from God, it is a lie from the devil meant to deceive people and damn them to hell.
    - i) Think about the water: Just a small taint will make it impure.
    - ii) Think about Joshua 9: The smallest of lies will lead God's people into serious error—into losing battles against the enemy (affecting subsequent generations).

### **Conclusion:**

**(2Thes 2.13 cf. 1Thes 2.13) We must gird our loins with the *truth* (and *only* the truth).**

- God is truth. What God says is truth. And when He writes it down... it is the Scripture of Truth.
- God's truth is to found today in Scripture, the Word of God—*Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone) because all other sources of truth are tainted with error.

### **If we refuse to gird our loins with truth...**

- If we refuse to receive Scripture and Scripture alone as the source of God's special, specific revealed truth to us...
- We will not only find ourselves exposed in battle (the belt/girdle holds everything else together)...
- We will find that we have nothing to hang our sword on (the Word of God is either true or tainted)...
- And we will find that we will not be able to fulfill the mission of “reproducing” sons of God... Truth must protect our loins—our procreative/reproductive capacity (we are called to sow the seed of the Gospel to see new sons of God born by the Spirit of God).

**We must *receive* (accept) the truth of God in Scripture alone and *rest* on Scripture alone as the truth of God. Scripture is sufficient because Scripture is Truth—the Word of Truth, the words of truth.**