

## The Armour Series: Week 2 Devotions

In week 2 of the Armour Series we explored the Belt of Truth.

### Day One

#### Read:

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come” – John 16 : 13

#### Engage:

Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit in this passage, and He describes the spirit as a bringer of truth. What does this mean? Some people might say it means that the Holy Spirit makes you honest, or that He only tells you what the Bible says. These answers are definitely not wrong, but this week is a week where you are going to be challenged about what truth is and what the Holy Spirit would convict us to believe. The Holy Spirit, according to John 16 : 13, does not just tell us what has happened but the Spirit also tells us what is to come. It even says that he brings messages directly from Jesus himself. The Holy Spirit, in conjunction with the Word of God, can bring truth in our lives but the thing about this truth is that it will not always make sense. This week's devotion is about putting God's truth over our own and in reading His Word, we are going to discover together how to do that.

#### Prayer:

Dear Lord, thank you for giving us the way, the truth and the light that is Jesus Christ. We ask that you would bless this week as we learn more about your truth and how we can arm ourselves with against the powers and principalities of this dishonest world. Help us to remain strong in our faith of who you are and who you call us to be, and forgive us for where we have failed to do so. We love you, Lord. Amen!

### Day Two

#### Read:

“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’” - John 8 : 31 – 32

#### Engage:

The truth that Jesus is speaking about is being a child of God that is free from sin and its fruits. This is the “Belt of Truth” that fastens us in a way; The Gospel. The fact of the matter is that the reason the Gospel is such a powerful truth is because it is so simple. Watching an hour of Suits on Mnet might make you feel so smart that when you hear a message as simple as “Jesus died for your sins”, you might even look down on it. The gospel is sometimes the last thing we think about when we are going through something tragic or when we are struggling with a sin that we just cannot beat. However, here's a challenge to you: Jesus died so that you would not be bounded to such things but that you would live in the truth that He is Lord over your life. That is the Gospel. That means every family issue you have, every relational issue you have, the mental health problems that you deal with or even the sins you struggle with; Jesus' death paid for all of that. It is a promise, one you can only know by engaging the Word. So let's claim it, in his name and be free.

#### Prayer:

Father, we praise you for sending your son to die for us on the cross. We thank you for all the things that he paid for that free us from sin and its fruits. We ask Lord that you would realise this truth in our lives through our faith in you and what you have done for us on the cross. Help us with our unbelief. We love you, Lord. Amen!

### Day Three

Read:

"I do not sit with the deceitful, nor do I associate with hypocrites." – Psalms 26 : 4

Engage:

One thing that can easily loosen the belt of truth is whom we spend our time with. It might seem cliché and overbearing when you hear someone tell you that your friends matter. Perhaps it is much easier to remain friends with people because you feel isolated without them. There is definitely a place for friends in your life, but the reality is that the people you befriend have the capacity to shape the character that you have. Imagine you met someone for the first time, and they lied on a frequent basis and gossiped about others in secret but were friendly in person. Would you trust that person? Yet, whilst I hope a lot of you would answer "No" to that question, a lot of us have those people as our friends. So, what does this mean? Well, while we are called to love everyone, that is very different from having a close relationship with everyone. Jesus even said that he only considers people who do the will of God as his family (Matthew 12 : 50). You might think that that is a different ball game but think about this: Some of us see our friends more than we do our biological family, if not just as much. If we are spending time like that with someone, they are influencing us one or the other. So, make sure these influencers are good for you and for your relationship with Jesus.

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for being so merciful to us and being an honest friend. We ask you to help us maintain honest and transparent relationships with our friends and families. Please also bless with people who can be honest and transparent with us, so that we may not be influenced by bad council. Rather, let us have people in our lives that lead us towards you. We love you, Lord. Amen!

## **Day Four**

Read:

"Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me." – Psalms 27 : 10

Engage:

