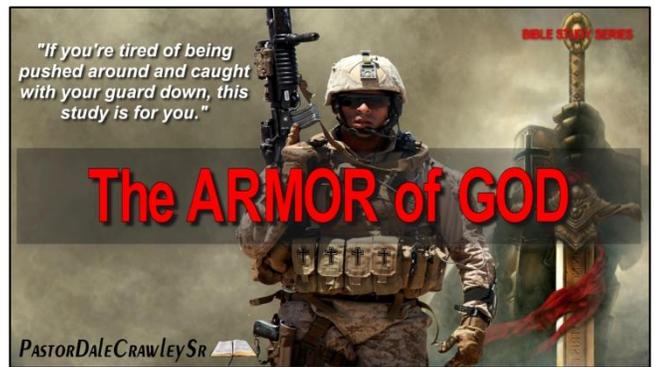


4 - THE BELT OF TRUTH

“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 firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth ...”

Ephesians 6:13-14a (ESV)

(Context: READ Ephesians 6:10-20)



“STRENGTHENING YOUR CORE” ...

Fitness gyms are packed with people lifting weights, riding spin bikes, and walking on treadmills. People are firming muscle, shedding pounds, and expanding their lung capacity.

But even with all the equipment, classes and memberships ... most workout programs tend to neglect a key part of the body: **the core**. A person can exercise zealously, and yet not be growing stronger in the place where they need it most!

Your core is the area around your trunk and pelvis, comprised of abdominal muscles groups. It's the central link in the chain that connects the lower and upper parts of your body, enabling all your limbs and movements to work together in harmony. Every motion you make – whether sweeping the floor or swinging a bat – requires support from this area. A strong core helps with your balance, your stability, your resistance to injury, your stamina over time and under pressure. In fact, a weak core could mean the difference between being able to walk upright or being relegated to a chair. The condition of your core affects everything.

Looking at the equipment of a Roman soldier, Paul metaphorically uses each piece of equipment to illustrate the significance of and need for the armor. In doing so, Paul first entry of the list of equipment **is the belt of truth**.

TRUTH correcting defined ... is God's view on the matter (and all matters).

Generally speaking, our society isn't one that takes strong, firm stands on truth. Even the church, sadly too often fails to hold clear views on right living and God-honoring choices. Many people who call themselves Christians today don't have a strong core belief system to govern their lives. They don't frame their decisions around the truth of God's Word, aren't stable and sturdy in their convictions, are too easily injured and wounded by others, and buckle under pressure rather than standing tough and persevering.

A Roman soldier “girded his loins” with something more akin to a girdle than a belt. Most scholars agree that more than any other piece of the soldier's clothing or equipment, this girdle or belt with its décor and elaborate buckles distinguished a soldier from a civilian. It wasn't some optional secondary accessory ... it was a strategic, primary focal point of their attire.

Truth is your core support. *It provides the essential backing you need when you're in the midst of a spiritual battle and war.*

Remember, the enemy's overarching device of deception!

- He shades reality with enticing and alluring colors, seducing us away from black-and-white principles.
- He propagates fantasies, causing temporal and insignificant things to somehow appear immensely valuable and favorable.
- He hides consequences in the fine print while highlighting on the parts that appeal to our shortsighted, self-gratifying flesh.
- His packaging is so clever that unless we know what's true – I mean really now it, know it at our core ... we easily fall prey to his ploys.

It is fitting that the belt of truth is the first piece of the whole armor of God. Jesus is “*the way, the truth, and the life*” (John 14:6), and it is only through Him that we come to God. Therefore, **truth** is of the utmost importance in the life of a Christian. Without truth, the rest of the armor would be of no use to us because we would not have the Spirit of truth (John 15:26).

This piece of the armor protects us against the lies and deceptions of the enemy. Scripture does call Satan the father of lies (John 8:44). As we see in Scripture, the devil likes to operate in half-truths (Genesis 3). He twists the truth ever so slightly to cause people to stumble away from God's truth.

The belt of truth prevents us from falling prey to the devil's lies. If we don't have an understanding of the truth, the rest of the armor is useless. If we have the belt on crooked, we'll have difficulty gripping the Sword of the Spirit (God's word) in time, and risk having our more vital organs exposed.

What Does Jesus Say about Truth? Being Truth himself, Jesus has some things to say about this subject. In addition to declaring that He's “the truth” he also says:

- Truth will set us free (John 8:32) from Satan's lies and tyranny over our lives.
- God's word is truth (John 17:17)
- Everyone who is of the truth listens to God's voice (John 18:37-38)

GOD'S TRUTH

Biblical truth. Without concrete allegiance to and affirmation with this truth – with real truth – you're left weak and susceptible to things that may look right and sound right ... yet actually aren't right. But with the standard of truth in place, you can adjust everything else in your life – your ambitions, choices, and feelings; your mind, will, and emotions – until all of it is “*tuned*” correctly. When you have a strong, stable, well-supported core, you can't easily be led astray by the enemy's clever lies. Gird yourself with truth ... and you'll be on guard from the word “Go!”