
Heart and Soul ... A Weekly Meditation

June 22, 2014

Becoming a Confident Witness

“So stand with the belt of truth around your waist, justice as your breastplate.”
Ephesians 6:14 (Common English Bible)

There are some people who never take a stand. I am thinking of a cartoon of a pastor sitting with his church board. Prominent in the board room is a chart that shows a steady decline in worship attendance over several months. The room is filled with discouragement, no one more discouraged than the pastor. One board member speaks: “Perhaps, pastor, it would help if you stopped concluding each sermon with the comment, ‘But then, what do I know?’” Many are those who live each day by loose opinions rather than fixed convictions. But the pastor should not be one of them!

Here, the Apostle Paul is speaking of considerable forces and powers that seek to diminish Christ’s witness and work in the world. Rather than dodging the difficulties they present, Paul urges a magnificent facing of those powers: “So stand with the belt of truth around your waist, justice as your breastplate.” The spiritual forces of evil are to be resisted as a soldier stands before an enemy, employing all means to stop their advance. The church is engaged in a cosmic conflict and the armor for battle can be nothing short of God’s truth and justice.

It is important to understand that when Paul wrote these words, soldiers wore a belt around the waist to hold loose garments tight to the body and to allow quick movement. Our “belt” in this spiritual conflict is “truth.” Paul speaks of the truth that is God’s Word, not some sentiment or emotion. Neither sentiment nor emotion has the capacity of strength necessary to face the church’s enemy. Each of us must face the opponent with “the belt of truth around our waist.”

The difficulty is that no one can stand in the power of God’s truth when little time has been given to become acquainted with this truth. There is simply no substitute for the regular and disciplined study of the Bible. As a soldier must properly prepare for battle if victory is to be achieved, the Christian must prepare by learning and applying God’s Word each day. As God’s Word takes up residence in our lives the “belt of truth” is fastened around our waist, our character is forged and we become an unbridled force for the cause of Christ.

Discipline my heart and time for the regular study and meditation of Your Word in the Bible, O Lord that I may become a more confident witness to the cause of Christ. Amen.

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