

## The Belt of Truth

Eph 6:14

**STAND FIRM** THEREFORE, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, NASB  
Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist, NIV

Dave introduced us to the importance of the 'whole armour of God' and now we are looking at each of the various elements of that armour. Every single part of it is essential, which is why Paul refers to it as 'panoply' the whole, entire, complete armour, not just as armour. It is God's armour – he provides it for us. But he does not put it on us, we have to do that ourselves, hence Paul's exhortation to take up and put on the whole armour of God. Armour is essential protection – antique health and safety equipment or clothing. Like builders working on a building site without steel capped shoes and hard hats. A surgeon performing an operation without scrubs and rubber gloves and a mask! Riot police going into action without bothering to put on riot gear!

The first piece of gear is the BELT of TRUTH. This is not an accurate translation. Paul actually wrote 'having girded your waist with truth.' What did soldiers put round their waists? We call it a belt but it was much more than a belt. It was a leather band (much thicker than the sort of belt we might wear to keep our trousers up) from which hung many studded leather strips. It went over the tough light tunic and acted as a protection for the lower abdomen and for the genital area. It hung down to the knees and was tough enough to deflect projectiles but also allow a great deal of mobility. The individual leather strips enabled the soldier unrestricted movement while giving a reasonable degree of protection. The second purpose of the belt was to hang things on. Attached to it were scabbards for knives and swords, and other useful portable military equipment, including their rations.

So the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God hangs from the Belt of Truth; there is a relationship between truth and the Word of God. Thirdly it held the breastplate in place. After the belt was put over the tunic the soldier would then put on his breastplate (which covered his chest, shoulders and back – the front was often made of bronze packed with leather, as were the shoulder pads and the back was more supple leather often without the metal covering as most of the protection needed was at the front as the soldiers advanced, not for the back as they had no intention of running away.) and these were then attached to the belt which it partly covered. Charles will talk about the breastplate of righteousness next week, but it needed the belt to hold it in place. So righteousness has a dependence upon truth.

Paul's reference to the loins girded with truth comes from Isaiah 11:5.

Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness (truth) the belt about His waist. NASB

The Greek OT that Paul used reads: 'And he shall have his loins girded with righteousness, and truth wrapped round his sides'. This is a bit different to our OT translations which are taken from the much more recent Hebrew texts. Who is Isaiah referring to? The Messiah; to Jesus. Let's read the whole passage.

Isaiah 11:1-9. A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him--the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD-- and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. **Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash round his waist.** The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. NIV

Jesus, the Christ, the root of Jesse, the Lord's anointed is described as having his loins girded with righteousness and his sides wrapped with truth. Like him we need to have the belt of truth buckled round our waists. The original name for what we now call 'Christianity' was "The Way". Righteousness is following The Way, living in God's ways, but Truth is knowing and holding fast to God's ways. Before we can put on the breastplate of righteousness, we have to put on the belt of truth. We have to know God's ways before we can live God's ways.

There are four elements in this verse that we need to look at this morning.

1. Stand firm therefore

2. Having girded

3. Your loins

4. With Truth

### **1. Stand firm therefore**

**Therefore** introduces a logical result or inference from what precedes. Because we are not warring against flesh and blood but against rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, we **therefore** have to stand our ground against the devil's schemes and also we have to take up and put on the full armour of God.

Eph 6:10-14 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the **full armour** of God **so that** you can **take your stand** against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **Therefore** put on the **full armour** of God, **so that** when the day of evil comes, you may be able **to stand your ground [resist]** and after you have done everything, **to stand. Stand firm therefore**, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist..

Three times time Paul calls on believers to stand firm thus emphasizing the need for immovable steadfastness in the face of a relentless, ruthless enemy.

**Stand firm** means to take up or maintain a specified position or posture. In context it conveys the idea of digging in (the Roman soldier's sandals had spikes for this purpose).

Again Paul commands the troops of believers to stand firm. The verb conveys a sense of urgency, 'Do it now! Don't delay!' and that we have to choose to stand firm. God urges us and enables us but He never forces us to stand, it is our choice, our decision, to stand or to fall.

**Each of the items of armour appear in the order in which a soldier would put them on and together make up the full armor (panoplia) that every soldier had put on before taking the field in mortal combat.**

### **2. Having girded**

The verb means you yourself have to fasten on the belt, wrapping it round yourself. No one can do this girding for you.

**Ray Stedman** writes that...

Belting one's waist (or, as many older translations put it, "girding the loins") was always a symbol of readiness to fight. That is why Paul mentions this item of armor first. You cannot do battle until you have girded yourself with the belt of truth. What does this mean in practical, everyday terms? Simply this: When you are threatened by discouragement, depression, spiritual apathy and coldness, and similar moods, you fight back by remembering that you first became a Christian by surrounding yourself with truth. You remind yourself that in coming to Jesus Christ you found the truth behind all things, you found the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the secret of the universe, the final reality! (Ray Stedman. Spiritual Warfare)

## **2. Loins**

**Loins**, waist, hip refer to the general area of the body between the ribs and the thighs, the midsection between the upper and lower body that includes the hips, the small of the back, the waist, and the groin.

