

**EPHESIANS – THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S CHURCH –  
OUR IDENTITY, OUR WALK, OUR WARFARE  
PROGRAM 61 (#912241)  
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**SERIES: Ephesians – The Mystery Of God’s Church –  
Our Identity, Our Walk, Our Warfare**

**TITLE: Program 61 – You Must Know Truth To Defeat Warfare**

**MONDAY**

**OPEN**

Has anyone ever taught you, Beloved, that if you’re doing everything right then everything is going to go well? For instance if you’re bringing all the tithes into the storehouse then you’re never going to want. Have they ever told you that if you are really firm in your position in Christ then you’re never going to have a conflict, that all you have to do is just let Christ overwhelm you with His goodness? O Beloved, they didn’t tell you about warfare.

**PART ONE**

I was thinking about a letter that I received just recently and it was a letter from a woman saying Kay, we have loved supporting you, but we can’t support you the way we used to because we’re in a terrible situation. My

husband has lost his job. And she said I am so angry with God and I am angry with God because we have brought the tithes into the storehouse as it says in Malachi and it says [“God will open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing.”] (PARAPHRASE, Malachi 3:10b) Well as I answered that letter I had to explain to her that that verse did not promise that you would never be in the situation of wanting anything. You have to take the whole counsel of God and look at what the whole teaching of the Word of God is about. And that’s what Precepts for Life is about. It’s about taking you through a book of the Bible chapter-by-chapter and verse-by-verse and seeing what it says then moving on to the next book of the Bible and understanding it. I mean if you read Philippians Paul says [“I know how to be abound and how to be abased. I know how to have plenty and I know how to suffer want.”] (PARAPHRASE, Philippians 4:12, KJV) And that “suffer want” means to be at a desperate situation. And so if just understand the whole counsel of God. And sometimes what we do is we get on this bent. There’s a certain teaching we like and we like that teaching because it promises us blessing or it promises us prosperity or or health or whatever and so we latch on to that and we don’t have the whole counsel of God. What Paul wants those at Ephesus to understand is hey, this is your position: you are seated in heavenly places. You are part of the body of Jesus Christ. You are one new man. You are the temple of God. You are part of God’s outworking of His plan in Christ Jesus. He tells them all that and yet he wants them to understand it is going to be war. You are going to be in a warfare. So he says, [“Finally brethren, I want you to stand firm in the Lord and in the power and strength of His might. I want you to put on the full armor of God, because you’re in a warfare.”] (PARAPHRASE Ephesians 6:10-12) So we’re looking at that warfare. And what I want you to understand is that Christian life is not one of passivity. It’s not okay, you’re saved. Now this is where you are, you’re part of the body and just rest in all those glorious promises. No there is a conflict going on. There is a warfare.

We talked about it in our last lesson. What I want you to understand today is this: that that warfare can be overt. In other words you know it's warfare. It is absolutely blatant. I think about Tom Hayes, he's the director of our Spanish Ministry. He was raised in Guatemala. And he's more Spanish. I mean he looks Gringo, but when you talk to him or you're with him, he'll turn to his wife to get some English word for something he wants, he can think in Spanish, so inwardly he's Spanish. Well he was raised as a missionary kid and his friends were the witchdoctor's sons. Now his dad didn't know this, but when he wanted to play with them and those sons would say, "O, I can't do this yet because I've got to go sacrifice a chicken and get the blood and do this and that," he'd say, "Okay, I'll come with and I'll help you so that we can go play quicker." And so what he would do is he'd go with the witchdoctor's sons and he would do the thing that their dad was requiring them to do to put some curse on somebody or do something like that, then he'd go back and play. Well there in Guatemala you can see it is overt warfare. There are curses. You can watch a pot get up from a room and just literally move over to the other side. It's a pot that three men couldn't carry and yet it's just being transported by evil spirits. So there's that kind of a warfare. And yet there is also a covert warfare. This is what we're dealing with in terrorism. We're dealing with a covert, underground network. We can't quite spot the enemy. It's not a certain nation, but it's people from certain beliefs that have taken those beliefs to the extreme or whatever. And so you and I have to understand when we are in warfare sometimes it is as blatant as all get out and I love it when it's blatant. I love it because you know hey, that's warfare. But when it's covert that's when you're in danger because you may not recognize it for what it is. And so this is why Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter 6 that he does not want us to be ignorant of Satan's devices. He wants us to understand what is going on and to know what we are to do. And so he's showing us where our struggle is and then he tells us that we are to **"Stand firm..."** verse 14, **"...therefore**

