There was once a highly significant battle being waged between two very disciplined and well-equipped fighting forces. Both armies well experienced, fearless and well-led. Each side held advantageous terrain and enjoyed optimum communication and intelligence information. Neither side was assured a victory.

One commander risked a small cadre of his most loyal and experienced fighters. He sent them on a risky secret mission under cover of darkness.

The next day on the battlefield, the risk paid dividends as the opponents most elite fighters were severely hampered. The secret mission under the cover of darkness has been to cut the belts of the elite forces of the enemy. Even though strong, experienced and well-equipped, the elite soldiers could not fight while also holding up their pants. The risk paid off and the battle was won for the lack of proper belts. I am not sure if that army lost because of drooping drawers or because of their falling shorts, but the fact is that they lost because they were not adequately girded. This morning I say, “Don’t let this happen to you!”

The King James renders this, “*Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth*” (6.14). The Greek text doesn’t actually specifically mention the word “belt.” I spent a LOT of time this week checking out about belts and what soldiers wore under their armor. One author explained that Roman soldiers wore a special leather undergarment, like a girdle or a corset under their armor. This writer explained that Paul mentions this first because it is the first armor-related item that a soldier would don as he got ready for battle. That made sense to me.

This corset-like girdle was important because it was foundational. It afforded a small degree of protection, but mainly provided support for the abdominal area and the back. Carrying the heavy weapons and armor was stress enough, but the soldier, in battle, also faced the push of the opposing forces. He needed all the support he could get.

I picture this girdle as a wide leather belt that may have included some sort of skirting-strips the protect the groin area. The bottom line is this. Paul starts off by mentioning being girded about. He mentions this first. It is first and it is foundational, so it is important. After all, as we have seen, you can’t fight if your pants are falling down.

The belt is significant literally AND symbolically. Listen to this, “It became invested with meaning to such an extend (sic.) that taking away the military belt of a soldier in public for hours or days was a humiliation used as a disciplinary measure by their superiors . Taking away the military belt permanently after a capitulation or during a dishonorable discharge from the army seems also to have been practiced . The significance of the belt as a symbol of ‘being a soldier’ continued well into the late empire as is demonstrated by the symbolic act of Christian soldier-saints openly refusing to remain in the army by throwing off their military belt in public.”

( <http://resources.takingground.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/04/Roman-Soldiers-of-the-1st-Century-%E2%80%93-Armour-and-Tactics.pdf> )

Paul styles this foundational girding as “*in truth*.” Truth is a significant thing. This is true in the Bible and **ALL** of life. We find this to be true from the get-go. If we go back to Genesis 3 and cover this familiar ground yet again, we begin to grasp the true significance of what Paul is taking about . . .

Now, to begin with, Adam and Eve are totally clothes-less. They are not dressed. That was the natural state. NO! I am NOT talking about Arkansas!!! They wore no clothes and that was no problem, mentally or physically. “No shirt, no shoes, no problem,” thank you Ken, Chesney!

Did you ever notice that one of the first people EVER recorded to speak in the Bible, ***beside*** the Lord is this serpent??? And what is the very **FIRST** thing said that isn’t recorded as the words of God or Adam? “*Did God really say…*? (Gen 3.1)” The first thing other than God or Adam speaking is this serpent **questioning the word of God**! See? He has been doing this since the beginning of time. He STILL is doing it. It is part of his strategy.

What is this question about? It is about **T R U T H**. “*What did God REALLY say*?”

* + What do **we** KNOW about what God says?
	+ How do we **understand** what God says?
	+ What do we **do** about what God says?

These are important, foundational considerations. Truth ***IS*** foundational. Truth is vital. Truth is **STILL** under attack, right up into our day. There is not “Your truth,” or “My truth.” There is just ***truth***. And, yes, there **IS** absolute truth! To say, “There is no absolute truth; everything is relative, one way or another,” ***IS***,itself, an ABSOLUTE statement.

Notice that immediately after Adam and Eve eat the fruit, breaking God’s law, “*their eyes were opened and they knew they were naked*” (3.7). What happened next? First thing, they invented “Fruit of the Leaf.” This was, of course, the precursor to “Fruit of the Loom.” The wisdom that they gained from the fruit that was desirable to make one wise caused them to be **ashamed**.