"Jews considered the loins as where the reproductive organs are located and so we find the phrases "to go forth from someone's loins" equated with "to be descendant". The expression "**to gird up one's loins**" means to put on a belt to hitch up the garment which is worn loose in the house or in times of relaxation, with a view to greater mobility for work, for travel, for battle etc."

One of the most well known examples is in Exodus 12:11 where Moses records God's instructions to Israel on the night of the Passover...

"Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your **loins** girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste-- it is the LORD'S Passover."

## **4. Truth**

**Truth** means that which is not hidden or concealed, what is 'out in the open', containing nothing that is hidden. "Words are true when they correspond with objective reality. Persons and things are true when they correspond with their profession. Hence a truth is a declaration which has corresponding reality, or a reality which is correctly set forth. Since God is Himself the great reality, that which correctly sets forth His nature is pre-eminently the Truth. Obviously whatever God says is **'the truth'**" This Truth is embodied in Christ Jesus! John 1:14,17, 8:31, 14:6... The Spirit is also called 'the Spirit of Truth' John 14:17, 15:26, 16:3.

**How do we gird ourselves with the Belt of Truth?** It must have something to do with the Spirit of Truth and also Jesus himself, who is the Truth and spoke the truth as we read in the gospels. It has to be more than Bible knowledge or reading a passage every day. Only the Spirit can lead us into all truth, we cannot know it just by human study or intelligence. TRUTH is revealed by the Spirit. So what can we do about girding ourselves with truth? We have to put ourselves in the place of revelation; take time to let the Spirit lead us into the truth. We need to be filled with the Spirit and then pray over the scripture, meditating on God's word. It is not study, it is getting the word of God into us in such a way that it lives inside us and so we will be strong will be able to overcome the evil one. 1 John 2:13-14. If we really know the truth like this it will set us free.

Satan is the liar and the progenitor of lies, so man's human condition is all about lack of truth. People suppress the truth, and exchange God's truth for a lie, and do not obey the truth. Rom 1:18,25,2:8. They are blinded by Satan so they believe lies and cannot see the truth, and if even if they are told the truth they may well ridicule it. So we must oppose him with God's **truth**. Like a soldier's belt that undergirds everything else and holds it all together, so God's **truth** must undergird all we are and all we believe and all we say and do and it will then hold everything together in our lives. As Christians, we love truth and live truth. Which is why John write to his spiritual children...

I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children **walking in the truth**. (3John 1:4)

**Warren Wiersbe** writes that...

Unless we are motivated and directed by truth, we will be defeated by the enemy. If we permit any deception to enter our lives, we have weakened our position and cannot fight the battle victoriously. The girdle of truth is not an offensive weapon; it is for protection. When the believer has what I call "an attitude of truth" in his life, this protects him from Satan's attacks. **It does not prevent these attacks; but it keeps the believer from being harmed by them.** (Wiersbe, W: Strategy of Satan: How to Detect and Defeat Him)

**Ray Stedman** relates a story regarding **truth**...

In Proceedings, the magazine of the Naval Institute, naval officer Frank Koch tells the story of an incident that happened to him at sea an incident that illustrates the principle Paul talks about:

Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. I was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on the bridge as night fell. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities. Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing of the bridge reported, "Light, bearing on the starboard bow." "Is it steady or moving astern?" the captain called out. Lookout replied, "Steady, captain," which meant we were on a dangerous collision course with that ship.

The captain then called to the signalman, "Signal that ship: We are on a collision course, advise you change course 20 degrees." Back came a signal, "Advisable for you to change course 20 degrees." The captain said, "Send, I'm a captain, change course 20 degrees." "I'm a petty officer second class," came the reply. "You had better change course 20 degrees." By that time, the captain was furious. He spat out, "Send, I'm a battleship. Change course 20 degrees." Back came the flashing light, "I'm a lighthouse." We changed course.

God's truth is like that lighthouse and we are like that battleship. In

our human arrogance, we chart our own course and demand that the world adjust itself to our wishes. But God's truth is unchanging, unbending, unyielding. It is not God's duty to alter His truth. It is our responsibility to chart our course according to the light of His Word, which is ultimate, objective reality. If we fail to do so, we risk running our lives aground. (Ray Stedman. Spiritual Warfare)

**Phil Rogers**

Ref. [www.preceptaustin.com](http://www.preceptaustin.com) comments on Eph 6:14