***The Full Armor of God - The Belt of Truth

The Suffering of Spiritual Combat, No. 4 - PH30-02

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:28-30***

No one who is not a Christian can understand the Word of God. You cannot enter into the things of God until you are a believer. When you are a believer, you can still not enter into the things of God unless you are a Spirit-filled believer. That means to be in the status of spirituality. To be Spirit-filled means to be a spiritual Christian. That status is achieved through the confession of known sins. Your maturity may be at a very low level as a believer, but your spirituality can be in perfect full operation as of this point, and indeed it must be if you are to learn the spiritual phenomena with which we will be dealing here. So, it is our custom to allow a moment of personal prayer, and opportunity of silent examination of our minds and of our situation personally in order that if there is something to confess, it may be done. Shall we pray?

Ephesians 6:10-18 list for us 7 items which compose the battle gear which God has provided for the Christian to use in his war with the demon angels. This is a war in which all of us, in one way or another, are involved. The more we come to spiritual maturity, the more deeply we will be involved in that battle, and the more important it will be for us to have the items of battle gear at our disposal, and ability to use those items.

The apostle Paul in Philippians 1:28-30, which is the book that we are studying, has indicated that he is in a conflict and so are the Philippians believers. This conflict is the conflict with the demon angels. The passage in Ephesians 6:10-18 explains to us the armor for our defense and for our attempt in this battle. Here, it is our purpose to try to take a passage that you may be familiar with, and to convert it into usable form. This armor is something that we must use because God has commanded us to use it. He has commanded us to use it in order that we may achieve victory in the angelic warfare. This is not just some kind of a challenge. I want to review the first item with you that we looked at: the belt of truth. This is because in fielding questions this week, I realized that some things apparently did not come through as clearly as they should have.

First of all, Paul says in Ephesians 6:14, "Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth." Truth here refers to God's viewpoint as recorded in Scripture concerning life and eternity. Satan the liar has filled the world with human viewpoint distortions about life and eternity. The belt of truth is secured by what we have called the grace system of perception. I want to simply call your attention to eight specific elements that are involved in proceeding and understanding spiritual things. If you get these eight elements in your mind, it will go a long way for you to be able to achieve a belt of truth. These things should be something that you should be able to think through step-by-step from top to bottom.

The belt of truth is secured on a grace system. This means that God will teach any believer without limit His divine viewpoint. This is contained in categories of doctrine. One Christian does not have more capacity for learning doctrine than another Christian. It is a grace system. So, your human merit and your human IQ is not involved in this. There is no such thing as a spiritual giant. I get sick and tired of hearing about great men of God who are spiritual giants. That's a big slice of baloney because it intimidates the average Christian into thinking that he has to be some kind of second class Christian. If there's anybody you think is a spiritual giant, or something outstanding before God, I can tell you that you can be just exactly what he is. This is because the grace system is such that everybody is equal when it comes to spiritual maturity advancement. Nobody has an advantage over anyone else.

**What God has Provided for our Learning Doctrine**

Here are the elements which God had to provide so that you can learn spiritual things. If God had not provided these things, you couldn't learn one spiritual iota of anything. That's the point. You could not begin to put on the belt of truth if God had not first in grace done this. Here are the eight things that He provided:

1. **The Bible**

He gave us a completed Bible. This was a grace act. Nobody deserves this record of spiritual phenomena which we call Bible doctrine. No one deserves this marvelous record of reality toward life. This includes: the way life really is; the way your body functions; the way your soul functions, with all the facets of the soul; and, the way your human spirit functions. Nobody deserves this completed Bible. It was produced by God the Holy Spirit who informed the human authors. He revealed this information to the human authors. He guided them in accurately recording it. The books of the Bible themselves were preserved by God in spite of much demonic effort to destroy them. This is what the liberal minister is constantly doing today. He is trying to stop the grace system of perception by neutralizing the completed Bible. He doesn't perhaps realize that that's what he's doing. However, Satan knows what he is doing. Therefore, the first thing in the grace system of perception for you to realize is that God has given you a complete canon of Scripture.

