

**"Be Strong in the Lord  
by Girding Your Loins  
With Truth"**

by Elder Bill Jones



Like last month, this theme comes from Paul's communication with the Ephesians in which he is exhorting them to: *"... be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"* (Ephesians 6:10-11). Part of that armor, which he points out to the Ephesians as being essential to their spiritual warfare against wickedness, has to do with them making the preparations of having their loins girt about with truth.

The truth that Paul speaks about is God's truth. For those who would put on the whole armor of God it is the foundation of their preparations. Without the acquisition of His truth there is little hope for the victory we seek when engaging in spiritual warfare. Its value, its strength, its necessity, lies in the fact that it represents the mind and will of God. It is born of the Spirit of God. It is **not** what we have conjured in our minds.

God is the author of truth; He is the ultimate standard and the final judge of what is truth. His *"... TRUTH ABIDETH AND HATH NO END"* (Doctrine and Covenants 85:17). Meaning of course that it is eternal and changes not. It is a conviction settled in our minds, knowing whom and what to believe in, and it is revealed in Jesus Christ by whom we must be governed. It counters Satan's efforts to create confusion and uncertainty. To repel him, Christians must be *"GIRT ABOUT"* with the truth of God. How do we further identify this *"TRUTH THAT HAS NO END"*? How do we obtain it that we may gird our loins with it? Paul talks about and identifies it as the **GOSPEL MESSAGE** and we obtain it by **ACCEPTING THE WORD OF GOD.**

However, we must keep in mind that to attempt to obtain truth and knowledge through our intellectual pursuits, or observation, or experiment and research, or trial and error, is trying to obtain the Word of God and His truth by means which are representative of the wisdom of the world. Such an attempt is futile as

**NATURAL MAN  
VS.  
SPIRITUAL MAN**

is affirmed by the following scriptures. *“The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; For they are foolishness unto him; Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (1 Corinthians 2:14). *“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance . . .”* (1 Thessalonians 1:5). These scriptures plainly state that the gospel message must be accompanied by God's power and the Holy Ghost in order to be God's gospel.

Using these scriptures as our authority, it is easy to answer questions like the one asked of Job, when he was in the midst of his lamentations to God. The question was, *“Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?”* (Job 11:7). The answer is “no” if we limit our search for God using only the wisdom of men; it is “yes” if God chooses to reveal Himself to us. He chooses to if we prepare by making ourselves worthy to receive the Spirit of God and exercise our faith unto the belief and knowledge of God.

We must acknowledge before going any further that the greater knowledge, the greater wisdom, the deeper understanding which we want that is representative of God's Word, and Christ's gospel message, cannot be acquired through natural means. They are separate and apart from worldly learning, knowledge and experience. This does not mean we have no personal responsibility in obtaining God's Word; just like our having to study and research and investigate to obtain knowledge of the world in which we live.

Evan Fry, in his book The Restoration Faith suggests, “God may require work, effort, and study on our part before He grants us the wisdom from above. Nonetheless, the gift of wisdom and truth is just that, it is a gift. It comes not by will of man, but by the will of God. Like other spiritual gifts it is a result of right living, wise and moral choices, and a certain spiritual quality of life. It is given to those who have prepared and cleansed themselves and made ready for the gift. It comes from Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”



How important for us to realize that God’s disclosure of Himself is a gift. Perhaps that is why we call such things **GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT**. Such gifts are provided us at God’s discretion. We should always be mindful of the fact that our understanding is given us by the Spirit of God. We have been fashioned by God’s Word. He is the origin of our life and because He is, He is willing to share His mind with us.

Arthur Oakman, in his book Belief in Christ affirms this fact by showing the unique way that God allows us communication with Him. He says, “Men are made by God, and there is a spirit within them; that spirit is capable of recognizing and responding to the fuller light.”

Other scriptures assure us in a very personal way of the great desire that God has to share with us—His truth and light—by teaching us through the gift of His Spirit. “. . . *the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth*” (1 Corinthians 2:11-13).

*“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart (imagination) of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).* We should continually give thanks for the way God has provided for our being able to come into His presence and access His truth which is so vital in our existence.

