

speaking to God's people

freegiftfromgod

bible studies

Subject: **The Armour of God – Pt 1 - Truth**

Scripture

Introduction

Commentary

In the last newsletter and bible study I wrote about the fact that as Christians we are at war. Anyone who doubts this only needs to carefully study the words of the Apostles and the Lord to find this is true. We are at war, but not in the physical sense, we are war in the Spirit.

But we are fortunate for we have on our side the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who has already conquered and who will give us the victory. He did not call us to himself so that we could be walked over by the devil and his servants. No! He called us to share in the victory with him over the spiritual forces that oppose us as well as the passions and desires of our flesh that wage war against our inner selves.

And in doing this he gave us weapons to use as we wage this war against our flesh and the spiritual hosts of wickedness. Paul tells us:

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

	<p>So in order that we do what is required, let us spend the new few weeks looking at the whole armour of God and what that means for us.</p>
Ephesians 6:14	<p>The first of the pieces of armour described here is:</p> <p><i>“...having girded your loins with truth.”</i></p> <p>Other translations talk about putting on the belt or girdle of truth.</p> <p>The very first thin we must have to wage this spiritual war is an understanding of the truth. There are many who profess to know the truth and promote something they consider to be the truth, but it is not always so.</p> <p>Where will a person find the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? In the word of God. If we are to find the truth we need to have a strong understanding of the word of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ and his Apostles as laid down in the scriptures. The word of God is truth as Jesus himself testified saying:</p> <p><i>“Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth” (John 17:17)</i></p> <p>We must go to Jesus for He is the Word and the only truth that exists for us comes from and through him and He is the only way to the Father</p>
John 14:6	<p>Jesus showed us where the truth lays in many places. One of the most quoted is in this scripture.</p> <p><i>"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me"</i></p> <p>Jesus is the truth and access to the Father is by and through Him alone. He is the way by which we come to the Father and His way is the truth. And in the truth there is life eternal as well as life in this age. It is the knowledge of the truth that offers this better life here and now as well as a future with God.</p>

If we are to find the truth and the way to God, then we must follow the “way” that is Jesus. His way of truth is shown in many places. Consider this interesting contrast made by the apostle John.

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17)

There is a subtle contrast here that says Jesus gave us the truth and Moses gave the law. The law led to condemnation for all of mankind for it identified sin for what it is and made it more sinful. But the law was not the truth for truth came through Jesus Christ.

This is a very interesting point being made by John for if the law is not truth, what is it? The subtlety here is that it is not the law that is the truth, even though the law is true, but it is the keeping of the law that is truth. The truth is about how we behave and how we live our lives in obedience to the Father. It is not about keeping laws but is about living as Christ lived and being transformed into his image through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Just as an aside, when all the work of God is done and the final judgement has been completed and God lives with man, then the truth will be among us. Do you think there will be any law? Do you think there will still be the commandments telling us what “Thou shalt or shalt not do?”

No, there will be no law in God’s kingdom because it will not be required. If all of mankind lived in obedience to the ways of God and were living in perfect harmony and the image of Christ, why would there be any need for the law? When the truth reigns in our lives we do not break God’s law because we do not have the desire to do wrong. When all sin and causes of sin have been removed as the bible says will happen, then the law becomes irrelevant for those who enter God’s kingdom will desire only to do what is good and right and true.

But we are not there yet and we still need the armour of God to fight the current spiritual war. So first we must seek out God’s truth, not what someone says is the truth or what we think is the truth. We must find THE truth.

John 8:31-36

So how will we know the truth when we find it? There are so many people promoting all kinds of things in the name of Christianity that they call the truth, but they cannot all be right? Sometimes their positions are almost polar opposites, so whom do you believe?

Fortunately in this scripture Jesus gave us some insight into the nature of the truth and it can be used as a test to determine truth from error. He said:

31 Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples,

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

33 They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to any one. How is it that you say, 'You will be made free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin.

35 The slave does not continue in the house for ever; the son continues for ever.

36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

Many people quote this verse that says, "...the truth will make you free." But not many really understand the implications of this statement.

Firstly we can see that if the truth truly makes a person free, then anything that would lead a person into bondage or enslave them in any way is not of the truth. Knowing this, you can weigh what a person or a minister says to see whether their position or teaching is really of the truth or not.

But then in the above section we see this fascinating conversation. The Jews said they had never been in bondage, so how could they be made free. Jesus replied in verse 34, "...every one who commits sin is a slave to sin." So a sinner is in slavery and in bondage and therefore a sinner cannot be of the truth.

