

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Finally, brethren, summon up courage, be strong. *We find strength in union with the Lord, not in ourselves.* **Its strength in the power of His might.** We draw strength from the Lords boundless supply, that is the reason we are strong. The power of His might – If the Lord assists us with His might, we need not fear any battle.

We come to this vast and rich subject. Loins Girt about with truth and having the breastplate of righteousness. The feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, above all taking up the shield of faith, take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. A picture of a Roman soldier clad for war. We shall look at these pieces but today I think we may only be able to cover just 2 pieces.

Be strong and put on the whole Armour of God – be furnished with every grace, The Whole Armour that none is missing, that no part is exposed to the enemy, that you may be able to stand and to fight and to OVERCOME. Against the wiles of the devil, to overcome requires our full armour, the complete armour that God provides. The reason we are so courageous is we realise the Lord is with us, and our enemies are alone without any help. While our Master has said. I will never leave you nor forsake you Lo I am with you always.

The enemy always attacks where we are weakest. The Christian armour is made to be put on; it is given for us to use. But almost all of us are guilty of neglecting the offered grace given. **In this armour there is protection for repelling every kind of attack, but it remains** for us to apply them to make use of them.

The Ephesians were told to Stand and adopt a posture to fight their enemy. To stand up from sleep a call to vigilance.

Paul reminds the Ephesians but also us of open warfare he reminds us of the wiles of the devil. That our battle is not against flesh and blood. **But how do these principalities and powers fight against us?** They can't put sickness upon us at their will - They cant force us to do evil, but only tempt us.

This is how the enemy attack us? The enemy **tempts us** and tries to get us to sin, **entices us to lie**, or act with a bad temper **or lose our temper**. He will visit with false doctrine, if he can; he is constantly trying to introduce false doctrine into the church. He will introduce denial of the Scripture, doubts and questions. He does it gently at first. Very subtle. He will try to get us to **Question Gods word**, like at the fall of man *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said to the woman, Is it so that God has said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?.* Genesis 3:1

He tempts us to love our business, or any number of things overly much, tempts us to revolve everything around our business, or these many temperal things. yes, we must be responsible but he pushes us further and further. We find ourselves putting other things, temperoral things first and God second. That's His goal.

Or he puts the thoughts in us that it's not our responsibility to preach the Gospel and to witness. It's the Pastors work, or God will save who he wants to save. He Tries to get us to place our full attention on this earths things, so we have no time to witness or do anything for Gods Kingdom. These are just some of His many attacks.

But whatever the attack there is a piece of Amor that is sure to defeat the and sure to keep us safe. Sure to overcome all his strategies.

And now the Apostle Speaks of several pieces of Armor.

Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.

Loins girt about **with truth**. What is meant by loins and **what is truth?**

What is truth Here? Some say it is Christ. Christ is truth. But **Christ is far more than only one single piece of armour, for one part, our loins**. No Christ is mighty, if anything He is the whole Armour not just a single piece. So, truth as it is used here, cannot really mean Christ.

There are Two ways of seeing truth. **1 objective truth** - the unchanging doctrines of the faith; as truth of Doctrine, **2 subjective truth**, truthfulness and sincerity as truth of heart, honesty of mind, the removal of all hypocy in our relationship

with the Lord. no guile, in our actions and feelings to the Lord. *There must be truth in the inward parts.* Psalm 51:6

It is not one or the other, but both of these are required to make this belt complete. **Doctrinal, truth** of His unchanging ways, the solid doctrines that defend our souls, - **and sincerity of heart truthfulness of heart to Him**, seriousness of heart to Him. Consecration and commitment to Him.

A bible example of sincerity of heart without doctrinal knowledge of the truth- is Saul of Tarsus, when he was full of Zeal fighting Christians, thinking He was doing good service unto God.. **he was very sincere, and very committed** but very wrong. **He had no knowledge of objective truth...the unchanging doctrines, and purposes of God.**

Both are needed, honesty or sincerity of heart **in what we put our hand to** - and then knowledge of the TRUTH. Both indeed are required to make the girdle (belt) complete; one will not do without the other.

Isn't it interesting how satan tries to steal the truth, tries to oppose the truth, **The more he opposes the truth the more we should hold fast to the truth.** In the ancient Roman times, the belt of truth was one of the most important parts of the Armour for without the belt of TRUTH the other pieces of armour are not held in place securely.

