

Spiritual Warfare: The Furnishings for Spiritual Warfare - 2

Introduction: As we continue in **Ephesian chapter 6**, starting in **verse 10**, we are dealing with this matter of spiritual warfare.

Paul begins this closing section with the words, *“Finally, brethren...”*

1. **v10** To be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.
2. **v11** We are to be concerned with the **whole armor of God**. (The purpose, *“...that ye may be able [δυναμαι —to become sufficient] to stand against the wiles [μεθοδεια- the methods] of the devil.”*)

v12 Between **verses 11 and 13**, we have a revelation of truth about this warfare. *“For we wrestle **not against flesh and blood**, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”*

3. **v13** We are told to take the **whole armor** of God once again, to **withstand**, and *“having done all...”* to **stand** in the evil day.

Your Loins Girt About With Truth

The Bible says, *“Stand therefore, **having your loins girt about with truth**, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;”*

You will notice that verses **14 through 16** complete one thought. You will also see that once again, we find the word *‘stand.’*

The word *‘stand’* in this passage emphasizes the obligation you and I have as good Soldiers for the Lord Jesus Christ.

To “stand,” we are instructed to have **our loins girt about with truth**.

In our day, we would not use the terms *‘loins’* or *‘girt about.’* The first perhaps unfamiliar word, *‘loins,’* signifies the hips. The second word, *‘girt about,’* signifies being fastened together as with a belt [in the underlying language, this is one-word **περιζώννυμαι** perizōnnymai).

It is needful for us not only to know **what is being spoken** but also **why it is being said in this matter**. If we were to do a topical search on the word *‘truth,’* we would find many passages that deal with this subject.

In **John chapter 18**, we find one of these passages that deal with a negative example of what is being discussed here.

Please turn with me to John 18:33-38

*“37 Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. **Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.** 38 Pilate saith unto him, **What is truth?** And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.”*

Pilate pictures a man that was **moved by the wind of politics**. He made decisions and choices not based on truth but rather to stay in power. In the end, we are told that Pilate lost favor with Rome and eventually was either banished or committed suicide.¹

The Christian, however, is to abide “in the Truth.” We are to be students and children of the truth. We are to be filled with (yielded to) the Spirit of truth. This is the opposite of **hypocrisy or dissimulation**. This is the opposite of **having no truth**, as is said by the Lord concerning our Adversary, who has no truth in him and is the Father of Lies. (See **John 8:44**)

Jesus Christ, the Truth

*“6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, **the truth**, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” **John 14:6***

At the beginning of the book of John, we find these words that describe the Lord Jesus Christ.

*“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) **full of grace and truth.**” [the source of all grace and truth]*

Then in **John chapter 1:16-17**, we read these words, *“And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, **but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.**”*

That which binds everything together for us in the Christian life is truth. The girdle that was put about the Soldier served this very purpose.

¹ We know nothing of the outcome of the trial, but Eusebius (EH 2. 7) preserves a report of otherwise unknown Gk. annalists that Pilate was forced to commit suicide during the reign of Gaius (ad 37–41). D. H. Wheaton, “Pilate,” ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., New Bible Dictionary (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 929.

“The “girdle” or “sash” was always with the ancients an important part of their dress, in war as well as in peace. They wore loose, flowing robes; and it became necessary to gird them up when they traveled or ran or labored. The girdle was often highly ornamented, and was the place where they carried their money, their sword, their pipe, and their writing instruments. The girdle seems sometimes to have been a cincture of iron or steel, and designed to keep every part of the armor in its place and to gird the soldier on every side.” - **Albert Barnes.**

We are to be **girt about with truth**, and **our weapon is truth**. The Holy Spirit is thus called the Spirit of truth!

*“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even **the Spirit of truth**, which proceedeth from the Father, **he shall testify of me:**” John 15:26*

The Lord Jesus Christ said in **John 17:17**, “*17 Sanctify them **through thy truth: thy word is truth.**”*

Truth, according to this passage, is to be bound all around us. In doing so, we have stability, strength, and agility. This idea is that it surrounds us in its entirety.

If I were to ask you this morning, **How do you suppose to surround yourself in truth? How do you presume to be girded about with truth?**

We must not just agree with the truth but rather **give ourselves to the truth**.

Our biblical example earlier told us of a man who **mocked the fact that there could ever be real definitive truth**. Think about all that is in this world today. We sometimes get frustrated just dealing with the so-called “news” agencies who do not report the truth.

My friend, the only truth that exists is the Word of God and the Incarnate Word.

