

Put on the Belt of Truth

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Introduction: Open your Bible to the book of **Ephesians 6:10-17**. As Christians, we often think our struggle is against flesh and blood. Our battle is for our mind. We must bring our thoughts captive to the Word of God. The title of our message is "Put on the Belt of Truth".

Let's stand and read **Ephesians 6:10-17**, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. 12 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*. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. 14 **Stand** therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God".

[Prayer for Guidance]

God tells us four times to stand or withstand. God wants us to hold our ground. We are to go forward, progressing in holiness, being conformed to the image of Christ. When we are tempted to go back to our old life or our old way of thinking, we are to hold our ground!

Six pieces of spiritual armor are named in Ephesians 6, and they are divided into two kinds of armor by the use of two verbs. For the first three pieces of armor, Paul used the verb translated "having" along with another word (**verses 14–15**). But we are told to "take" the final three pieces of armor (**verses 16–17**).

The difference is that the first three pieces of armor are things we have already put on. The idea is that we are to wear these pieces all the time, the way we put on our clothes every morning. But the other armor pieces, like the sword and the shield, we pick up as we need them, like a baseball player who picks up his bat when it's his turn to bat.

- I. The **Purpose** of the Belt of Truth. The Belt of Truth tells us of our **need to be Ready for War** at all times. As Christians we are never *not* in battle.

Our spiritual armor is patterned after the armor and weapons of a Roman soldier of the day. For instance, these soldiers wore a long tunic that flowed down to the ground. It was an outer garment that served as his primary clothing. It was usually made of a large square piece of material with holes cut out for the arms and head. Ordinarily it

flowed down to the ground. But when it came time to fight, the soldier would pick up his tunic and tuck it into his belt for mobility in battle.

The purpose of the Belt of Truth is to give us a constant readiness for battle—a constant readiness to fight. The beauty of this piece of armor is not what it can do offensively, but what it can keep you from. The Apostle Paul was writing for his own day and generation when it was the custom for people, men included, to wear long and loose garment. The soldier needed something to gather his tunic so that he could be unencumbered and free to fight. The belt keeps the soldier from snags.

The first thing the soldier always did when he was getting ready to meet the enemy, was to gather all his clothing together and fix it firmly in position by means of this tight band or belt which then held all his clothing in position.

You will find that this picture is one which is used frequently in the Scriptures. We see this illustrated spiritually by Peter. **1 Peter 1:13**, “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”.

Our Lord said in **Luke 12:35**, “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning”. What was he saying? Be focused! Be ready for action! That is the first step always. Never be caught in a condition in which you are not focused on the battle. That is another way of saying, “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth”.

This is a foundational piece of armor. The soldier cannot hope to succeed without it.

Application: What does this mean for us? It means that Satan’s chief scheme is to distract and deceive our mind with false philosophy. There is always a sense of reason with the deceitful schemes of the wicked one. We don’t have to figure all the false teachings of the world out. We do not have to familiarize ourselves with ever false teaching. We must instead be intently focused on the truth.

- II. The **Protection** of the Belt of Truth. Later on we are going to see how we use the Word of God offensively to fight against the wicked one. But here on this piece of armor, Paul says we are to use the Word of God to protect us defensively. We are to take the truth of the Word of God and protect ourselves with it. We are to use it as a belt and to gather all of our thoughts around it. “Let God be true and every man a liar!” In other words, we must rigidly bring our thoughts into captivity by the Word of God.

Paul says it this way in **2 Corinthians 10:5**—we are to be “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”.

So when Paul refers to the Belt of truth, he is speaking of the Word of God in the same way Jesus spoke of the truth in **John 17:17**, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”.

Jesus said also in **John 8:31-32**, “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”. We are unencumbered when we bring every thought captive to the Word of God!

So how does this belt of truth protect us? Look at **1 Peter 5:8-9**, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith.” “The faith” here is representative of the whole of God’s truth and God’s person. We are to have faith in Christ and His way as He is revealed in the Word of God. This is the belt of truth that gathers all of our thoughts around Christ. We are unencumbered by false doctrines and false philosophies.

I do not merely look at the Bible intellectually and study it as if it were a textbook, but it is instead more like a lifeline whose truth holds me and governs my whole attitude toward everything that happens.

We must have a settled conviction that the Bible is the Word of God. We must abandon ourselves to it and let it guide every aspect of our lives. We must bring every thought subject to the Word of God and to the Lordship of Christ. This is the only way to be unencumbered in the battle.

- III. The **Putting on** of the Belt of Truth. How can I “put on” the belt of truth? What does that look like? It means you trust all of God’s promises. When the battle rages, and it looks like God is not good and that you will ultimately fail, you trust God’s Word that all these things are for your good and for God’s glory. You trust the promises that we need to “taste and see that the Lord is good”. You do not let your thoughts go beyond those promises. When it looks like God is not in control, you bring your thoughts away from those snags and you tell yourself that God “works all things after the counsel of His own will”. You must bring every thought into captivity to the Word of God and the obedience of Christ.

James tells us in **James 4:7**, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”. Satan’s battle against you is always in the mind. He is going to try to snag your thoughts away from the promises of God. You must battle him and resist his overtures to take you captive in your thoughts. How do you do this? You submit yourself to all the promises of God. If God says it, then it is true. You get your thoughts under the belt of truth. Let the Word of God hold back any thought that would discourage or distract you.