Look at Gen 2.25, “*Both the man and his wife* (NOTE to self : MAN and WIFE, not ‘man and his dude’…) *were naked* …” Interesting factoid, huh? What does it say next? It says, “*yet they felt no shame*.” Just seven verses later, they have to make clothes out of fig leaves. ***Why***? Because that delightful fruit **did** make them wise. They realized that they needed something. So, they “*made coverings for themselves*.” There you have it — the first cover-up in history!

What did they need to cover-up? Their nakedness. But why?? It was no problem BEFORE their eyes were opened. What did they see when their eyes were opened? This is BIG.

Here it comes — This is something. We are going to dive into a word. Catch a big breath, 1. because this is a deep dive, and 2, because this will take your breath away!

 Gen 2.25 - they were naked. Naked is ***KUM*** in Hebrew.

* 3.1 - the serpent was “*the most cunning*.” “*Cunning*” is related to “*naked*.”
* Adam and Eve were ***KUM***— “*naked*” - and unashamed (2.25). The serpent was *the MOST KUM* (3.1).
* 3.7 - “*they knew they were naked*” - They knew they were ***KUM***.

When their eyes were opened, they **KNEW** they were ***KUM***. They realized they were **like** the *MOST KUM*. Oh, HOLY MOLEY!! They were created in the image of the Most High. When they disobeyed, they became like the serpent. When their eyes were opened, they realized they were ***KUM***. Their eyes were opened and they SAW that they had become ***like the serpent***. They had gone from the image of the Most Hight to being like the most ***KUM***, like the serpent. They had become **like *the MOST KUM***.

No wonder they felt ashamed. No wonder they wanted to cover up. Do we see? This has been playing out EVER SINCE. Obviously, “Fruit of the Leaf” was **NOT** the answer. It wasn’t ***then*** and it isn’t ***NOW***. What ***is*** the answer? ”Fruit of the Spirit!! Ta Da!!! We need to “*put on the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Rom 13.14). The fruit of the Spirit **IS** Jesus.

But this old serpent is STILL out here slithering around. He is STILL questioning God and His word. He is STILL messing with people. He is STILL causing people to feel ashamed.

We are called to STAND. We aren’t supposed to sit down with the devil. We aren’t supposed to sit down, negotiate and compromise and accommodate. We are supposed to ***stand against*** him and his wiles.

You can’t stand in “Fruit of the Leaf.” “Fruit of the Loom” won’t cut it, either. You need Truth-brand under-garments!! Paul says wrap yourself up in T R U T H. What is truth? **WHO** is Truth? The Truth we need for life is **J E S U S** ! ! ! He is “*the way, the TRUTH and the life*.” We have to have JESUS! We must be girded, wrapped-up, in Jesus!

I have another word study for you. Ready? Stay with me. Paul says right here “*gird yourselves*” (Eph 6.14).

* *Perizusamenoi*—Aor Mid Part (“*girding yourselves*”)
* From *peri* + *zonnumi* (*peri* means around + *zonnumi* = to gird)
* *Zonnumi* is from *zoni* = belt or girdle. *Zoni* is from *zugos*
* *Zugos* means “a yoke” So, girdle is related to yoke. WOWOW!

What does Jesus say? Jesus says, “*Come unto Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light*” (Matt 1.28-30).

We come to Jesus for salvation. That is the start. We stay with Jesus for sanctification. We go with Jesus for service.

Remember what Jesus says to the church at Laodicea? *I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth. 17 For you say, ‘I’m rich; I have become wealthy and need nothing,’ and you don’t realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I advise you to buy from me gold refined in the fire so that you may be rich,* ***white clothes so that you may be dressed and your shameful nakedness not be exposed****, and ointment to spread on your eyes so that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be zealous and repent” (*Rev 3:15-19).

Jesus challenges His people to be NOT naked, but robed in His righteousness alone. In the Garden the problem of nakedness began. In Glory it is finished. He provided clothes for Adam and Eve. He provides a covering for sin. He provides a robe of righteousness for us in this life. He provides garment suited for glory. He provides spiritual armor - a girdle of truth that is Jesus Himself!!!

See, Jesus meets our needs. Let us come to Jesus. He will give us rest. He will give us comfort. He will give us garments for life. He will give us garments for glory. Let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us be girded in the Truth.

We must put on Jesus. “*The truth is in Jesus*,” Paul says (Eph 4.21). He tells us, “Take off your former, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, the one created according to God’s like ness in righteousness and purity of the truth” (4.22-24). Gird yourself in the Truth. Put on Jesus!