It was truth that kept Joseph when He was sorely tempted by potifers wife, when she cast her eye upon Him, and day by day tempted Him. He said, **"How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"** Gen 39:9 It was the truth and knowledge of God that strengthened Joseph to boldly say 'How can I do this great wickedness against God'

The verse opened by exhorting us – **STAND THEREFORE**- * We are told that the grey heron has a very singular mode of defence. When attacked by the eagle or falcon it **simply stands quiet and firm**, using its bill as a sword, allowing the enemy to pierce himself through by his own force. **The Christian's method of defence is very similar.** We have the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. When attacked by the enemy, without or within, **stand firm and display the Word, hold**

it forth. The more fiercely the foe attacks the more surely shall they pierce themselves with it. His Word is a fire, all that cross it shall be burned. **"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth"**

Next is Loins, we look at what is meant by Loins – We use scripture to interpret scripture and see in *1 Peter 1:13 Therefore girding up the loins of your mind, being sober, perfectly hope for the grace being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Our Spirit and our minds are compared to the loins. **The Loins speak of the seat of all our strength.** If a man has weak loins, he is a weak man.

Let your thoughts, and let your minds be focused, prompt, ready, prepared for your spiritual work, keep your mind in check from all those thoughts, cares, affections, and lusts, which may entangle, detain, hinder. *Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

If we have a focus on God's Word and rich understanding of Scripture and truth, **We will be strong and sincere and fixed on Gods purposes.**

But if we only focus on carnal things the result is a darkened understanding, if we are uncertain about scripture. If we are wavering and not convinced of mind we will be weak and faltering. **The shaking of the loins is a phrase to express weakness.** *Psalms 69:23 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.*

Our minds and spirits need the belt of truth. To strengthen them, and to brace us, or we will tremble from terror, dismay, and feebleness. How solid and strong is a Christian established in Truth not wavering but braced.

Having the Breastplate of Righteousness. This is the largest and biggest piece of armour, suggesting that satan attacks in this area the most. **What is it the breastplate protects,** we look briefly at this subject the breastplate of righteousness. It's the piece of armour that protects the whole chest area that is where your heart is. I read that this piece of Roman armour which the Apostle compares to the Spiritual Armour was more than a breastplate It protected the back as well the front, it gave protection to the neck and the Hips. It wrapped a strong defence all around them, back and front protecting the vital organs, protecting the heart, from

the foe. **The heart in scripture speaks of your feelings and affections.** The Heart needs to be protected from thoughts, words, and deeds. Our hearts can be contaminated and corrupted so easily by hurts resulting in "lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled." **So we put on this breastplate of righteousness to protect this treasure** which we have a **Born Again heart** we put it on to protect conscience and feelings that have been touched and sanctified and purified by our conversion. Our heart is like a reservoir of life-of purity. If we had a bottle of clean water, we would be very very careful not to pour in any dirty water, any contaminated water, we wouldn't pour in any think we know to be impure. It's the same with our hearts. We guard them.

One sure way we know someone has the breastplate of righteousness on and in place is they have a great desire to follow in obedience to Gods ways. And they are a positive influence of salt and light wherever they go. They do lasting good to their neighbourhood. They are conscious of their behaviour and actions offending God, and walk reverently and rather want to please Him.

So how does a Christian put on the Breastplate of Righteousness. **We put it on by self-denial.** Suppose someone never denied or limited themselves to what they watch on TV. It's an intriguing story they want to know what's happening but there is very bad language. It is crammed full of sexual images. Yet they enjoy it because it is so well acted and done. You begin to like it, you begin to excuse the badness. It has corrupted your affections. It has weakened you, and lowered your standard. We now tolerate the sins portrayed.

What we should have done is say to ourselves No, I can't watch this program **I'm going to guard my heart.** I'm not going to allow that to win my affections. **Christ is my most sacred possession. I'm going to deny myself watching this. *I'm going to diligently keep my heart.***

We put on the breastplate of righteousness by self-denial. Are we protecting what is most precious to us.

We think of the well-known scripture **Proverbs 4:23** Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. **We keep and guard our hearts with the breastplate of righteousness.**

Our Lord constantly wore the breastplate of righteousness. Because He constantly desired and delighted to do His Fathers will. When our Lord was faced with the greatest battle of all time, He said *Luke 22:42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*

The breastplate of righteousness would lie neglected if we did not believe that holiness is pleasing to God, and essential to our happiness.

We would neglect it if we had no interest in obedience to Gods Word. Scriptures **like be renewed in the spirit of your mind.** Eph 4:23 Scriptures like **put on** the new man, who according to God *was* created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph 4:24

Oh but we who have been forgiven much Love much and desire much to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord. We desire to walk in Holiness and truth and consecration unto our Lord. We desire to keep our hearts full of God's word, lest the flow of life would be little and weak.

"All my trust on Thee is stayed, All my help from Thee I bring; Cover my defenseless head With the shadow of Thy wing." The righteousness of Christ is the breastplate of the soul.