1. **The Local Church**

Secondly, God has established for us the organization of the local church. This never existed prior to the day of Pentecost. Again, no Christian deserves this provision. Yet, this provision is essential for public teaching of Bible truth. The local church is going to exist right on down to the time of the rapture. It is very dangerous and it is very hazardous for you to get into small Bible groups--little private Bible groups that meet in homes with people. If you want to blow up your spiritual life with a lot of misconception and a lot of misinformation, just get yourself into somebody's cute little home Bible class. There are some good home Bible classes provided they are taught by someone with the spiritual gift of teaching, and who knows something about the Word of God. However, usually these discussion groups are fatal to one's spiritual life--extremely hazardous. I would advise you to stay out of little discussion groups.

College students are particularly prone to that because they live in dormitories. Therefore, they have a natural setting for getting together with a few folks here and a few folks there, and having a little bit of so-called Christian Fellowship. That Christian Fellowship is easily used by Satan for your personal spiritual destruction.

The way God has set up this system for you to learn something about the Word of God is through the organization of the local church. Any badmouthing that you hear about the local church is just plain ignorance. It's going to be here. It is God's system, and it is to be used the way it is supposed to be. I grant you that a lot of local churches are not what they're supposed to be. They are not really local churches at all. They're just some kind of club, and that's all they amount to. However, the establishment of the local church is a key factor in securing the belt of truth. The primary reason for the local church is to enable the Christian to secure the belt of truth. This is provided in different ways. It is the business of the local church to hit you with doctrine and give you information. Then you can have the consent for building and putting on the belt of truth.

What's happening today? Churches are mostly providing secondary and trivial things for their members. The sad thing about it is that the sheep don't know any better. You can take a look at a new convert. He's a brand new Christian. He gets born again. Therefore, what does he do? He comes into a church, and the first thing he does is he looks around. "What do we do here? What is the church business? What is the operation all about?" The first thing he does in most churches is get steeped with a lot of misconceptions.

A lot of us have misconceptions that we still haven't disentangled from our thinking. It is very hard to get over the traditional lines with which we were reared. It is very hard to buck the tiger of the local church establishment; to stand up against the crowd; to stand up against the officials; and, to stand up against the people who are supposedly the authorities. Do you know why they're the authorities? It's because they've got churches full of people; they've got more pews; they've got bigger buildings; and, they've got more income, so obviously, we think that God must be blessing them. Obviously, they are the source of truth, and they're beloved by everybody, so therefore they are obviously the ones whom God is using. Now the local church has a tough job. It was established as a key factor in the grace system of learning spiritual things. Without it, you cannot learn spiritual things. Without a local church, your spiritual life is going to be at a very very low level.

1. **The Pastor-Teacher Gift**

Along with this, God has to provide someone to do the teaching, so that was the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. No Christian, again, merits this provision. The demons seek to belittle the absolute need for a pastor-teacher. The pastor-teacher does his work in public, in a group. The reason for that is so that you can react to the Word of God according to your own volition. No one else is to know about what you do with the Word of God except you and the Lord. Therefore, you are taught in a group so you can sit here and resist what you hear, or you can open your thinking and be receptive to what you hear. Christians cannot get the Word of God in any useful degree on their own. I'll tell you who tells people that you can get the Word of God on your own. It is the lazy preacher; it is the incompetent preacher; and, it is the uninformed sincere preacher who is suggesting to you that if you just take your Bible and read it, God is going to reveal great things to you. That's a bunch of malarkey. You're not going to get anywhere, hardly at all, reading the Bible on your own. That's why God set up a system, a grace system, of learning spiritual things, and it has a series of essential factors: one, the completed Bible; two, the local church; and three, the pastor-teacher gift to give the instruction.

His instruction is to be in the form of a monologue. You hear a great deal of talk about the virtues of dialog. Dialog is usually people exchanging ignorance. If you get a bunch of experts together who really know their stuff, they might get together and have a fruitful dialog. However, this is not generally the condition in a local church. Dialog is not the way people learn. People learn by sitting and listening and paying attention, and then they can operate on something that they have been told that has been explained to them and that they understand. This of course does not mean that the questions must be excluded. That is clarification, and that is perfectly legitimate. When you don't understand things, the point of wisdom is to ask for clarification. Therefore, the pastor-teacher gift is in the local church to give you the information so that you can learn spiritual things according to the system. However, he must be able to teach you, and you must be able to listen.