The truth is that there are a lot of people in this nation who have been abandoned by their parental figures. It is not unique problem to this country, but it is definitely a big problem that is worthy of mention. The reason that this truth is important for today's devotion is that it can make people live a life feeling abandoned by someone who should have been there. It can make you believe that you do not have a father or a mother who cares for you. That can be your truth, and you might not trust easily. However, the fore-mentioned passage of scripture rebukes the lie that you are forsaken. God loves you, and He receives you. It might not feel like much, and you might leave this devotion feeling lonely if that were all there is to say. It might even be hard to believe because of what you go through. There might be people in your life right now who lie to you and steal from you. You might have people who are unsupportive of your dreams, or people who are close to you that ridicule you for the way you are. You might even have people who hate you. We all have experienced some kind of betrayal or hurt that makes it hard to trust. However, Jesus died for your trust. He paid for it in blood. You do not have to give to him. In fact, Jesus died fully knowing that there would be a lot of people that wouldn't believe in him. However, he would do it again. That is how much loves you and wants to have a relationship with you. The belt of truth allows us to trust in God, because it is belief that he is the truth. Trust that he will never forsake you.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for what you have done and what you are willing to do for a relationship with us that is built on trust. Father, in you we have everything that we have ever lacked. Thank you for filling the gaps in our lives. We pray that you would help us to remember you each time we feel like we are forsaken. Help us to know the truth, that you are with us. We love you, Lord. Amen!

## Day Five

### Read:

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ." – Ephesians 4 : 15

### Engage:

We have been a bit defensive with the Belt of truth, but tonight is all about sharing the truth with someone else. This is not an easy topic to talk about because a lot of people generally think that it is easy. For example, if someone who cannot sing auditions at the Voice SA, SA's Got Talent or Idols, we usually get a kick out of laughing at them with our friends and family. How did the poor, untalented soul go so far as to perform on national television without someone telling them that they are trash at singing? Maybe you just assume that they didn't want to listen to the "haters." However, the truth is not hatred. It can be told in that spirit, but that's not inherently what it is. So, what it really means is that maybe that person was continually told "white lies" about their singing voice all the way up until the television screen where millions of people are laughing their heads off. Telling the truth in love is not easy. However, the scripture is not trying present a formula that makes it easier but rather a motivation: Your love for the person. If we can see that withholding this truth from someone we love can lead them down a horrid path in their life, why would stay silent? Sometimes telling the truth in love is less about being polite about it and more about just doing it. We should be wholesome in how we present the truth (Eph 4 : 29), but do not rob the people you love of their chance to grow because you are too afraid to prune them with the truth. Love on them with honesty.

### Prayer:

Jesus, thank you that you are a bringer of correction and of growth. Lord, we bless you for also being truth and for setting us free from our own deceit. We ask you to help us be honest with people as you are with us. For your Word calls us to love all people, so help us to reveal our love through the transparency of what is in our hearts. We love you, Lord. Amen!

## Day Six

### Read:

"Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know[b] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.'" – John 14 : 5 – 7

### Engage:

If Jesus is the way to knowing God, if he is the truth of salvation, then he kind of is the Belt of Truth in a way. Think about it; whenever you wear a belt, it is in the hope that your pants won't come falling off spontaneously. It keeps you supported and protected, so long as you have it on. When it comes to our salvation, Jesus is the same as well. So long as you truly know him and who he is, so long as you commit to confessing him as your Lord and Saviour, you know God the Father too. This means your salvation is secured. This does not mean that you have to be perfect because the disciples still made mistakes, but nor does it mean that you can do anything that you want because we are called to be dead to sin if Jesus is truly our Lord and Saviour. What that means is that you can pursue the grace of God so that you can change or "be transformed" in the way you think, feel and ultimately behave. Knowing this truth is so critical to our faith; that we are redeemed by Jesus and have the free gift of a eternal relationship with God.

### Prayer:

Jesus, thanks for making it so simple for us. Thank you that by knowing who you are, we know who the Father is. Thank you that only what you did on the cross grants us salvation, and that you get all the glory. We love you, Lord. Amen!

## Day Seven

### Read:

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” – Hebrews 4 : 12

### Engage:

As this week has come to a close, an important question to ask yourself is how do we then keep the truth in our hearts? When we are under attack from the lies of the enemy in our lives, as well as the demotivating lies that we tell ourselves when we are beating ourselves up because we failed at something or made a mistake, how do we hold fast to the truth? The answer is obvious: The Word of God. It is a living thing, and it is because it is alive that we can count on it being relevant to every situation we encounter. It is because it is so accurately convicting, that we can trust it to reveal the truth to us about ourselves and about where we are at. If you do not have anyone that can be real with you, at least know that you have Jesus and you have God’s word. There’s so much in the Bible that will leave you convicted. It will always tell you the truth.

### Prayer:

Lord, thank you for speaking to us this week about the truth that is in you and in your Word. We pray that as the week goes by, we will be able to apply what we have all learned to our daily lives. We ask you to have mercy and forgiveness for when we fail to keep consistent with your Word. Please encourage us to keep the belt of truth fastened in our lives. We love you, Lord. Amen!