

6:14 **Stand firm** therefore, having girded your loins with truth...

Stand

Repetition

- The triple-repeated “*stand firm*” lead us to the pieces of armor. How do we “*stand firm*”? First, we “*stand firm...having girded your loins with truth.*”
- Here, the verb “*stand*” is in the imperative mood – which is a grammar nerd way of saying this is **a command**.

Perseverance of the Saints

- The popular phrase “once saved, always saved” is not accurate enough to reflect biblical truth. **True believers persevere and are preserved in the faith:**
 - True believers persevere.¹ They always confess belief. READ Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Hebrews 3:6,14.
 - True believers are preserved by God in salvation to the end. READ John 10:27-29; Romans 8:35-39.
 - False confessors fear and love the world more than God in Christ (Matthew 13:20-22; Mark 4:16-19; Luke 8:13-14), and fall away (Matthew 24:10; 1 Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 3:12; 1 John 2:19).

Readiness

Always Active Duty

- “*...having girded your loins*” is a figure of speech for readiness (Luke 12:35-38; 1 Peter 1:13).

¹ “All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end” (*Baptist Faith & Message* [2000], V).

- “*Having girded your loins*” speaks to a soldier’s preparation for immediate battle. A soldier would not do this unless conflict was imminent.²
- “Readiness” is a consistent N.T. theme for believers.³

Old Testament Allusion

- This is an allusion to Isaiah 11:5 (though not a direct quote). Each piece of the “*armor*” is taken from O.T. imagery about the Messiah’s armor. It is, after all, the “*armor of God*” (6:11,13).
- In Isaiah 11, the Coming One...
 1. ...is a Son of David (11:1).
 2. ...is completely empowered by the Holy Spirit (11:2).
 3. ...is perfectly impartial in His judgment (11:3).
 4. ...will defend those who justly need defending (11:4a).
 5. ...will execute judgment on the wicked in the earth with the Spirit-empowered Word of His mouth (11:4b).⁴
 6. ...has as the most foundational layer of His clothing “*righteousness*” and “*faithfulness*,” or “*truth*” (faithfulness and truth are closely-related ideas in the O.T.).⁵
- Here’s the important point we need to take away from this: Paul is telling us that we are clothed in the same way that the Messiah, the Christ, our King Jesus, is clothed (remember that we are to be “*be strong in the Lord*,” 6:10)!

² Since swords were “girded” on (1 Samuel 25:13; Psalm 45:3), this forms a “bookend” with the “*sword of the Spirit*” (6:17b).

³ Matthew 24:42-51; 25:1-13; Luke 12:35-48; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 3:1-2; 1 Peter 3:15; Revelation 19:7-8; 21:2.

⁴ The word translated “*breath*” in 11:4b, ריח, is the same word translated “*Spirit*.”

⁵ For “*righteousness*” and “*faithfulness*” (or “*truth*”) together, see also Psalm 96:13; 119:75,138; Proverbs 12:17.

1. We represent the King.
2. We rely on the Holy Spirit.
3. The truth of the Bible is our absolute rule, and is fundamental to who we are in all areas of our lives.

The Days Are Evil

- Believers can be lulled into seeing reality as an unbeliever sees it – focused on only the visible, material realm. We not only minimize the spiritual forces of evil active in the world, but slowly minimize God’s active role. We pray less. We may say we believe the Bible’s witness, but we don’t live like its testimony about spiritual realities is true.

In Truth

Preposition

- The preposition in the original Greek (ἐν) is translated “with” here, but is usually translated “in.” As we are remaining prepared for imminent battle, we do so by staying “in truth.”⁶

Our Enemy, the Liar

- Sinful, fallen humanity “*exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator*” (Romans 1:25, NKJV).
- When Paul tells us to stand ready in the truth, he is reminding us that we are in the same conflict that began in Genesis 3, the conflict over God’s truth versus the temptation to create our own self-exalting, autonomous “truth.”

Truth

- When studying a passage, it’s helpful to see how the human author (by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) uses words in that passage throughout the book. Don’t just assume you know what he means. In this

⁶ “Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about in truth” (Young’s Literal Translation.)”

way we let the Bible teach us to interpret the Bible (a work of the Holy Spirit called illumination).⁷ What does Paul mean when he tells us to be ready for battle in the “truth”?



- The “message of truth” is “*the gospel of your salvation*” (1:13). Once you hear it and believe it, you are sealed in Christ by the Holy Spirit.
- “Truth” is a significant theme in Ephesians 4.
 - We are to speak “*the truth in love,*” dedicated to helping one another grow together in Christ (4:15).
 - We “*learn Christ*” by hearing and being taught Christ, since “*truth is in Jesus*” (4:20-21). The result of this is that we “*lay aside the old self*” (4:22) and seek to be “*renewed*” in our minds (4:23), clothing ourselves in a “*new self*” created by God “*in righteousness and holiness of truth*” (4:24).
 - The result is that we “*speak truth each one of you with his neighbor*” (4:25, quoting from Zechariah 8:16).
- As believers, we are “*children of Light*” (5:8); as “*children of Light,*” “truth” is the fruit of our lives (5:9).
- Without a firm knowledge of and belief in the truth of God as contained in the Bible, you are unprepared for battle: “*I have written to you...because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one*” (1 John 2:14).

⁷ “The infallible rule for interpreting Scripture is the Scripture itself” (1689 Baptist Confession of Faith in Modern English, 1.9).