1. **Priesthood**

Next is the creation of the priesthood of all the believers. This was another factor that God had to give in this age for us to be able to learn His truth. That means that each Christian is personally and privately to handle his own life before the Lord. The reason for this is to preserve your volition. Nobody can learn spiritual things without your freedom of choice. We have had centuries of religious persecution where religious groups have thought that they could convey religious ideas by force. They have tried to circumvent the volition of people in order to shove it down their throats. You cannot shove anything down a person's throat against his volition and have him accept it. God knows this because this is how God made us. It works in all areas of life. Whatever area of life your interest is in, or whatever area of life you're involved in, you can be sure that volition has to be a respected factor. It is a very great thing within marriage. It has to be respected. Even when you have people who are acting in a wrong way, you must recognize that their wrong actions are the expression of their volition, and they must be dealt with without squelching the expression of that freedom of choice.

The priesthood of the believers is to provide that kind of a setting so that you can learn spiritual things. Again, no Christian deserves this kind of respectful treatment. The old sin nature is an embarrassing thing. It's nice to keep all those things private, isn't it? It's nice to know that you don't have to come to a confessional and tell me what you've done this week. It's nice that you don't have to come and sit on the other side of the board, and I open the door and you tell me what you thought about Mr. So-and-so and Mrs. So-and-so and what you said. It's nice that you don't have to come and tell me what you said about me, and thought about me, and so on. This is not God's way. God's way is to keep all the old sin nature trash private. So you keep it private too.

I'm amazed at how Christians are in the habit of exposing themselves to other people. Everything that happens in their lives, they've just got flabby lips, and they have to go running off at the mouth about themselves, instead of preserving their privacy and keeping their problems within the context of their own life. That's the priesthood of the believer. For this reason, people in a public service should not be embarrassed. It is easy to do this. We do this in innocence. I cringe when I think of some of the things I used to do. We should not be asking people who are visitors to raise their hands. I finally realized every time I went to another church and they asked me to do that, I didn't raise my hand.

I was sitting in a service of one of the great high-powered fundamentalist preachers who was preaching, and he was preaching a very powerful sermon. It was big church here in Dallas several years ago, and they had asked our boys band to come and play. So the boys had played and we were all seated in the first couple of rows. Here were all these musicians, and I was off on the end. All of a sudden, this great evangelist screamed. (You'd would know him if I called his name.) He said, "Now I want everybody who is a Christian here to raise your hand right now. You Christians. Put your hand up." And I was looking straight ahead, but out of my peripheral vision, I could see 20 heads flip to the right to look at me as every band boy snapped his head toward me because they'd never experienced this, and they hadn't been briefed on this. They didn't quite know what to do. Yet, their sense of grace orientation in this church offended them immediately. Well I didn't raise my hand. Neither did the rest. That evangelist thought he had a field day with a whole mob right here in front. He preached to us for the rest of the service.

So I realized, "I don't want to raise my hand in public. I don't want to identify myself. I don't want to make a public spectacle. I'm a very retiring person by nature. Here I'm asking other people to tag themselves," so I've gotten over that. It's a violation of privacy. It interrupts the system that God has set up for us to learn spiritual things. When I go asking people to identify themselves in the service, it's interrupting the system. We shouldn't do anything to put a tag on people. You go into some churches and put a tag on that says, "Visitor." Everybody knows they're supposed to shake hands with you. I used to be plagued for a long time about having people at the door who had good smiles to welcome all the folks coming in to show that we were a friendly church. And we used to send out welcoming letters. When I think of all the ladies I used to have type those monotonous tedious letters welcoming these people, and letting them know that they have done us a great favor, and the kingdom of God has been greatly advanced because they happened to visit our service. I am glad there is no purgatory, because I would have a lot to undo.

