

Stand Firm Against Demonic Lies With These Spiritual-Warfare Weapons

In the spiritual warfare passage from Ephesians 6, Paul's first instruction is to "stand therefore, having your waist girded with truth" (v. 14). It may seem strange that the belt or girdle is the first item of the Roman soldier's equipment that Paul mentions, since it wasn't a piece of armor at all. But the belt had a central function that was vital to most of the soldier's armor and weapons.

The soldier's basic attire was a tunic—a shirt-like garment that draped from shoulder to knee. Over this, he wore metal torso armor and long, protective leather strips that hung from his waist to his lower thighs around his entire body. His belt was a band of wide, thick leather with loops and slots that clamped over these items. From it hung a sword, rope, ration sack, money sack and darts. Everything the soldier needed in hand-to-hand combat was on his belt, right there at his fingertips.

When running, the soldier pulled up his tunic and tucked it in his belt, freeing his legs for speed and maneuverability. This was known as "girding one's loins."

While the belt had no offensive function of its own, it was the piece of equipment that essentially held everything else together, keeping the soldier ready for anything he might face.

Here's what this means for us today: Truth is what fits us for the life of a Christian. Truth holds everything together and makes us ready. At the center of our lives, we place "the truth [that] is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21). And everything we do is drawn from that all-encompassing center.

When we know the truth and live the truth, we can access our weapons quickly and confidently, without fear that anything is out of place in our lives. "We have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by expressing the truth and commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. 4:2). Truth gives us courage to stand against our enemy.

Why is truth to be our primary concern? Because the weapons of Satan's major attacks against believers are falsehood and deception. He is the great deceiver! This is how the Bible describes the devil: "When he lies, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

When we stand in the truth, we never speak from our own resources. We speak from the truth revealed to us through the Bible and the Holy Spirit. Speaking truth is not always comfortable. But it is always right.

Some years ago, a prominent Bible scholar was about to publish a book explaining how his research led him to a conclusion about the authorship of an Old Testament book. He knew his findings would upset the prevailing consensus of modern scholarship, and he dreaded the storm of criticism that would follow. But he went on to say, "There is a worse fate than being misunderstood; it is to be to truth a timid friend."

As a soldier wearing the belt of truth, you need not be timid about standing strong in defense of God's reality. From that belt, you draw all the resources you need to combat a culture that promotes falsehood and attacks truth.