

The background of the image is a dramatic, high-contrast photograph of dark, swirling storm clouds. The clouds are dense and textured, with some lighter areas where light breaks through, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall tone is somber and intense.

THE INVISIBLE WAR AGAINST SATAN



Part 10: The Belt of Truth

Introduction

During our previous nine lectures on *The Invisible War*, we have carefully examined the Scriptures to determine what God has revealed to us about Satan and the evil angels who were cast out of heaven with him. Avoiding theological extremes (thinking too much of him or thinking too little of him), we have readily acknowledged that we are in a fierce spiritual battle against principalities and powers much more powerful than us. However, Satan is only a created being and is totally under the command and almighty power of the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. Therefore, we are more than conquerors and have been given everything we need to engage this wicked enemy. A review of these truths will better prepare us to consider God's armor.

The Invisible War: A Review

- “Behind man and his fortunes, the Bible tells us, there stands not only God his sovereign Maker and Lord but also the agency of a malevolent spirit called Satan” (Carl F.H. Henry).
- “Sometime between the events of Genesis 1:31 and Genesis 3:1, there must have been a rebellion in the angelic world with many angels turning against God and becoming evil” (Wayne Grudem).
- “The biblical picture of ‘the satan’ is of a nonhuman and nondivine quasi-personal force which seems bent on attacking and destroying creation in general and humankind in particular, and above all on thwarting God’s project of remaking the world and human beings in and through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit” (N.T. Wright).

The Invisible War: A Review

- “The tactics of Satan and his demons are to use lies (Jn. 8:44), deception (Rev. 12:9), murder (Ps. 106:37; Jn. 8:44), and every other kind of destructive activity to attempt to cause people to turn away from God and destroy themselves....They will also try to use temptation, doubt, guilt, fear, confusion, sickness, envy, pride, slander, or any other means possible to hinder a Christian’s witness and usefulness” (Grudem).
- “The life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ reversed the tide of war. The King appeared, single-handedly breaking the stranglehold of the oppressor....Jesus speaks of his cross as the definitive cosmic exorcism” (David Powlison).

The Invisible War: A Review

- “There is a balance to be kept. Satan is defeated, but he is still doing harm...But we can also look at him in this way: he is still doing harm, but he is defeated” (John Frame).
- “Satan has not only carried on his battles on a large scale, but he has been at work throughout the ages, and continues to carry on his nefarious activities now, as a defeated but vicious foe seeking to destroy you *personally*” (Jay E. Adams).
- “It would appear that angels of every rank in both camps are constantly at war with each other in the invisible realm, and that, since there is no question of putting one of these spirit beings to death, the victory or the defeat is gained by the application of power and the withdrawal of the inferior force” (Donald Grey Barnhouse).

The Invisible War: A Review

- “We know from the Lord’s forewarning that his most frequent trick, when he cannot hurt us openly, is to surprise us by a secret attack when we are off our guard. Since we are aware that he is going to attack us by indirect methods and make secret attempts upon us, we must look well ahead and see that no hurt befall us” (John Calvin).
- “In the battle of prayer which raged around his personal destiny, Paul experienced the fact that the weakness and limitation of human existence are the necessary presuppositions for the operation of the divine power which is made perfect in this weakness and limitation” (Gerhard Kittel).

The Invisible War: A Review

- “It must be remembered that the kingdom of Satan is very comprehensive. It is the kingdom of evil; not merely of moral evil, but of physical evil viewed as the direct effect, or as the symbol of moral, or as in sympathy and affinity with it. Satan must be conceived not less comprehensively. The Satan idea has not only an ethical side, of which we are accustomed to think too exclusively, but also a physical. He is not only the father of those who sin, but he is the tyrant of those who suffer, especially those who suffer from diseases which touch the mind, and so disable from entering into the kingdom in a way which ordinary physical maladies do not” (A.B. Bruce).

The Invisible War: A Review

- “Our real enemy is not “flesh and blood,” but demon warriors. We must shift our thinking from seeing *people* as our enemies, rather than Satan’s wiles *behind* the people.
- Our own reason, understanding, and intuition are inadequate, as is every other human attribute, including will-power. Satan will beat us every time.
- God alone knows our enemy and He knows exactly what provision we need to face every wicked scheme.
- Now let us turn our attention to the most complete and well-known passage in the Bible about spiritual warfare, where we can learn how to utilize God’s protective armor.

