

A Fight to the Finish

We need to know the enemy is Satan and all the evil in our world...We need to know the power from the Lord and from his mighty strength...We need to know the equipment God has provided for battle.

Ephesians 6:10—12 Finally, receive your power from the Lord and from his mighty strength. Put on all the armor that God supplies. In this way you can take a stand against the devil's strategies. This is not a wrestling match against a human opponent.

Ephesians 6:13 Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet. TMSG

Ephesians 6: 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth...So then, take your stand! Fasten truth around your waist like a belt...Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth...Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth

It is important that the Christian not "give place to the devil" ...Don't give the devil any opportunity to work...And "don't sin by letting anger control you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

James 4:7 So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Are we experiencing days of evil these days? How are we doing in standing up against the devil? If we do not put on the full armor of God, we will be weak and we will fail against the devil.

"Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes!" The intent of the phrase "put on" is that Christians are personally responsible for putting on the full armor of God. No one else is going to put on the armor for you! You and I can help and encourage one another but each one of us is called to personal responsibility in putting on the armor of God! God is available to each one of us and God is always the first one we are to depend on!

We must always remember as we see all the evil in our world today that behind all of evil in our world is the work of Satan using every tool he has.

The government is looking for ways to save entitlement programs and the only place they look is more taxation. The environmentalists are looking for ways to save the planet and the only thing they can come up with is lower population. Politicians are looking to solve our illegal alien problem and most of them only come up with legalization. Isis is trying to change the world and they are using terrorism. All of these are using a wrong strategy. God has revealed in His word that the way to deal with all these and many other problems we face on this planet is transformation... The heart needs to be changed... Matt 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

Remember God works from inside out not outside in.

For us to Stand against this we need the equipment God has provided

The Belt of Truth



Front



Side



Back

The belt on a Roman soldier wasn't the most attractive piece of armor but it was the most important. It allowed them to tuck their tunic and keep from tripping and falling in combat. The belt was broad and composed of sturdy leather. From it hung an overlapping skirt of leather straps almost like an apron on which were decorative rivets. Also from the belt hung specialized hooks and holders on which to secure the Sward, and an apparatus on which to rest the large battle shield. Also, on the belt were clips with which to hold the breastplate in its proper place. Supplies of bread, oil and water were also on the belt. The King James Version tells us to gird up our loins with the belt of truth. To gird up means to prepare.

Remember the Christian life is a battleground not a playground.

I. The Belt itself is the foundation of our armor.

The Roman army at the time of Paul's writing, was the most powerful military force in the world. The Roman soldier's superior armor and weaponry was largely responsible for the Roman military's might and success.



In today's study, we will begin to examine our armor and weaponry in detail, the first piece of equipment that Paul mentions is the belt. Around the waist, a Roman soldier wore a wide belt. the belt was essential because it had two vital purposes: (1) the belt held the rest of the armor in place and supported the sword (therefore, it was the first piece to be put on), (2) the belt acted as a girdle which collected together the soldier's long under-garments about the waist. This provided needed extra support and additional strength in the time of battle.

It was the belt that supported the sword, without which there would be no place to put a sword. Imagine an overzealous soldier, fired up and charging out into battle—but without his belt, and consequently without a weapon!

The professional soldier, to be what he must be, must devote himself entirely to the soldier's life, giving up civilian or worldly affairs. He must make sacrifices. He must keep himself fit. He must dedicate himself to learning how to maneuver and handle his weapons with skill. He does this to satisfy his commanding officer (and for his own survival).

- The belt tied tightly around the soldiers waist indicated that he was prepared for action.
- The belt or girdle also held the breastplate (which we will look at next week) in place and it also held the sheath which held the sword.
- When the soldier was off-duty he would loosen the belt to indicate he was off-duty.
- The belt was a simple but essential part of the armor; it is what held everything together.

The Belt of Truth...Sincerity.

Now, Paul says that our belt is "truth". The information received through Divine revelation or inspiration Subjective truth is personal truth. It is being genuine, without hypocrisy. We call it sincerity. I believe that Paul is saying that our belt is spiritual 'sincerity' rather than spiritual 'facts' or 'information'.

Sincerity for the Christian soldier performs exactly as the belt did for the Roman soldier. Before we examine how sincerity corresponds so well to the soldier's belt, let's get a better grasp of what is meant by spiritual sincerity.