**having girded your loins with truth...**” Now when he says, **“...having girded your loins with truth....”** (Ephesians 6:14a) remember what I told you, that Paul is looking at this Roman soldier. As he looks at this Roman soldier with this helmet, with this breastplate, with his belt, with his shoes, with his scabbard that hold that little Roman sword, as he’s looking at him with that shield of faith he says, listen carefully, “I can use those as illustrations of truth that everyone needs to know in warfare.” So the first thing he does is he says, **“...having put on....”** (6:14b) So I want us to see the “having” because what he’s saying here is “you’ve already done it. You’ve already done it. You are prepared for this warfare.” Ephesians chapter 6, verse 14: **“Stand firm therefore, having....”** (6:14a) I would underline “having”. I underlined it in blue, just a real emphasis. **“...Having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and....,”** verse 15, **“...having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, [take] up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one...take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”** (6:14-17) So he’s saying, “Having done these three then I want you take up these.” And so I want us to see “having” because what you and I are doing in studying the Word of God together and going through the Bible book-by-book and chapter-by-chapter and verse-by-verse we are having girded our loins with truth. He says, “I want you to put on the belt of truth.” So let’s look at this belt of truth. The emphasis is truth. But let’s just look at the belt for just a minute. As Paul looked at that Roman soldier he knew how important that belt was. I mean it wasn’t a decoration like I have on. You know I wear a lot of belts. So it wasn’t a decoration. Rather it served a purpose. Now my belt serves a purpose because what it does is it holds the battery pack for my microphone. Unless I’m face to face with the microphone. So that’s what my belt usually does. But the belt that the soldier put on was what they hooked the breastplate to so it would keep

the breastplate in place. That’s very important and we’re going to see why later. It’s also what held the scabbard that held the Roman two-edged sword so that he always had this sword at his side and was ready to pull that sword and to defend himself or to do whatever he needed to do with it. So then he says, **“And having shod your feet with the...gospel of peace.”(Ephesians 6:15)** So he wants them to remember three things. In warfare you already need to have truth. You already need to have righteousness. You already need to have peace. If you’re going to make it in warfare there has to be truth, there has to be righteousness, there has to be peace. Now it’s wonderful that he gave us the image of the soldier because then we can look at it and it becomes a memory device. You just think of a Roman soldier. There’s a lot of historical movies and there’s a lot on the “History Channel”. And there’s a wonderful thing that “National Geographic” did on Alexander the Great. Alexander the Great was that Greek general who took over when his father Philip died and by the age of 30 he had conquered everything that there was to conquer. He was out on the battlefield doing these great feats of war in his 20’s. But as you watch that you see the Roman soldier. You see the Greek soldier. You see the armor and you have a picture and you look at that picture and this is what you think. You think truth, you think righteousness and you think when you think about the feet when you think about being shod then what you do is you think okay, peace. So I want us to look at truth. Then we’re going to look at righteousness. And then we’re going to look at peace, having those things. Now I want you to go to John chapter 17. In John chapter 17 Jesus is getting ready to go to the Garden of Gethsemane. He is leaving the upper room. He is with the eleven apostles. And the eleven apostles, Judas has gone to betray Him. Talk about warfare. Judas has gone to betray Him. So He’s on His way to the garden. We believe that He stopped before He got to that garden and He prayed a prayer, a prayer that has to do with the belt of truth. I’ll tell you about it in just a minute.

## **PART TWO**

Welcome back, Beloved. I left you in John chapter 17 where Jesus is making His way from the upper room from the upper part of the city down across the Kidron Valley over to the Garden of Gethsemane the olive press. On the way He’s going to pass the Temple Mount. He is with His disciples. He has told them that He is going to go away. He has told them that He is going to send another helper. Their hearts are troubled. [He has told them that in this world they’re going to have tribulation. But He says, “Be of good cheer because I have overcome the world.”] (PARAPHRASE, John 16:33) He’s told them all these things and then I believe purposefully He stands there and He utters this prayer to the Father, a prayer to the Father that will be an encouragement to them and an encouragement to you and to me as we look at it. It’s a prayer where He says that He has finished the work that God gave Him to do. Let’s say I’m an apostle and I’m listening. Jesus finished His work. I want to finish my work. He goes on and He talks about how the Lord has given them to Him and how He’s kept them and how He’s watched over them. And then in verse 13 this is what He says, **“But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy...full in themselves.” (John 17:13)** I’m saying these things right now while I’m in this world so that My apostles might have joy in themselves. So I want you to know that in the midst of warfare there is joy. He says, **“I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world...,” (17:14a)** Now remember; I’ve said it over and over again, 1 John chapter chapter 5 verse 19, **“...the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.” (1 John 5:19b)** We have seen in the book of Ephesians that there are three classifications of people. There are Jews and there are Gentiles and there are Christians. And Christians are made up of Jews and Gentiles and Muslims and Buddhists and Hindus and people that have all come to recognize the truth. And the truth is that [“Jesus is the way,