This is part of the privacy picture, and it is very important. You can see that churches violate this all the time. Why do they violate it? Because his majesty the devil has talked them into some human viewpoint ideas that it would be nice and it would show Christian concern and Christian love if they would perform all these things for people. Therefore, the bigger the church is, the more they go into this sort of thing. What they are doing is interrupting the system for people to learn spiritual things, and they don't realize that Satan has conned them at a very strategic point. You should deal with your problems; your weaknesses; your attitudes; and, your sins with the Lord--not some counselor. Your pastor-teacher is a legitimate source of advisement. However, when you know the Word of God, you will be able to handle your own problems. God has made every physical provision and every spiritual provision for us to privately live our lives.

1. **The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit**

The next factor is the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. None of us deserves this. The Old Testament saints never dreamed of such a marvelous privilege, that God would dwell within our bodies. Yet, it is God the Holy Spirit who is essential to make the grace system work. He is the one who makes it work successfully. He is the ultimate teacher of spiritual phenomena which is what makes up the belt of truth. If you did not have God the Holy Spirit indwelling you, you could never put on the belt the truth because you would not have the one teacher who makes these things clear to you. The human agent simply gives the expression to that which the Holy Spirit gives reality. Therefore, there is no spiritual progress without being born again. You have to have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which you secure at the point of salvation. It is He who gives us understanding of the Word of God.

1. **The Filling of the Holy Spirit**

Next is the filling of the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Holy Spirit is a condition of spirituality required for securing the belt of truth. Filling comes through the confession of known sins. It is a technique of the Christian life which must constantly be used. There is no progress in the Christian life without the filling of the Spirit, and again no believer can claim that he deserves such a provision. The demon angels very vigorously promote a pseudo spirituality which is steeped in pride. There are Christians who seldom confess sins, if ever, and yet they go about smugly viewing themselves as responsible significant Christian people, and they are not. If you are not in the habit of confessing sin and being alert to your need to confess sin, then you have interrupted God's chain of learning his spiritual viewpoint, and you are going to be left out.

1. **A Living Human Spirit**

The next factor is a living human spirit. This is essential as the point of contact with God for us to learn doctrine. It is God who teaches our spirits. And who merits this? No one. This human spirit acts as a storage reservoir of spiritual truth. It is the belt of truth. All the teaching of the pastor-teacher in the local church or any other teacher you have is toward your human spirit. The point of it is to fill that reservoir. Putting on the belt of truth simply means filling up the human spirit with Bible doctrine.

1. **A Soul for Bible Doctrine**

Finally, the last point is that God has given us a soul which is capable of functioning on Bible doctrine. This soul is capable of functioning as the result of the belt of truth. This doctrine in our human spirit will cycle up into our mind to guide our thinking. It will cycle up into our will to guide our choices. It will cycle up into our emotions to guide our feelings. These three areas constitute the soul. The soul takes in divine viewpoint from the human spirit, and it expresses that viewpoint toward God and toward man. The soul gives guidance to the body in the actions of the body according to divine viewpoint. It is the belt of truth that forms the frame of reference in the mind that gives us a new conscience according to God's standards. It gives us His divine viewpoint in the soul.

All of these eight elements are essential for putting on the belt of truth. You should learn them. You should be able to think through them. You should understand how they were. Therefore, you should be conscious at any point at which these are violated. That's the issue today. Anytime any one of these things is violated in some way, then you know that Satan is trying to come up on your blind side to keep you from learning spiritual phenomena.

If Christians could ever learn this, and if the average Christian could get hold of this setup that God has provided and understand it, I guarantee you there'd be an exodus out of churches like you have never seen and never dreamed of. People would just go storming out of churches. They'd realize that they are missing the boat completely, and they don't have half a chance. However, in any case, you'll understand that the local church is not to be viewed with all the false concepts that are on it today. There is only one thing you need to know about a place when you walk in. Is there a pastor-teacher who is exercising his authority gift of instructing in the Word of God, and therefore, people come to know God's divine viewpoint? That's all you need to know. If he's doing that, you've got a church that can do the job for you. If he's not doing that, none of those other things will stand you in points of crises or advance you spiritually.