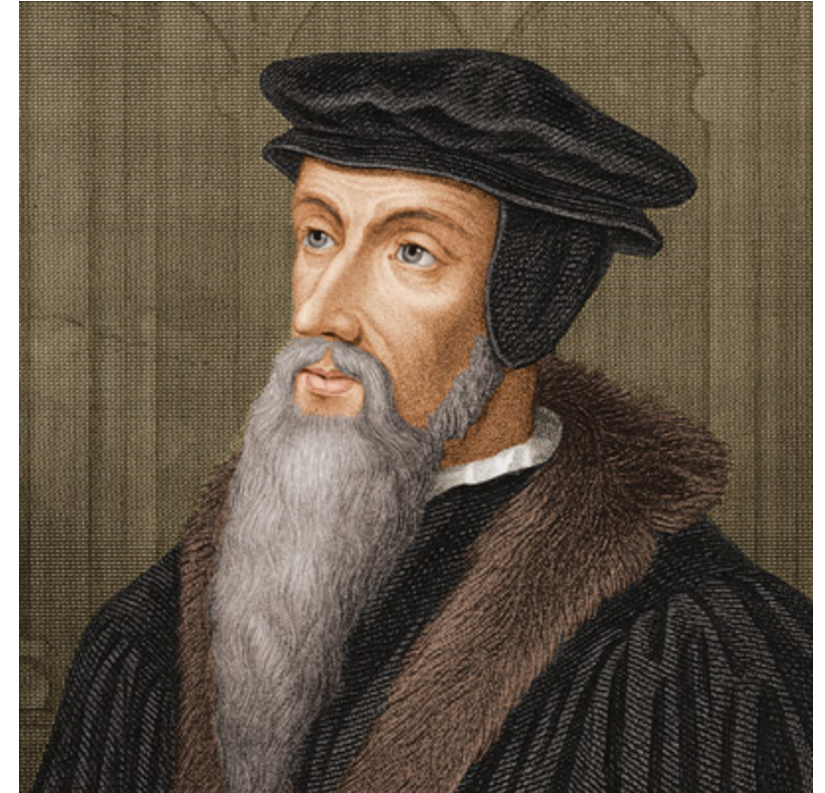
The Armor of God

- The Belt of Truth
- The Breastplate of Righteousness
- The Sandals of Readiness
- The Shield of Faith
- The Helmet of Salvation
- The Sword of the Spirit
- All-Prayer



Interpretation: A Word of Caution

“We must not inquire too minutely into the meaning of each word; for an allusion to a soldier’s kit is all that was intended. Nothing can be more idle than the great pains which some have taken to discover why righteousness is made a breastplate, instead of a girdle. Paul’s design was to touch briefly on what was chiefly required in a Christian man, and to adapt it to the comparison which he had already made.”



John Calvin
1509-1564

The Belt of Truth

Ephesians 6:14

- “Stand firm, therefore, having girded your loins with truth” (NASV).
- “Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth” (ESV).
- “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist” (NIV).
- “Stand your ground, putting on the sturdy belt of truth” (NLT).

A horizontal strip of aged, yellowish-brown parchment with irregular, torn edges. The parchment is set against a solid black background. The texture of the parchment is visible, showing some creases and small holes. The text is centered on the strip.

“For truth has stumbled in the public squares...”

