

## THE BELT OF TRUTH

### Ephesians 6:14a

#### Ephesians 6:10-14a NKJV

**10** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. **11** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. **12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

**13** Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. **14** Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth..."

#### Prayer

- Paul the Apostle was imprisoned for his faith, in Jesus, in a Roman prison which is where he wrote this letter to the Ephesians, from.
- Pulling from the imagery of the Roman soldier who, most likely, guarded his prison cell, Paul tells us how to arm ourselves for the battle we are in.
- What is fascinating though, is that Paul was in a **physical** cell, having been persecuted by **physical** people, and was now guarded by a **physical** Roman soldier, yet he writes that "this war is NOT against flesh and blood" — it is not against people.
- **Billy taught this last week, but it is worth repeating:**
- **People are not the object of our warfare. People are the object of God's love.**
  - The war, as v. 12 tells us, is against "principalities and powers. Against spiritual forces of wickedness in high and low places."
    - It's talking about Satan and demonic forces in the spiritual realm. That is who our battle is against. It's a spiritual battle.
- **And the armor necessary, FOR that battle, is spiritual armor.**
- Before we get to the belt of truth, we need to know a few things about the armor, as a whole.

#### THE ARMOR IS GOD'S ARMOR.

- We are at war. Right now. It's a spiritual battle.
- And the war can't be won without the power OR the armor, of God.
- Billy preached it last week "...be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God..." (Ephesians 6:10b-11a)
- Literally translated, this phrase means, "Put on God's armor".
- It is critical that we do not hear God saying "You be strong", but rather "I am strong. You be DEPENDENT on me. That's where your strength comes from."

Secondly (to take a page out of Britt's book):

### **THE ARMOR IS METAPHORICAL, NOT MAGICAL**

- Paul is using powerful imagery here, but it IS imagery.
- Here's why this is important: Prayer is OBVIOUSLY essential in the spiritual battle (as we see in v.18), but we don't just pray, "Lord, give me the shield of faith" and then the enemy is like "Oh no he's got the shield! What are we going to do."
- We don't just "pray the armor on", as I have heard some people say.
- **Every piece of armor represents a spiritual reality that is necessary for the spiritual battle.**
- To "put on" that armor, means that we APPROPRIATE these spiritual realities to our lives... which is the next quick point is:

### **THE ARMOR MUST BE APPROPRIATED, IN ORDER TO BE EFFECTIVE.**

- In order for the armor to be do its job, we have to apply these spiritual realities to our lives, and utilize them.
- The armor does us no good to talk just talk about it, recognize it, or even just pray about it.
- We must **appropriate** it to our lives. We'll talk about how to do this, with the belt of truth, today.

### **THE ARMOR POINTS US TO, AND IS FULFILLED IN, JESUS.**

- Everything about the armor points us to the finished work of Jesus, on our behalf.
- So, when we talk about the **Shoes of the Gospel of Peace**, we can't divorce that from the fact that Jesus Himself IS our peace.
- **Today:**
- **Belt of Truth** >> "I am the... TRUTH"
- The armor is fulfilled in Christ.
  - As we are clothed with Christ, we are clothed with this armor.
  - All of these elements are symbolic of who Jesus is, and what He has done for us.
  - **Jesus IS the hope in battle the against spiritual forces of wickedness.**

Such is true with the belt of truth:

**"Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth". (v.14a NKJV)**

**The belt is a metaphor for truth.**

- **How it FUNCTIONED:**

**There is a reason that Paul mentions the belt first.**

- Before a soldier would put on the rest of his armor, he would put on the belt.
  - The belt, then, served as a place, to which to the breastplate would be attached.
  - The bronze mitra would hang down and would have been attached to the belt, to protect his groin area (very important).

- And his sword and dagger would have hung from the belt.
- **Everything else was connected to, and hung on, the belt.**
- **When we're talking about spiritual battle, we need to know that:**
- **Everything is connected to, and hangs on, the (belt of) truth.**
- **The belt was not a dinky belt. It was like weight lifters belt that provided support to the soldier's core.**
- Likewise:
- **The (belt of) truth strengthens the core of our being.**
  - Which is why the Psalmist, when he felt like his soul was "melting away with sorrow", to **strengthen him with His word (ref. Psalm 119:28)**
- Because the breastplate only went down so far down, the belt was not only necessary for holding everything together and strengthening the soldier, but for **covering the exposed parts** of the abdomen and back, that the breastplate wouldn't reach.
- **The Holy Spirit says His Church, through the pen of Paul:**
- **The (belt of) truth protects the exposed and vulnerable places in the life of the believer.**
  - We all have vulnerable and exposed places — a chink in the armor — and that's where the enemy likes to attack.
- **The belt provided ease and freedom of movement.**
- You ever wondered what the phrase "gird up your loins" came from? This is it.
- The belt was used to tuck in ("gird up") the soldier's long loose undergarment that would have hung to the ground and restricted his movement.
- **The belt provided ease and freedom of movement**
- We need to know today that (even as Jesus said)
- **The (belt of) truth provides freedom in the life of the believer.**

**Every piece of the armor is intended to guard us from a different scheme of the enemy.**

- The enemy the belt of TRUTH, guards us from: LIES.

