

Several weeks ago, we began an examination of the armor of God, in the previous study, if you recall, I suggested three things from verses 10-13—[1] Its Source (v10)—this is the armor OF God, it's armor that comes from God—it comes from the love of God, purchased by the blood of Christ, and applied by the Spirit of God...

[2] Its Need (vv11-12)—its need is underscored by a brief description of our enemy—Satan and his demonic hosts, v11—"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle with flesh and blood..."

[3] Its Goal (v13)—the goal or purpose of this armor is to enable us to—"withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand"—this is the ultimate purpose of this armor—it's given to us so that we may stand firm against our enemies...

V14—"Stand therefore"—and then the apostle provides four participles (that function as commands), v14a—"having girded" v14b—"having put on" v15—"having shod" v16—"taking the shield"—we are to gird, put on, fit, and take up the shield, so that—"we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand..."

That brings us this evening to the first of six pieces of armor—The Belt of Truth—and I want to consider this first piece of armor under three simple headings—[1] What is it? [2] Why is it important? and [3] How is it put on...

## I. What Is The Belt Of Truth?

1. Now—let me simply say in the first place, Christians have understood the term TRUTH in one of two ways...
2. [1] As objective truth—that is—Scripture often speaks of itself as the truth, the truth about God, man, Christ, salvation, and eternity...
3. Eph.4:20-21—"But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus..."
4. Jn.17:17—"Sanctify them in truth: Your word is truth" and Ps.119:160—"The sum of Your word is truth..."
5. [2] As subjective truth—that is—Scripture often speaks about TRUTH as a synonym for truthfulness or sincerity...
6. Eph.5:9—"for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth"—that is, truthfulness or sincerity...
7. Ps.51:6—"You desire truth in the innermost being" 1Cor.5:8—"Let us therefore celebrate the feast...with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth..."
8. The question then becomes—What does Paul mean by saying—"Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth..."
9. William Gurnall—"Some by truth mean truth of doctrine; others will have it truth of heart, sincerity. Those I think right that comprise both...for both indeed are required to make the girdle complete..."
10. 1Jn.2:4—"He who says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him..."
11. That is—the truth (the gospel) is not in him, it's not in him by faith, it's not believed sincerely by him, from the heart...
12. 2Jn.1:1-2—"The Elder, to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever..."
13. 3Jn.1:3-4—"For I rejoice greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth (Co.1:5-6)..."
14. In all of these examples, we find that truth is spoken of as indwelling us, it refers to truth embraced in truth...

15. Thus, by truth is meant—the truth of Scripture, especially the gospel, believed in the heart and with sincerity...
16. That is, by truth is meant—the truth of God's holy Word, embraced in the heart, believed truthfully or sincerely...
17. Let me clarify—our believing or embracing the truth doesn't make the truth TRUTH—it's truth regardless if we believe it...
18. But—and this is the whole point—putting on truth as a belt, as a piece of armor, is believing that truth sincerely...
19. Simply put—the TRUTH will never benefit us one bit, unless it's first truly received or believed from the heart...
20. Charles Hodge—"By the belt of truth is meant truth subjectively considered; that is, the knowledge and belief of the truth. This is the first and indispensable qualification for a Christian soldier. To enter on its spiritual conflict ignorant or doubting, would be to enter battle blind and lame. As the girdle gives strength and freedom of action, and therefore confidence, so does the truth when spiritually apprehended and believed.
21. MLJ—"I interpret the word TRUTH in this context to mean a belief in, and a knowledge of, the 'truth as it is in Christ Jesus.' It is the objective truth, which I possess in a subjective manner. It means a mastery of the truth, but it also means being mastered by the truth. I am held by the truth. This is the thing that binds me and holds me together and puts me on my feet and gives me vigour and strength and power..."

## II. Why Is The Belt Important?

1. Before I suggest a few broad reasons for this belt, let me point out, this belt is functional and not merely decoration...
2. MLJ—"Belts are often worn purely for adornment, and for the sake of appearance: but that was not at all in the mind of the Apostle. He assures us that this girdle is an absolutely essential part of the equipment; and it is therefore the first thing we have to put on..."
3. To "gird the loins (or waist)"—refers to a common first century practice, that every person would have understood...
4. In olden days men, both Jews and Gentiles, wore an outer garment called a tunic, which went down to the feet...
5. When it was time for him to perform some activity, he would tuck this garment into his belt, he would gird his loins...
6. Thus, the phrase "To gird your loins" became synonymous with—"being ready or alert"—prepared for war...
7. [1] It's foundational to all else—this is evident in that the apostle Paul places this piece of armor before all else...
8. For the first century Roman soldier, his belt was essential because it held together the other pieces of armor...
9. It really didn't matter if he had on his breastplate, shoes, helmet, and had his shield and sword, if he didn't tighten his belt...
10. The belt was essential to all the rest—without this, the rest didn't matter—without this, the soldier would lose...
11. How do you know what righteousness is without truth, how do you know about the gospel of peace, apart from truth...
12. How can we take up the shield of faith, if there is no objective source of truth—truth is foundational to all else...
13. My dear friends—we can not go into the battle and in any way be victorious, without our waist girded with truth...
14. [2] It's influential to the whole man—that is—Scripture teaches us that God uses the truth to sanctify or change us...
15. Jn.17:17—"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth"—Christians are sanctified, made holy, by the truth...