the truth and the life and that no man can come to the Father apart from Him and that there is no life apart from Jesus.”] (PARAPHRASED, John 14:6) They’ve come to recognize that and they comprise the church. So He says, **“...the world has hated them, because they are not of the world...as I am not of the world. I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.” (John 17:14b-15)** Now how is He going to keep us from the evil one? **“Keep”** means “to preserve”. It means “to guard”. It means that here you have them and the enemy’s not going to come in and take them prisoner and incarcerate them so to speak or shut them up in his prison or under his dominion. And He says, so I ask You **“...to keep them from the evil one.” (John 17:15b)** Now you want to put a red pitchfork over **“evil one”** there cause it’s a reference to Satan. He says, **“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth....” (17:16-17a)** So immediately in your mind’s eye you go to the belt on the Roman soldier. **“Sanctify them in the truth; [Thy] word is truth.” (17:17)** So when you look at the Roman soldier and you look at the belt you think, “Oh that belt represents truth and that is what sets me apart. That is what keeps me. That is what preserves me.” And that’s why Paul is saying in Ephesians 6, [“Having put on the belt of truth.”] (PARAPHRASE, Ephesians 6:14a) This is what we do with every program; we are increasing your belt of truth. We’re taking care of your belt of truth so that you can take care of the breastplate of righteousness, because righteousness is living according to truth. But it all begins here. Truth is foundational. It’s fundamental, knowing the Word of God. The Word of God is the basis of evangelism. The Word of God is the basis of prayer. **“If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, [then you will] ask [what you want].” (John 15:7a)** The Word of God is the basis of fasting. The Word of God is the foundation for everything. This is why the apostles said, [“We must give ourselves to prayer and to the Word of God.”] (PARAPHRASE, Acts 6:4) It’s truth. And so he says here in verse 17, **“Sanctify them [through Thy]**

**truth; Your word is truth.” (John 17:17)** Set them apart. Now why did they need this in warfare? You go back to what He said to them previously and it’s recorded in John chapter 8, verse 44 because Jesus is dealing with religious leaders, religious leaders that refuse to see themselves as sinners and in need of a savior. They think that they’re just fine because they’re Jews, because they were born of Abraham’s seed and so they think that they’re just fine. But Jesus turns to them and He says in verse 43, **“Why [can] you not understand what I am saying? [It’s] because you cannot hear My word.” (John 8:43)** Remember we just saw in John 17 in verse 17 that His **“...word is truth.” (17:17b)** So He says, [“You can’t hear My word. You’re not hearing truth.”] (PARAPHRASE, John 8:43) He says, **“You are of your father the devil...,”** red pitchfork there. **“You are of your father the devil...you want to do the desires of your father....” (John 8:44a)** red pitchfork. He says, **“...He was a murderer...,”** red pitchfork over **“he”**. **“...He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth...,”** why? **“...Because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” (John 8:44b)** So what God wants you and I to recognize, what He wants you and I to live by is the fact that if I am going to make it in warfare, if I am going to stand firm I’ve got to know truth. In Hosea chapter 4 he says **“...There[’s] no...knowledge of God in the land.” (Hosea 4:1b)** He says, **“My people...,”** in verse 6 **“...are [being] destroyed...,”** they are being ruined, **“...for [a] lack of knowledge....” (Hosea 4:6a)** And this is what happens. A lack of knowledge is a lack of truth. We don’t know what truth is. And if you don’t know what truth is the enemy is able to destroy you. He is able to come in with the subtlety of a lie. This happened to me when I was a brand new Christian. I was sitting there at John’s Hopkins. I worked on a research team. I’m a registered nurse. But I was working on a research team. I was typing. I was a brand new child of God. I was saved in 1963. I was a divorcee with two boys. I’d shaken my fist



in the fact of God and said, “To hell with You God. I’ll see you around town. I’m going to find someone to love me.” I came to know Jesus Christ. I went down on my knees an immoral woman, a harlot, a whore, whatever you want to call me, but I came back up clean, a new creature in Christ Jesus. I was absolutely transformed. I began to devour the Word of God. I just read it, read it, read it because it’s truth. And then I was sitting there one day and I was typing and it came to me all this about Jesus Christ is a bunch, and excuse me, but this is the thought, it’s a bunch of bull. And I was horrified. I thought how could I have a thought like that? It absolutely did me in and I told my friend about it. And he just laughed and I thought, don’t laugh, I’ve just blasphemed God. And he says, “Listen, that’s warfare. It is warfare.” Warfare is anything that comes against the truth, that it is a lie. It is a deception. It is a distortion. It is taking one truth of Scripture and taking it out of context and distorting it. It comes in all sorts of forms. We’re going to be talking about it more, but I just want you to understand having put on the belt of truth. You’ve got to know truth. It’s fundamental. It is foundational. You’ve got to know truth because then [“you know the truth and the truth will set you free.”] (PARAPHRASE, John 8:32) And you will not be overcome by the enemy who’s a liar.