### **THE BELT OF TRUTH PROTECTS US FROM GIVING INTO LIES.**

- Referring to Satan, Jesus said "He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because **there is no truth in him. Whenever he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.**" (John 8:44)
- In the same way that **Hebrews 6:18** says that "it is impossible for God to lie", it impossible for Satan to NOT lie, deceive, or somehow distort the truth.
- He will use every kind of deception to bring us down, misdirect us, or distract us.
- **Why does he use lies and deception? Because they're effective.**
  - "All war is based on deception." (Sun Tzu - The Art of War)

- The enemy knows this, and uses this to his advantage, in the life of the believer.
- And it won't always be an outright lie.
- Satan will often simply misuse or twist the truth. in order to deceive us.
- This is what he did with Jesus when he tempted him in the wilderness — He spoke some scripture, but he misused it and twisted it.
- The garden with Eve, “Did God REALLY say, don't eat of this tree?” (ref. Gen. 3), and caused her to speculate which distorted the truth.
- Satan will use speculation and imagination.
- When you begin speculating and imagining what other people are thinking or saying what is happening with a situation, you may be stepping into a trap of Satan. Speculation and imagination are the real of the devil.
- Satan will often use confusion and misdirection.
- “God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:13)
  - One of the ways that I have learned to identify the work of the enemy in my own life (especially in relational conflict), is when everything starts becoming super convoluted or confusing, I have learned that is the stench of the enemy.
- **And misdirection.**
  - Ghost armies that the US used during World War II.
  - Our military impersonated other allied armies, using things like inflatable tanks and sound systems that replicated the sound of real tanks and real radio transmissions, **so that a the Nazi's wouldn't know who their real enemy was.**
- The enemy will do whatever he can in order to convince us that something or someone else is actually the enemy, when it was him all along.
  - This is why Paul, by the leading of the Spirit, urges us: People are not the enemy.
- **These lies and deceptions, usually show up in two basic ways:**
- Lies will come from external source — a person, a teacher, social media, etc.
  - We have to remember that, just like those US troops disguised themselves, so “Satan disguises himself, as an angel of light.” (2 Corinthians 11:14)
- Lies can show up internally, as our own thoughts.
- Peter in Matt 16 when he told Jesus that Jesus wasn't going to have to suffer and die? How did Jesus respond “Get behind me Satan... you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”
- What was happening in Peter's mind, was NOT God. It was Satan.
- It was a demonic thought planted in his mind.
- **THE DEVIL IS A LIAR, AND MASSIVE PART OF HE ATTACKS US, IS THROUGH DECEPTION, CONFUSION, MISDIRECTION, AND SPECULATION.**

- But God gives us armor to protect us from the lies of the devil **“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth.” (v.14a)**
- **The belt of truth protects us from giving into lies.**
- Now, notice that I didn’t say, “The belt of truth protects us FROM lies coming”. It protects us from giving into the lies.
- **We can’t prevent the lies from coming, but we CAN prevent those lies from taking root in our lives.**
- **We can’t prevent the battle, but we can be victorious in it.**

How do we do that?

## **VICTORY OVER THE LIES COMES WHEN WE APPROPRIATE THE TRUTH TO OUR LIVES.**

- It is not enough to know that there IS truth. We must **UTILIZE** that truth.
- How do we do that? First, we go to the source.
- Jesus said **“I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6)**
- **“Father... sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)**
- **God’s word is truth**
  - **The written word (the Bible) connects us to the LIVING word (Jesus).**
- You want more of Jesus? Get more of his word.
- **By reading, receiving, and reciting the truth of God’s word, we can resist the lies of the devil.**
  - And **James 4:7** says, that when you **“Resist the devil. He will flee from you.” (James 4:7)**
  - We gotta read (or listen to it), then receiving (believe it, appropriate it), and then speak it! or sing it!
    - There is power in the verbal proclamation of truth.
    - This was what **Jesus doing in the wilderness when He was tempted by LIES, from the devil. He didn’t just believe and receive the truth. Jesus spoke it, out loud.**
- **Clarify:**
  - I’m not talking about “MY truth”. I’m not talking about subjective truth.
  - I’m talking about the truth of who Jesus Christ is, and what His Word says about who He is, and who we are.
  - **THAT Truth guards us from giving into the lies and deception.**
- **Unlike the sword (which we’ll get to later), the belt (and the rest of the armor) was not something that was intended to be thrown on real quick, once the battle began.**