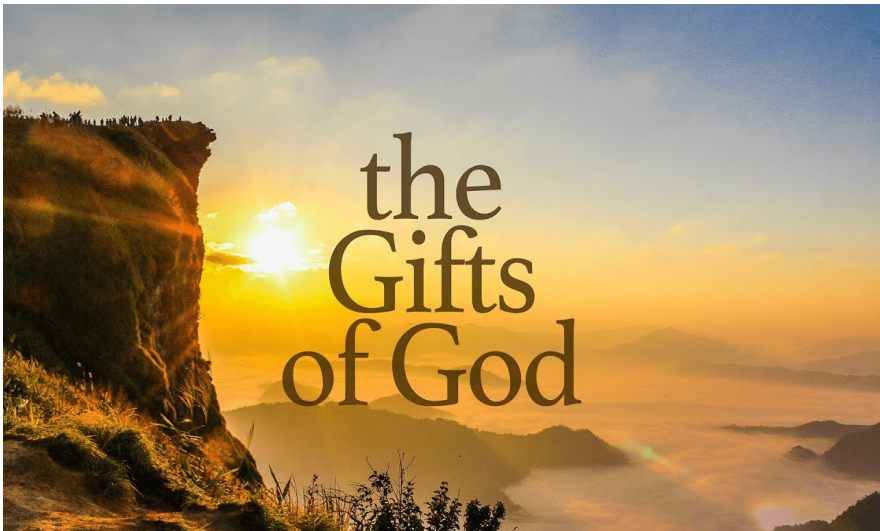


By now it should be apparent there is something unique about girding our loins with truth and obtaining and accepting the Word of God. Paul knew there was something special and he told the Thessalonians as much in his letter to them when he said (and I paraphrase): “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost; and you became followers of the Lord having received the word with joy of the Holy Ghost . . . And we were allowed by God to be **TRUSTED WITH THE GOSPEL** and to **SPEAK OF IT BY THE SPIRIT** as it pleased God, that we should do . . . And because you accepted it as the word of God and not the word of men, you received it with the understanding given to us by the Spirit.” \*

\* Read it in chapters 1 and 2 of 1st Thessalonians; mainly verses 5 and 6 in the first chapter and verses 10 thru 13 in the second chapter.

To gird our loins with the truth of God is of little consequence unless we are allowed by God to be trusted with His gospel and to speak of it with the endorsement of His Spirit. If we gird ourselves with truth the action means we intend to do something with it; keeping in mind that our preparation to receive it has to be acceptable to God. Likewise what we do with it afterwards has to be acceptable to God.

Sometimes an individual may not have made special preparation to receive the Word of God. Alma is an example of this. We know when he was a young man he was a great hindrance to the Church and he led many people astray; still the Lord intervened in his life and blessed him greatly with opportunity to receive the Word of God. While it is true he was not worthy of such a gift because of anything he did, such gifts are provided at God's discretion, and people do not always receive gifts because they deserve them. Many times they receive gifts because they are loved. What they do with the gift determines what follows next.



We know the story of Alma and how he was visited by the Angel of God. We know he chose to accept his exposure to God's truth and make it a part of his life from that time forth. His testimony of the event many years later to his son Helaman is an example to those of us who choose to accept God's Word and gird ourselves with His truth. \*



*\* “Yea, and from that time, even until now, I have labored without ceasing, that I might bring souls unto repentance; that I might bring them to taste of the exceeding joy of which I did taste; that they might also be born of God, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Yea, and now behold, O my son, the Lord doth give me exceeding great joy in the fruit of my labors; for because of the Word which he has imparted unto me, behold, many have been born of God, and have tasted as I have tasted, and have seen eye to eye as I have seen; Therefore they do know of these things of which I have spoken, as I do know; and the knowledge which I have is of God” (Alma 17: 22-24).*



If you and I gird ourselves in God's truth and follow in the path where that truth may lead, we will be able to more fully experience Jesus' promise, "... if ye **continue** in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). We will be free from the ignorance that renders us susceptible to Satan's lies and his deceptions which lead to sin.

It is important we pay attention to Christ's use of the word **CONTINUE**. When Christ said, "*If ye **continue** in my word then are ye my disciples indeed,*" He meant that to **continue** in His Word was the act of **continuing** to listen to Him, to **continue** to have conversation with Him, to **continue** to interact with Him, which would **continue** to lead to more truth and more understanding and more revelatory experiences. It is in the **continual** receiving of His word where our authority lies. **Continual** revelation leads to the truth which is represented by the gift of the Holy Ghost. Particular attention should also be paid to the word **LEADS**, which in this case means: ongoing; preceding further; yet more light and truth to break forth from His Word.

Read 2 Nephi 12. It is of great value. Read verses 35-39. They are particularly pertinent to this month's theme. They speak of those people who will continue to receive God's Words and those who will not. "*For unto him that receiveth, I will give more: And from them that shall say, we have enough, shall be taken even that which they have*" (2 Nephi 12:38).

**THE TRUTH  
SHALL MAKE  
YOU FREE!**



Those who will **continue** with God shall receive line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. Those who will not **continue** will lose even that which they have. The Spirit leaves where it is not wanted.

If we are to gird our loins with truth and participate in the process of putting on the whole armor of God to be a part of the warfare against wickedness, we must be mindful that we are to do so by **continually** calling upon God for His support. There is a promise given in Jeremiah. *“Then shall ye call unto me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart”* (Jeremiah 29:12-13).