When the Scriptures speak of sincerity, it means a genuine and singular desire to please the Lord. It means that our heart's one longing and our mind's one aim is to serve the Lord and promote His glory. God has always desired and required this virtue of sincerity in His people.

Sadly, there has always been those who have professed religion but who have been devoid of true spiritual devotion to God. These individuals who profess something that they are not are called 'hypocrites'.

There are those who talk spiritually and act righteously when they are around other Christians; however, when they are away from fellow Christians, they talk and conduct themselves in an ungodly manner.

Titus 1:16 They claim to know God, but they deny him by what they do. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit to do anything good.

Is your genuine aim to please, serve, and glorify the Lord or are you merely pretending? Is it real or is it just an acting performance that is a hypocrite?

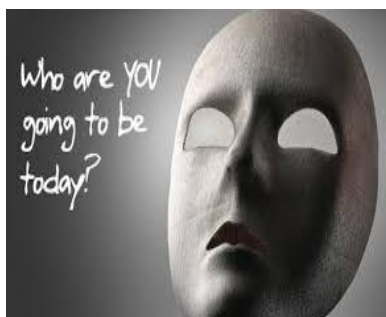
Does our life - inside and out - reflect the attitude, not my will but Thy will be done?"

Do we give the Lord Jesus our best or just our left-over's?

Do we order our time schedule in such a way that it reflects the Lord's priorities?

Do we give our relationship with Him our best time or just our spare time?

Do we seek opportunities to do good and glorify Him or do we wait to do good until our conscience can no longer allow us to ignore a need or opportunity?



Putting on a mask

The Christian Soldier

Now, we are ready to see how sincerity in a Christian life performs like a belt of the Roman soldier.

Christian, if you don't first have a genuine desire to do what is right and to serve the Lord, you will not bother to make the effort to take-up and put-on the rest of the armor of God and to learn how to use the sword of the Spirit. The belt suggests the commitment needed as a soldier of Jesus.

- Only the committed athlete is successful. They take the time to train and prepare for what they are doing and as a result they are successful. Only the committed soldier will win the battle.

What does a Belt do?

A belt holds everything together and it wraps completely around the body!
We are to put on the Belt of Truth, wrap it around us and let it hold everything together!

Illustration

If you take up the tools of a plumber and work on plumbing you do the work of a plumber.

If you take up the tools of a carpenter and work on wood and carpentry you do the work of a carpenter.

If you take up the tools of an accountant and work with numbers, taxes etc you do the work of an accountant.

If you take up the tools of the devil and work with lies, deception, and destruction you do the work of the devil.

Wearing the belt of truth means to walk with Jesus.

John 14:5 Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one goes to the Father except through me. Exactly what does that mean? It means you must come to terms with who God really is and who you really are.

Start your walk with Jesus by agreeing who He is...

- 1) It is what God has said – He has shared who He is through His living and written word.
- 2) It is what God has done – He has shared who He is through His love and compassion and action by sending his Son for man.
- 3) Start your walk with Jesus by agreeing who you are, the one that needs Him...It is in knowing the truth that we are set free. If we know God's voice by knowing God's word. The truth will set you free.

It means that no one else can force you to put on Jesus. He has provided the armor but you must get dressed!

Truth in your action

Warren Wiersbe wisely said, "God's promises are prods not pillows." Those that have really experienced the grace of God are changed forever. Zachaeus was a tax collector and a cheat. When he confessed Jesus as His Lord he made a public announcement of how he had wronged others and how he was going to make it right. Zacheus was willing to walk like Jesus no matter what it cost.



Conclusion:

We must remember we do not fight against flesh and blood? People are not the problem!! We fight against the lies and schemes and strategies of the Devil.

Are you willing to follow Jesus no matter what it cost? The Belt of Truth is Jesus Christ and what He says! Jesus Christ is to wrap around us and He holds everything together.

You and I as Christians are in the spiritual battlefield on a daily basis. We need to put on a daily basis, the Belt of Truth, who is Jesus Christ, and allow Him to hold everything in your life!



**Jesus said: We must
become like little
children to enter His
kingdom, and He said
about the little children
let them come to me.**



Questions and Comments