16. My dear friends—remember, the belt of truth is TRUTH embraced, TRUTH experienced in the soul of man...
17. [a] Mind, Eph.4:23—"be renewed in the spirit of your mind"—this is where the battle always begins—the mind...
18. To have our loins girded with truth means, we have renounced the traditions, opinions, and thinking of men...
19. To have our loins girded with truth means, we have bound our consciences to nothing but the truth of God...
20. Steven Lawson—"To gird your loins with truth, means you have all of your thoughts tied down to the truth of God. It means to fasten down all your convictions, that you have chapter and verse, in which you are grounded. There can not be no loose thoughts. No slack beliefs. No free thinking. No original thoughts. No one is ready for spiritual battle who's mind is filled with human reasoning and the thinking of this evil world system..."
21. Charles Hodge—"Let not any one imagine that he is prepared to withstand the assaults of the powers of darkness if his mind is stored with his own theories, or with the speculations of other men. Nothing but the truth of God, clearly understood and warmly embraced, will enable him to keep his feet for a moment, before these celestial potentates. Reason, tradition, speculative conviction, dead orthodoxy, are a girdle of spider-webs. They give way at the first onset. Truth alone, as abiding in the mind in the form of divine knowledge, can give strength or confidence even in the ordinary conflicts of the Christian life, much more in any really 'evil day'..."
22. [b] Heart—that is—the truth truly and rightly understood, should fill our hearts with love and with true joy...
23. To have the belt of truth tied around our souls, is to have all of our affections taken up with the reality of truth...
24. [c] Life—by this I mean, the word of God received with a believing heart, should influence the way we live...
25. Oh my friends, to rightly and really know the truth, of necessity means, it moulds and shapes the way we live...
26. Deut.6:6-9—"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets (something bound) between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates..."
27. The Hebrew word translated "frontlets" literally means "to bind"—and is meant figuratively and not literally...
28. In other words—God commanded the Hebrews to have His word in their hearts (v6), in their mind (v8b), and in their lives (v8a)...
29. Moses was not commanding them to actually or literally write them (or bind them) on their hands—but he's speaking figuratively...
30. What does it mean to "bind the word of God on your hand"—it means, the word of God was to influence how you lived...
31. 3Jn.1:3-4—"For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth..."
32. Tit.1:1—"Paul, a bondservant of god and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth which accords with godliness (truth that leads to a godly and pious life)..."
33. [3] It's vulnerable to attack and distortion—because truth is essential, our enemies will hate and distort the truth...
34. Jn.8:44—"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it..."
35. 1Tim.3:15—"If I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth..."

36. My friends, what is the church to be—what is a primary purpose of the church—to uphold the truth of God...

### III. How Is The Belt Put On?

1. V14—"Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth"—that is—Christians must put this belt on them...
2. MLJ—"It is we who have to do this. The girdle is not put on us, we have to put it on; and we have to put it firmly in position..."
3. [1] Believe and study the written truth—my friends, in order to put on the belt of truth, we must be in the truth...
4. We must read it, hear it, believe it, study it, apply it, obey it, love it, memorize it, and humbly meditate on it...
5. My dear friends—to bind your waist with truth, is more than merely reading your Bible and hearing sermons...
6. Yes, these things are essential, they are at the very heart it, there can be no girding of the loins without these...
7. But—to have our spiritual waists girded (tightened) with the belt of truth, we must get the word down into our souls...
8. Prov.3:3—"Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart..."
9. [2] Pray for and rely upon the Spirit of truth—only the Spirit can effectually bind the truth around our souls...
10. Jn.16:13—"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth"—this no doubt has a special application to the apostles...
11. Christ would send the Spirit of truth at the Day of Pentecost, to lead them into the further revelation of inspired truth...
12. But—it also has application to all Christians, who have the Spirit of truth, to reveal unto us the glories of Christ...
13. Ps.25:4-5—"Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day..."
14. Ps.43:3—"Oh, send out Your light and truth! Let them lead me; let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle..."
15. [3] Walk closely with the Living truth—that is, communion with Christ, in and through the Word of Truth...