- The armor needed to be put on **BEFORE** the attack came.
  - Fire wood — water, dirt...
- **Girding ourselves with truth BEFORE the attack comes, prevents the lies from sticking.**
- "...take up the whole armor of God, **so that** you may be able to withstand in the evil day..." (**Ephesians 6:13**)
  - **We can't afford to wait until we're under attack, to appropriate the truth our lives.**
  - So important that we read and receive scripture everyday, into our hearts and minds.
- Some of you: "Well, it's too late bro. I'm already under attack. I'm already believing and receiving lies.."
- No, it's not too late. All the more, you need to put on the armor of God.
- The Bible actually says that the way we **combat** those lies is the same way that we prevent the lies from taking hold of us — **we do it, with the truth.**
- **Here's how this works:**
- **You may hear this lie**
- Lie: God's not going to love and forgive me after what I've done.
- The same lie sometimes sounds like this:
  - Lie: God is mad at, or disappointed with, me.
  - That's a lie.
  - How do we know it's a lie? Because we know the truth.
  - Truth: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (**1 John 1:9**)
  - Truth: "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (**Romans 5:8**)
- Lie: I'm not enough.
  - Another side of this coin is:
  - Lie: I will never amount to anything.
    - And that lie can come through all sorts of places (parents, teachers, coaches, bosses, social media - **comparing ourselves to other will always open us up to lies.**
    - Or, it may just be planted in your mind by the devil.
    - That's a lie.
    - Because the truth is:
    - Truth: "You are God's masterpiece created in Christ Jesus for good works that He prepared before hand that you should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:10**)

- Lie: I have a right to not forgive, or to hold a grudge.
- That's actually a lie — we don't have a right to not forgive, and to keep being angry.
- Bitterness (which is what a unresolved anger is), ENSLAVES US.
  - Truth sets us free. Lies enslave us.
- We need to combat that lie with truth.
- Here's the truth:
- Truth: "...do not let the sun go down on your anger, for anger gives a foothold to the devil... Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you."(Ephesians 4:26-27, 32)
- Lie: I'm going to be abandoned. (I am alone)
  - I have a deep seated false belief, that I am going to be left or abandoned... The enemy loves this.
  - **IMPORTANT:**
  - **Satan is is a squatter!**
    - He has limited power, so he will capitalize on our weakness, in order to increase the effectiveness of his limited power.
  - He didn't originate the lie in me. But he does capitalize on it.
    - "Yeah that's right. He's gonna leave, she's gonna leave, they're gonna leave, and your'e gonna be alone."
- But that's a lie.
- Truth: 'He (Jesus) Himself has said, "I will **never leave** you, nor will I ever forsake you.'" (Hebrews 13:5b)
- Truth: "Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is **with you** wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

### Some other lies:

- "I don't belong." "I don't have a place" "I don't fit" "I'm not wanted...Nobody wants me" "I'm not valuable"... or "I'm only valuable because of what I do, not who I am"
- Comparison... that's a lie.
  - You can always find someone better or worse than you.
- The truth is: You're not the worst. AND You're not best.
- You are BOTH more prone to do wrong than you could ever imagine, AND more unique masterpiece, deeply loved and treasured than you could ever dream.
- **That's the truth.**
- The enemy will ALSO lie about the identity of Jesus, which will often come through culture.
- It's critical that we identify that, and guard against that **by knowing the truth**. Even as Paul wrote to Timothy:

- “Hold on to the pattern of wholesome teaching you learned from me... carefully guard **the precious truth** that has been entrusted to you.” (2 Timothy 1:13-14)
  
- **For every lie, there is a corresponding truth.**
- **To put on the belt of truth means that we find that truth, read it, receive, and recite it until the TRUTH becomes truer and louder than the lie that it opposes.**
  
- So... **What lies are you susceptible to believing?**
- Identify those lies.
- How? By knowing the truth.
- Truth exposes lies!
- You should also just ask the Lord: “Can you show me what lies I have a tendency to believe?”
- And ask your Christian community or family: “Are there any lies that you think I’m believing?”
  
- Once you identify them as a lie, bring them to Jesus, and His word.
  - Read your Bible, listen to sermons that are preaching scripture, listen to worship music that is full of truth.
  - Then recite that truth by speaking and singing it.
- And as we do these things, we will be able to stand firm IN FREEDOM, against the wiles of the devil, because Jesus said:
- **“If you continue in My word...you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:31-32)**