

GROWING IN GRACE

“...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10 (NIV)

TRUTHFULNESS CREATES THE PATHWAY TO BE PROTECTED AND RESTORED

Series: Dressing for Success: Standing Strong in an Evil Day (Part 2)

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Ephesians 6:10-13 (NIV) 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

- A. The phrase “be strong” in the Greek is in the plural imperative and carries the idea of standing both individually and collectively strong.
1. We need to take personal responsibility for our stand against evil.
 2. We need to stand with others in our stand against evil.
- B. Our armor is designed to accomplish 3 specific things in our lives:
1. Our armor is designed to protect us.
 2. Our armor is designed to advance God’s purposes.
 3. Our armor is designed to take us to people that need peace with God.
- C. The focus today is on verse 14 that notes we are to have “the belt of truth buckled” around our waist.
1. The Greek word for “truth” here is *alētheia* and emphasizes truthfulness.
 2. Specifics within the definition focus on being objective about issues, and finding out what is honoring to God in our lives as a whole.
 3. The word emphasizes what is true more than how we feel.

C. Let's explore 3 pathways that keep us centered in truthfulness:

I. TRUTHFULNESS REQUIRES THE PATHWAY OF REFLECTION

A. The most important reflection we can establish in our lives is asking the question, "What has God said?"

James 1:22-25 (NIV) 22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

B. The opposite of deep reflection is superficiality.

II. TRUTHFULNESS REQUIRES THE PATHWAY OF FRIENDSHIPS

Hebrews 3:13 (NIV) But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

A. We need to answer the question, "Who is my support group?"

B. A fundamental rule in my support group is that people are truth tellers, with my best interest in focus.

Proverbs 27:6 (NIV) Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

III. TRUTHFULNESS REQUIRES THE PATHWAY OF WILLINGNESS

A. A key question for us regarding willingness is, "Am I ready to follow?"

Luke 22:42-44 (NIV) 42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." 43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. 44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

B. There are times when we will have to address our willingness before God, allow Him to minister to us, and then choose the harder path.

APPLICATION:

A. Truthfulness has the ability to protect and restore.