Isaiah 59:14

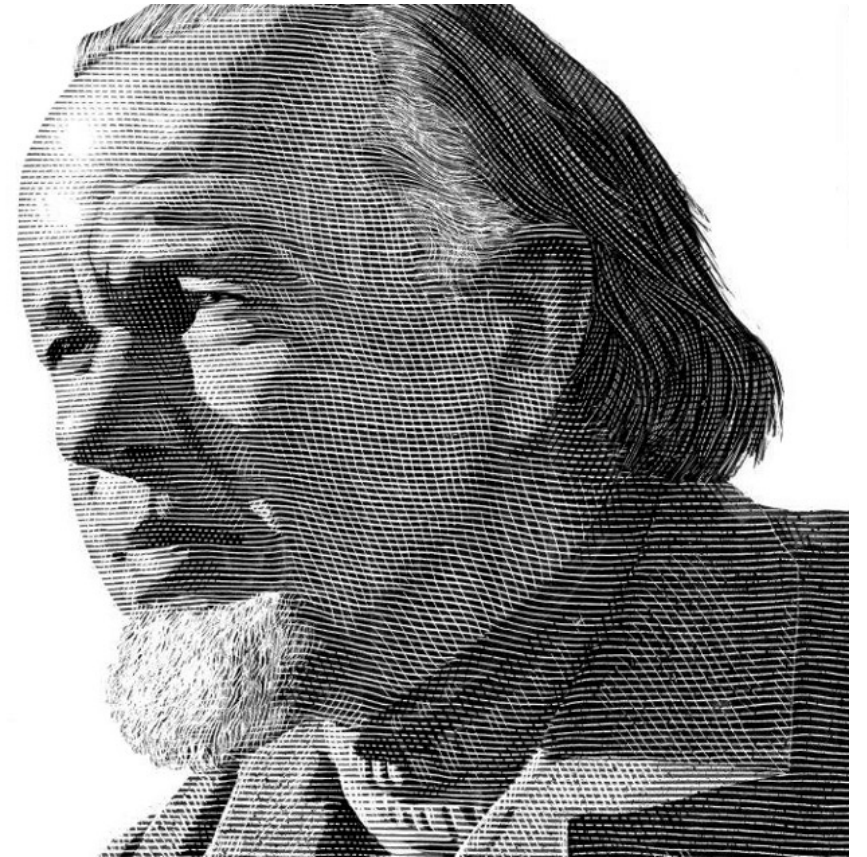
Schaeffer on *Truth*

“Christianity is not a series of truths in the plural, but rather truth spelled with a capital ‘T.’ Truth about total reality, not just about religious things.

“Biblical Christianity is Truth concerning total reality – and the intellectual holding of that total Truth and then living in the light of that Truth.”

Address at the University of Notre Dame

April 1981



Francis A. Schaeffer

1912 -1984



The Meaning of “Gird Up One’s Loins”

- The Greek word for *loins* means “waist, as the place where a belt or girdle is worn. Since the garment was worn ungirded about the house, girding denotes preparation for activity, especially for a journey” (Arndt & Gingrich).
- We see its literal use in II Kings where we learn that the prophet Elijah “wore a garment of hair, with a **belt of leather around his waist**” (1:8).
- John the Baptist also “wore a **leather belt about his waist**” (Mt. 3:4; Mk. 1:6). John is obviously being compared with Elijah.
- The word is common in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the O.T.).



The Meaning of “Gird Up One’s Loins”

- In agreement with Arndt & Gingrich, Kittel’s *Theological Dictionary* maintains that the expression *to gird up one’s loins* “means to belt the garment which is worn ungirdled in the house or in times of relaxation, with a view to greater mobility for work, for travel, for battle, etc.”
- “The picture is clear when we think of a first-century person who tucked the folds of his long, flowing garment under his belt so that he was no longer hindered in his walk or work” (Simon Kistemaker).
- Jesus warned his disciples to be watchful when He said to them: “**Be dressed in readiness** and keep your lamps alight” (Lk. 12:35).



The Meaning of “Gird Up One’s Loins”

- Regarding the Messiah, Isaiah states that “righteousness shall be **the belt of his waist**, and faithfulness **the belt of his loins**” (Is. 11:5). It is this text which Paul quotes in Ephesians 6:14 - “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist” (NIV). “A prophecy of the Messiah is now an exhortation to the warring Christian” (Kittel).
- We have been looking at the literal sense. The figurative sense can be seen in I Peter 1:13. “Therefore, **gird your minds for action**, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
- Once again, according to Kittel, “we have an admonition to watchfulness and readiness for battle. Anything that might impair mind or sense is to be girded up high, i.e., set aside.”



Why An Exhortation to Watchfulness?