- If we agree that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Truth.
- If we agree that the Spirit of truth is no other than the Holy Ghost.
- And if we agree that the Word of God is truth.

Then we must conclude, if I am to be girt about with truth, I must **abide in the truth and be a student (disciple) of truth.**

One Bible Scholar summed it up this way:

1. **There must be doctrinal truth** in the believer's life so that they may stand in opposition to error. (What does God teach us in His Word concerning Himself and our manner of life?)
2. **There is the application of truth** so that the believer is not just living in the formality of empty religion. (Hypocrisy and Dissimulation)
3. **There is the truth of sincerity** that stands in opposition to guile.

Truth must be “girt about” first.

The order in which all is listed here is not by accident but is according to the Holy Spirit.

A battle is going on today that is raging against truth and the “Truth.” As the Bible declares, there are people all around us who are blinded. They cannot see. They have no truth.

But who possesses truth? Are we not possessors of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do we not have the Word of Truth? And as a child of God, am I not indwelt with the Spirit of Truth?

Yes, we must be girt about with truth, **but let us take the truth to those who do not have the truth.**

Not only do we see this first subject of the armor of God, but we notice the second in this list that is coupled with it.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The Bible says once again in verse 14, *“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and **having on the breastplate of righteousness;**”*

These two naturally go one with another. **Without truth, I would not know righteousness.**

Two ideas are given to us in the New Testament concerning righteousness. One has to do with our conduct; we might say right living. The other has to do with the righteousness of Christ.

We are instructed by truth to right living.

We are told as we look into the Word of God what is right.

For the truth, the Word of God teaches us in **II Timothy 3:16** *“16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, **for instruction in righteousness:**”*

As one has said, what is right living before God? **It is the application and outworking of truth in the life of a believer.**

I cannot say I have on the breastplate of righteousness and live in ungodliness. And if I have not on the breastplate of righteousness, how can I protect the largest area of my person?

“When Satan accuses the Christian, it is the righteousness of Christ that assures the believer of his salvation. But our positional righteousness in Christ, without practical righteousness in the daily life, only gives Satan the opportunity to attack us.”

Secondly, we are told in the Word of God of **the righteousness of Christ.**

We are to walk as a Christian in righteousness. Our standing, however, is due to the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. “The devil always tells us that we are ‘no good.’ We know he is right, and we fall into discouragement. The fight goes out of us. What are we to do?” **We are to be encouraged and reminded of truth, that we are accepted in the beloved not because of our righteousness but because of His.** This certainly speaks to the Devil’s title of being called the *‘accuser of the brethren.’*

Philippians 3: 8,9 *“8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 **And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**”*

Paul entered into this through faith. Just the same as you and I. At the moment of Salvation, the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ was placed on our account. Judicially we are justified or declared righteous because of the Lord Jesus Christ. These two faceted elements of the breastplate of righteousness are seen here in this verse.

I want to turn to one more place in the Bible that is a similar passage concerning these two furnishings we have looked at today.

Hold your place there and turn over to the book of **II Corinthians chapter 6:1-10**

Notice from the beginning of this passage that Paul is 'beseeching' the Corinthians. He is imploring them with this instruction concerning being a worker "together with him..." [the Lord Jesus Christ]

But Paul goes on and says we are to approve ourselves. The idea is that these events and trials that came into the life of Paul — approved the character of his labor for the Lord Jesus Christ. They showed him to be true and faithful. These circumstances, these trials, these afflictions, these spiritual battles declared they were the minister of the Lord.

Notice Paul lists them out for us and what a list it is:

In much patience

In afflictions

In necessities (going without food, drink... those things necessary)

In distresses

In stripes

In imprisonments

In tumults

In labours

In watchings

In fastings

So how did you do it, Paul? How did you wage spiritual warfare in these battles?

The Word of God tells us,

By pureness - purity of life... (right living)

By knowledge

By longsuffering

By kindness

By the Holy Ghost

By love unfeigned (not faked)

By the Word of Truth (The Word of God and the Incarnate Word)

By the power of God

By the Armor of righteousness

And what was the result of all of this? Well, that depends on whose side you're

looking from.

To the Christian honour. From the world, dishonor.

To the Christian, a good report. From the world, an evil report.

To the Christian true (we might say girt about with truth). From the world judged as deceivers.

To the Christian known because of the King. To the world unknown.

And on He goes.... *“dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; 10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.”*

What a wonderful encouragement our Lord has given us in His Word!