

shades of truth? ... NO

We started to look way back in April (before we took another direction with the pandemic) at how a Christian manages to survive and keep a vital relationship with the Lord, in an environment that is less than conducive to spiritual growth. Paul encourages us in Ephesians 6:10-18 to put on the whole armour of God. This is essential to have all-round protection from satanic attacks.

This month lets tackle the process of dealing with each aspect of the armour, so we can get a better idea of what each piece stands for and what it achieves.

We are living in a day where truth seems to have many shades, and certainly doesn't appear to mean what it is supposed to mean. Some time ago I had a couple of Jehovah's Witnesses on my doorstep sharing their particular version of what they believe to be the gospel. I told them I was a Christian and they very quickly responded by indicating they were not only Christians, but born-again Christians.



PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ USA editions - Main, Spanish and Prison editions recommencing distribution
- ★ African editions - South Africa Main and Prison, Zimbabwe, Botswana also recommencing distribution
- ★ The responses coming from prisoners in South Africa. Although World Hope can't take teams into prisons, the church within continues to grow. We are seeing 400-500 responses per month
- ★ His continued care, protection and financial provision for the Challenge ministry

Now I could have taken that at face value and agreed with them. However, I was immediately suspicious of their claim and decided to ask exactly what they meant. They hedged around the issue and clearly didn't respond to my inquiries. So I decided to get down to specifics and asked them how they had become a Christian.

To help them a little further I asked them about their story of conversion to Jesus Christ. Once again I was greeted by quizzical looks. Eventually they revealed what made them Christians was what they were doing i.e., going door to door, and that made them acceptable to God.

To them this was truth, but it wasn't biblical truth, so it is not surprising that the first piece of the armour Paul says to put on, is the belt of truth. As the normal belt is central to the body it is essential we see that the absolute truth of God's Word is essential for us to be able to stand in this world, against what seems an overwhelming enemy.

We must see that biblical truth is an essential ingredient to our daily growth and development. When we talk about putting on truth it is not some obscure, vague thing.

Truth, like all the other pieces of the

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armour, represents a crucial part of the character of God.

So when we put on the belt of truth we put on Christ. In John 14:6 Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life..." Everything about God is truth, so if we are indwelt of God the Holy Spirit, then we should be filled with truth, we should be the purveyors of truth. John 17:17 says "Sanctify them by your truth. Your Word is truth". As the Word of God is read it refines us, moulds and shapes us into the people God wants us to be.

Also as we put on the Word of truth daily, God gives us wisdom for daily living, discernment for decisions as well as dealing with people like my two visitors. We live in an age where truth has

become so relative, which has resulted in the shifting of society's moral and ethical compass, to the point that we no longer seem to know, or want to know, what is right or wrong.

We must see that the belt of truth is intrinsically related to every other piece of the armour. If we start with a perceived truth then we are not going to be able to put on the rest of the armour. Recently we have had a number of liberal theologians bring into question the cardinal building blocks of Christianity. These range from the death and resurrection of Jesus, the inerrancy of Scripture and the like. This erroneous thinking is the enemy's way of keeping the belt of truth off the Christian.

The other important aspect of putting on the belt of truth is that putting on the character of God in the form of biblical truth should impact how we live. Such a Christian is one who does not lie. They can be trusted; their word can be relied upon. They are the person that doesn't steal because they value the fact that their witness is all-important i.e., so cheating on their tax return is not an option.

So putting on the belt of truth is both foundational and fundamental to putting on the whole armour of God. We must start with the absolute truth of God's Word and keep it on to maintain a proper perspective on the world around us.

{ CARL CARMODY
EDITOR CHALLENGE }

PRAYER needed for:

- ★ Our partners in South Africa – Multi Ministries, World Hope Prison Ministry, RICO Ministry as they continue to be shutdown in their communities
- ★ Our writers who contribute each month to Challenge newspaper. We often have people write into Challenge enquiring or making comment on an article. Our writers make a very important contribution
- ★ The Challenge Board as they navigate new directives from government for all Boards. They need the Lord's wisdom and direction as they handle the overall running of the ministry.
- ★ Our USA prison edition. We supply the papers free to Chaplains and Prisons however we rely on donations to cover the costs. Pray that we will see an increase in support especially during this time as we are seeing an unprecedented level of requests from chaplains



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