

Fasten on the Belt of Truth

This week we continued our series in Ephesians, unpacking the Armor of God given to us as we engage in spiritual warfare. Knowing that Christians battle the powers of this present darkness and the spiritual forces of evil, we studied the essential imperative for us to stand, girding our waists with the truth of God. As we studied the belt of truth we saw two points: 1) The truth holds everything together and 2) The truth re-unites everything together.

Ephesians 6:10-14a

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. **11** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. **12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil 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 firm. **14** Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth

I. There are contrasting truths of our culture. We either hold to and believe them, or we hold to and believe the truth of Scripture.

- Do you see this tension in your walk with Christ? If so, where?

II. Scripture teaches that God is truth, and that everything flowing from Him through His word and work is truth. Specifically, all of God's design for life and humanity are found in Him and through Him.

- Do you struggle believing this?

III. In the Garden, the enemy's first attempt to unravel God's good design was to challenge the goodness of God (truth Himself) and the words of God ("did God really say..."). Because Adam and Eve were not girded with the truth, they succumbed to the enemy's attack and the world began to unravel as God's good design was distorted. On a personal scale, when we remove truth from our lives we experience an unraveling of sorts.

- Where in your life have you seen the unraveling of God's design because you have removed truth from its central place?
- How has it affected you?

IV. The Second Adam, Truth made flesh in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, demonstrated resistance to the enemy's attacks through the girding of His waist with truth. This time, not in a garden but in a wilderness, Jesus resisted the temptations of Satan to doubt the goodness of God and to question the revelation of God by using the truth of God's Word. As our second Adam, we can be represented in Christ and thus reunited to God through His faithfulness. This is part of how truth re-unites everything that has been unraveled and fulfills its role spoken of in Ephesians (1:13). The Gospel is the word of truth and we see in the Word made flesh the truth of His faithfulness for us.

- Do you have a saving faith in the work of Christ?

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- Do you know those who do not?
 - How does seeing the unraveling of people's life compel you to want to share the truth of the Gospel with them?

V. Ephesians also demonstrates how the truth re-unites humans and humans. The mystery of Ephesians 3 is unpacked practically in 4:15 & 4:25: the people of God have no excuse for not being reconciled because we can speak the truth in love. When the Truth, who is Christ, defines our community then the truth of Christ unites us, meaning we must work hard for reconciliation to one another and for unity as a whole. The temptation is to let the bitterness of disagreements divide as we also allow the truths of "culture clubs" to define us. When unaddressed, we further the handiwork and plans of the enemy and work counter to God's clearly stated designs.

- Where in your life and relationship do you need to work towards reconciliation with a renewed fervor?
- Where do you see your life shaped more by the truths of our culture clubs, dividing the Bride of Christ, rather than the truths of our Kingdom that should unite us?
- How can we be faithful in re-centering the truth in and through our community?

VI. Paul states explicitly the ultimate purposes of God to unite "all things" in Christ (1:10) and the role of the truth is to shine the light on all the darkness in this world (5:9-13). The church is called the "pillar and buttress of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15) because we 1) Know truth personally through a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and 2) Live truth through obedience to His mission.

- How can you contribute to the mission of Truth to unite all things in Christ by shining light in the dark places of our world?
- What would it look like for you to do this with your family? Neighborhood? City?
- And in this world? What role can you play?