- Satan “is a liar, and the father of lies” (John 8:44).
- Satan uses crafty, deceitful schemes against us. “He makes use of all of his power and skill to bring all the sons of men into the same condition and condemnation with himself” (Thomas Brooks).
- His schemes are crafty, deceptive, premeditated, repeatable, cunning, evil, versatile, overreaching, perverted, sly, insidious, underhanded, artful, ensnaring, and destroying. As such, they are known as “the golden bait” by which Satan seeks to catch you.
- He sabotages both truth and love if he can conform you to his image” (David Powlison).

Have You Ever Been Deceived?

- What did it feel like to be lied to, betrayed, or misled?
- Have you ever deceived your own heart? “If any one thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man’s religion is worthless” (James 1:26).
- What does Jesus mean by “the deceitfulness of riches” (Mt. 13:22)?
- Have you ever been taken in by worldly “philosophy and empty deception” (Col. 2:8)?
- Have you ever become hardened by the “deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:12)?
- What were the consequences to you personally as a result of being deceived by someone or something?



What Is Truth?

- Biblical truth is “revealed, objective, absolute, universal, eternally engaging, antithetical and exclusive, unified and systematic, and as an end in itself” (Douglas Groothuis).
- “Truth is used in various ways in Scripture. We may distinguish a “metaphysical” sense (the true is the absolute, the complete, as opposed to the relative, the partial...) and an “ethical” sense (walking in the truth, i.e., doing right)...Truth comes by grace, by trinitarian communication, by Word and by Spirit” (John Frame).