The belt of truth then, is simply that the Word of God governs my entire perspective on circumstances and life. The devil tries to confuse us, to lead us astray with regard to what we believe. He is a “liar”, he is a “murderer”, he is “the accuser of the brethren”, he is “the adversary”; and, as we have seen, he exercises all his power in order to create confusion and uncertainty in your heart. How can you fight against him? “Gird your loins about with truth!”

There is really no hope for us in this fight with the devil, and all his wiles, unless we possess, and are possessed by, the truth. Without a knowledge of what we believe, and of Him in whom we believe, we are already undone, we are already defeated. “Stand therefore, having girded your loins about with truth”; “Gird up the loins of your mind”. The girdle is the first in the list of “the weapons of our warfare”. Let us be resolute to obey the Apostle’s exhortation, “and having done all things, to stand”

We all have to face this ultimate and final question: Do we accept the Bible as the Word of God, as the sole authority in all matters of faith and practice, or do we not? Is the whole of my thinking governed by Scripture, or do I come with my reason and pick and

choose out of Scripture and sit in judgment upon it, putting myself in the position of ultimate authority?

Why should we always return to the Bible when we have doubt? Why should we believe it? Because, as Paul says, we should not be as children, "carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive". The only way to avoid being deceived is have a compass, to have a map, to have an authority, to have something solid on which we can base our whole life.

The lost person cannot put on the Belt of Truth. **1 Corinthians 2:14**, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned." The truth of God in His Word is nonsense to the unbeliever.

Application: How then do we put on the belt of truth? By utterly surrendering to the revelation of God in His Word. We either take everything the Word of God and surrender ever inch of us to it, or we have no authority at all. You either submit completely to it, or else one man's opinion is as good as another's—and that means that you have no authority at all. Before you can ever succeed in girding your loins about with truth you have to come to God's Word as a little child, you have got to come to it as a 'fool'. He says in **1 Corinthians 3:18**, "If any man seemeth to be wise in this world', he says, 'let him become a fool that he may be wise".

We must abandon ourselves to the Word of God. We must not listen to our adversary the devil. We must not come under the power of our flesh and the deceptive desires of the old life that still dwell in our flesh. We must crucify all those things. It is just as Paul says earlier in **Ephesians 4:22-24**, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

It is as David said in **Psalms 119:11**, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee".

- IV. The **Proficiency** of the Belt of Truth. Look back at our text in **Ephesians 6:13-14**, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. 14 **Stand** therefore, having your loins girt about with truth". You cannot stand without the belt of truth. You will be tripped up by someone's harsh words or someone's deception if you are not anchored in the Word of God. You must trust God implicitly if you are to battle the wicked one. Remember **verse 12**, "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*". You and I as God's children are not wrestling against the Mormons or the false teachers who promote the prosperity gospel. We must gird ourselves with the belt of truth. We must resist the schemes of Satan and his wiles. We must not be caught or dragged down by the devil's falsehoods. We must cling tenaciously to the Word of God.
- V. **Practical Applications** for putting on the Belt of truth.
 - A. Turn off the TV. The Christian is called to be "looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith", and instead many Christians are confused and snagged by looking unto the media. You cannot gird up the loins of your mind through the true

"Bible belt" unless you put of sinful communication. **2 Timothy 2:4**, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Take a break from media. You may not have time for your Bible because when you are down and discouraged you go to media instead of God. Most of what is on TV is geared to deceive you. The world's media is filled with the deceptions of the wicked on.

- B. Remove distractions, search your heart for idols. What is it that controls you if it is not Christ? As the hymn writer said, "Break down every idol, cast out every foe". What is driving your thoughts? It could be a desire for a job, for the right person in your life, for your children to grow up right. It could be a lot of things. Bring your heart and mind captive to the Word of God. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" (**Matthew 6:33**). Let your thoughts and affections be brought into subjection to Christ and His beauty, and what will happen? "...all these things shall be added unto you". "Break down every idol, cast out every foe"!!!!
- C. Open up the Bible. **Psalm 1:1-3**, "Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper". Is your life controlled and under the Lordship of Christ's Word? Are you in captivity to the resurrection power in the Word of God?

It is fine to read Christian books, but we do not need that any man teach us. We need the unction within us, the Spirit of God to teach us.

It is not enough to simply know the Word from books and literature. For a Christian, the Bible is the "engrafted Word". It is the living Word—organic, alive, and producing joy and rest against the schemes of the devil. The Bible is more than a textbook for theology. It is a revelation of the living Christ in your soul. When you read it, it brings all your thoughts captive to it. This is the whole purpose of the Belt of Truth. Put on the mind of Christ! Bring all your thoughts captive to the Word of God and to the obedience of Christ!

Conclusion: Are you dressed for spiritual success? What are you fighting with? Are you taken captive by the schemes of Satan? Does he bring you into discouragement and doubt? How can you fight against him? How do you face the future? How do you deal with temptation and the devil and all the uncertainty of life today? Here is the only answer. May God give us grace and strength to have our loins girt about with truth!