Let me ask a very controversial question here. Do you call yourself a sinner? Many people will answer this saying, "I am a sinner saved by grace." But in that statement they are saying that they are indeed sinners. So let me be controversial again, do you still continue to sin even now you are covered by grace? If you

	<p>answered yes to this statement then again you are saying you are a sinner and therefore in bondage and slavery, but also that the grace of God is not good enough because in God's grace He did not forgive your sins in Jesus Christ, he took them away! John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)</p> <p>So if Jesus took away the sin of the world, when you call yourself a sinner you are bringing them back! And if you call yourself a sinner you are saying God's grace was not good enough and you are still enslaved to sin and in bondage under the laws that condemn those who sin.</p> <p>So what is the truth? The truth will set you free but if you are in this position, you are not free but in bondage.</p> <p>There is a way out of this and a way to work through this issue that is of the truth and each individual must find it. But it cannot be found by a man's own knowledge and insight, it must come from God.</p>
John 4:24-25	<p>God is of the spiritual realm and his message is a message of the Spirit. Jesus shows us that we must find the truth so that we can come to God. He said,</p> <p><i>23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.</i></p> <p><i>24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."</i></p> <p>If we call ourselves sinners, no matter how we might try to soften that statement, we are in bondage and not worshiping in spirit and truth. No sinner is of the truth so we need to find the way to pass out of the bondage of sin into the freedom of the truth through Jesus. When we find the truth all of the condemnation, heartache over failures, falling down and so on disappears. We find that place that Paul was in saying,</p> <p><i>3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself.</i></p> <p><i>4 I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.</i></p>

	<p>Paul was in a place where he knew of nothing against himself. He did not even judge himself. He stood before God with a clean heart and a clear conscience. He did not call himself a sinner for if that were the case he could not have said what he said. To call himself a sinner would be to self-condemn, but instead he left all judgement of himself to the Lord and his acquittal or judgement would be from the Lord alone.</p> <p>That is where we all need to come to. Then we too will stand righteous before God, not through anything we do, but through the truth and the grace of God. There is no righteousness except that which comes from God so we cannot do it ourselves, it must come from Him. And he has provided us the means by which we may have his righteousness so that we can worship in Spirit and truth.</p>
John 16:13	<p>In this scripture we see how the Lord provides us with the insight so that we can learn and understand the truth from God. It is not of our own doing but is of the Spirit for he says:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.</i></p> <p>The Spirit of truth, who is the Holy Spirit, is the one who teaches us the truth and guides our hearts and minds to understand the truth. I do not know how to teach you the truth so that you can understand it, but the Holy Spirit knows. The words that would convince one person will confuse or baffle another. But the Holy Spirit who dwells within can take the words of the truth and translate them into a message that will go to the very core of your being.</p> <p>This is how we can and will learn to worship in spirit and truth. It is how we will understand and gain access to the freedom that is in the truth of Christ Jesus. It is how we are convicted to see the difference between truth and error so that we can accept the truth and reject error.</p>
John 18:37-38	<p>Pontius Pilate posed a very interesting question worth pondering when Jesus stood before him. He said,</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>37 Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was</i></p>

born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice."

38 Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

What is truth? It is the freedom that comes only through the knowledge of Jesus Christ for he said, "The truth will make you free." It is the path that leads to righteousness and freedom from sin, freedom from bondage and freedom from the slavery of the passions of our flesh.

But will all hear and listen to the truth? No they won't for as Jesus said above, "Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice," which suggests there will be those who are not of the truth and thus do not listen to Jesus.

We see a perfect example of this falling away from the truth in the letter of Paul to the Galatians. They began with the truth and the freedom it offered, then went back into slavery under the law as preached by some Jewish preachers. Paul's comment to them was,

"You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?" (Galatians 5:7)

And what was it that they were doing that took them away from the truth? They were seeking circumcision and to be bound under the laws of Moses. They were going back into bondage and rejecting the freedom of the truth that comes through the word of Jesus Christ. And Paul further showed their folly saying in Galatians 5:1-4,

1 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

2 Now I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.

3 I testify again to every man who receives circumcision that he is bound to keep the whole law.

4 You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

They were free but then returned to slavery, which is not of the truth. And if they accepted the bondage of

	<p>the law, then Christ would be of no advantage to them. In fact those who followed the path of the law and became enslaved by it were severed and cut off from Christ.</p> <p>Pretty strong words and oddly enough in many churches today preachers are still preaching saying to keep the laws and Ten Commandments and that we are all sinners. This is not what Jesus or the Apostles taught for it is not of the truth. Jesus came to set us free from bondage, not to wrap us up more tightly. Don't get me wrong though, I am not against the law or suggesting it is evil. It is absolutely holy, just and good as Paul said also, but it is bondage for man that stands against man finding the truth. To find the truth you need to find the pathway to the truth that comes from Jesus, not a self-righteousness based on keeping laws.</p>
So what next?	<p>The study of what is or is not truth is a fascinating subject and not to be taken lightly. It is the first of the weapons and armour of God that will allow us to stand against the wiles of the devil. Just think, if the devil can entangle you in lies, then he wins. And there is so much that is taught that is not of the truth that it is imperative we each find the truth and live in it.</p> <p>So now it's your turn. What would you like to add to this conversation? Send me an email (link below) or engage with me on Twitter (@JohnBLemmon) and let's have the discussion continue.</p> <p>Feel free also to send this to others so they can join the conversation, as there is so much more I could add, but then that leaves nothing for you to say. I hope this has added value to your own walk with Christ.</p>

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