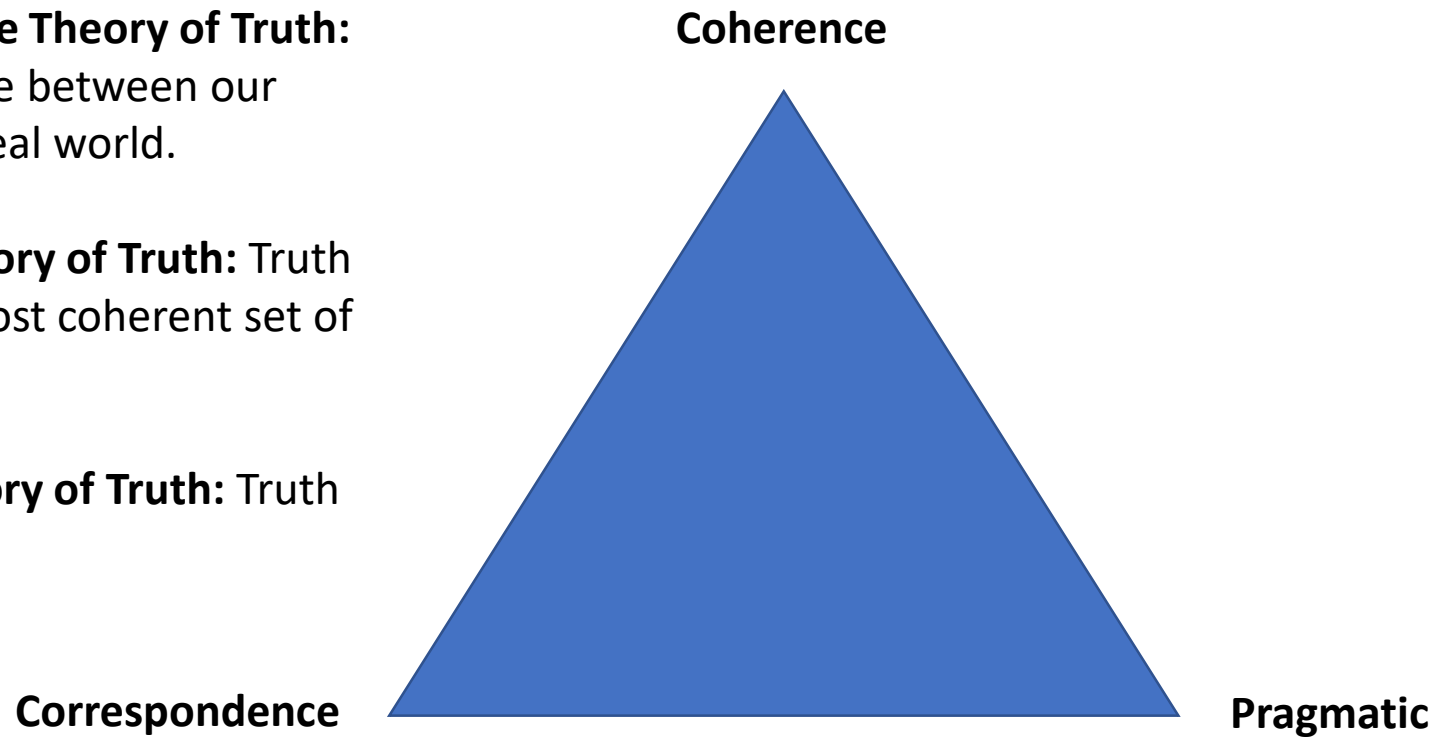
Tests of Truth

Correspondence Theory of Truth:

Correspondence between our ideas and the real world.

Coherence Theory of Truth: Truth is simply the most coherent set of ideas.

Pragmatic Theory of Truth: Truth is what works.





John Frame on the *Tests of Truth*

“Truth is ontologically the reality of God and all he has made. Epistemologically, it is the content of his mind communicated in his word in all forms of his revelation. The three traditional theories do not tell us what truth is, but they specify ways in which we can test our own apprehension of the truth.”

- Correspondence is the **situational test**, as we compare our ideas with God’s creation.
- Coherence is the **normative test** and seeks truth by obtaining a consistent view of God’s revelation.
- The pragmatic test (**existential test**) is what we embrace in seeking to obey God’s truth

Truth: In the Old Testament

- “The Lord is the **true** God; he is the living God and the everlasting King” (Jer. 10:10)
- “Send out your light and your **truth**; let them lead me” (Ps. 43:3).
- “Your righteousness is righteous forever, and your law is **true**” (Ps. 119:142).
- “But you are near, O Lord, and all your commandments are **true**” (Ps. 119:152).
- “The sum of your word is **true**, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever” (Ps. 119:160).
- “Buy the **truth**, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding” (Prov. 23:23).

Truth: In the New Testament

- “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and **truth**” (Jn. 1:14).
- “And you will know the **truth**, and the **truth** will set you free” (Jn. 8:32).
- “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the **truth**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (Jn. 14:6).
- “When the **Spirit of truth** comes, he will guide you into all the **truth...**” (Jn. 16:13).
- “...the word of the **truth**, the gospel...” (Col. 1:5).



What Defeats Satan's Angels?

“It might seem uninteresting to conclude with the advice not to underestimate and not to overestimate the difficulty of the spiritual battle. But the main point here is that we should not base either of our hopes or our fears on the empirical situation alone. News media and opinion makers in our culture seem to think that the most important issues are political, followed closely by entertainment. But Scripture says otherwise. The really decisive issues of human life are ethical and spiritual. And it is the religious and ethical equipment God gives us that will prevail over the hosts of evil.”

- John M. Frame

The Belt of Truth

- Establish convictions that are based on the Word of God. Why?
 - The poisoning nature of false doctrines
 - Imposters are so subtle
 - The influence they have on the whole man
- How do we form these convictions?
 - Be sincere in seeking the truth
 - Place yourself under the ministry of the Word
 - Be careful not to form your judgments from the opinions of people
 - Don't rest until the weight of every truth is impressed upon your heart.



1957 Commentary

“The heart made upright by divine grace will be nerved for any fray, outnumbered though it may be by the satellites of error; whereas the lurking consciousness of an unsound foundation, either without or within, palsies the combatant’s arm forthwith. He who contends for the truth with no hypocrisy, because he prizes it above rubies, will deal such decisive strokes that he will daunt the militia of craft and subtlety assailing him before they can task his mettle or offer a counterbuff (a blow given in return) to his heavenly battle-axe. Sincerity may be attacked by passing qualms; but it will not flinch from its colors in earnest, and those colors themselves are colors in grain (dyed), ineffaceable (indelible) and deluge-proof (waterproof)” (F.F. Bruce and E.K. Simpson).