

Paul continues with his Roman legionnaire illustration by referencing the 'belt of truth'. A legionnaire's belt was a very important part of his equipment.

To see a Roman soldier without his belt would be an indication that he was under punishment. Indeed, he himself would feel undressed. The belt not only supported his sword ('Gladius', the blade roughly 18" long – not a 'Spartha', the longer curved cavalry blade, the origin of Sabre, but would also hold his 'puggio', (a shorter all-purpose knife) and his purse, which would hold personal items of wealth and salt for savouring his food. In full armour it would also support his 'Kirtle', the tasselled leather skirt to protect his upper legs. The belt wasn't just there to keep his tunic off the ground. Therefore, Paul saying; 'with the belt of truth buckled . . .etc.' gives an indication as to not only how important the truth is, but also that we should hold onto it firmly – hence buckled. It also suggests that whilst truth is truth there are aspects that are more important depending on the circumstances. This is not to say that there are 'degrees of truth', rather that the whole truth isn't always helpful – we need to know what we need to know when we need to know it.

This week we celebrate our church anniversary. What do you want to give thanks for as we celebrate God's faithfulness as a church?

Read Ephesians 6:14

1. Why do you think that Paul chose to use the illustration of a Roman soldier to demonstrate the moral imperatives for Christians?
2. How do you think Paul's audience would react to the comparison of Christian morals/truth to that of a legionnaire?

3. Why is a two, or double-edged sword such a powerful image?
4. Where else in the Bible is a two/double edged sword mentioned? Do these other references have the same meaning? If not why?
5. What recent examples can you give where truth has been corrupted? What was the rationale behind such falsehood and what was the outcome?
6. In the time Paul was writing the sight of a Roman legionnaire would be a daily occurrence. Apart from a few, rare re-enactments or an old film we may never have seen one. What current day image can you think of to make the same point that Paul makes?
7. The 'belt of truth', Paul says, 'is buckled around the waist'. I mentioned above that a legionnaire would feel undressed without his belt to wear. How do you feel when confronted by untruths? How can prayer help to combat untruths in your life?
8. I, personally, find it confusing when, in a courtroom the oath required of witnesses says; ' I promise to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth' and yet, often, the questions asked and the rules of the court frequently prevent this from being fulfilled. What would your remedy be? Discuss.
9. We live in a world whereby truth is altered or denied in order to help those who feel oppressed. What are the implications of ignoring shared truths as a society for the sake of the minority? How does the message of the gospel help us when groups feel oppressed?

Prayer Points

With the 3rd anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine, please pray for a lasting solution for both peace and justice.

Give thanks for the newcomers to Beulah and pray that they settle into the fuller life of the church.

Continue to pray for those no longer able to join us in person at a Sunday service.

Praise God for the Oasis Mission Hub in Ghana and BMS' support in making this vision a reality. Pray that the mission hub will facilitate the recruiting, training and sending of young African mission workers to places in Africa and beyond.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

March 2nd 2025

The Armour of God:

The Belt of Truth

As we read in our series on Daniel last year, an unseen battle is going on around us in the spiritual realm. In Paul's letter we see that God has provided everything we need to stand firm and resist evil, but we are called to be actively aware of both the struggle and the resources available.

In Ephesians 6 the apostle Paul gives us the clearest description anywhere in Scripture of believers' resources for the spiritual battle. He vividly describes them as armour, which we must repeatedly take up in prayerful reliance on God.

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001