If the pastor-teacher is doing other things than studying the Bible, then watch out. If he's running around visiting people; socializing; giving talks to the local civic clubs; and, championing great causes within the community to keep the booze out (or whatever happens to be his pitch at the moment), he's out of his line. He's not doing his job as a pastor-teacher. That should signal to you that if he's doing that, he cannot be studying. It takes hours and hours and hours in order to come up with some significant instruction in the Word of God that people can go away and say, "Now I can grow on this. I can develop on this."

If your priesthood is being violated, you should be able to be conscious of that. If you're indifferent to the fact that God the Holy Spirit lives within you, and you keep him grieved and quenched because you do not confess sin so that he cannot operate and carry out the next step of filling you with the Holy Spirit, then you should be conscious that you are hindering God's chain.

If you've caught the idea that now you are born again, and because you're sincere, you have something to offer somebody, or that you have something with which to serve the Lord, or you happen to have been a church member for 20 years, or used to be a great person in some church where you had an official position, you might need to wake up to the fact that you don't have very much in your human spirit with which to serve and to give out. Consequently, you have never learned how to enable your soul to function on God's viewpoint.

This is terrific, and this is what God in grace has provided for that belt of truth. There's one other thing we should try to get clear. How does this system work? In this system, there are six specific stages, very briefly:

**The Grace System of Perception in Operation**

1. **Instruction in Truth**

Step one is the instruction in truth. The pastor-teacher stands up before the congregation. He uses the HICEE technique in the instruction of the Word of God (Hermeneutics; Isagogics; Categories; Exegesis; and, Etymology). No Christian can secure the belt of truth if a pastor is not doing this in every service. That should be your first clue to any church. If a pastor is not teaching the Word of God by expository teaching from the original languages, you're not going anywhere. Satan has stopped the grace system of perception from functioning right at this point. He has killed it mostly at step one because he has diverted pastors from teaching the Word of God in a usable form.

1. **Understanding of Truth**

Step number two is the understanding of truth. Under the filling of the Holy Spirit, the instruction of the pastor-teacher is understood in the perceptive mind. Your mind has two sides: the perceptive side of the mind; and, the directive side of the mind. The perceptive side is where we learn doctrine, and now under the filling of the Holy Spirit, we are able to understand what has been taught by the pastor-teacher from the Bible. That's the chain which came from God. God gave us the Bible. The Bible is explained by the pastor-teacher under the filling of the Holy Spirit, which means all known sins are confessed. You are sitting in a group, and you are learning the Word of God in the perceptive side of your mind. This is the same side of your mind where you learn reading, writing, arithmetic, and anything else that you learn in life. You are simply learning now the facts of the Word of God.

This, the Bible describes as "knowledge," or the Greek word for it is "gnosis." This is called "gnosis" that we have in the perceptive side of the mind. That's simply knowledge. There are three things that are necessary for you to secure "gnosis." You must have this knowledge if you are going to progress in your spiritual life. Three things are necessary to have it. One is that you must be willing to receive it. You have to have positive volition to being taught Bible doctrine, which means you have to be present in the services where the teaching is being given, and you have to be there regularly.

I want to tell you one of the devices of Satan--one of his strategies that you may not be alerted to. This is one of the reasons it is bad to miss a Sunday of Bible study, even once in a while. I have found with considerable, astounding, frightening regularity, that people who are having trouble along a certain line have a way of regularly coming to church and then missing a Sunday where the particular problem that they have indicated in their lives is brought to a focus in that particular Scripture that is being explained that day. I cannot tell you how regularly this happens. It happens with a frightening regularity. I get enough information that I know what is a problem for a person, and I know a point of negative response to them, and I'll be if every time they don't miss the service where that particular truth that they need comes to focus. That's what's bad about missing a service. This is what Thomas did. The one Sunday night that he doesn't come to church, the Lord appears. You can miss an awful lot and get in a lot of trouble by skipping one service. You come to all the others, and then you miss the one you really should be at.

That's the difficulty that we face in learning the understanding of the truth. You'll cut yourself out if you are not regular. You have to be open to instruction apart from your attitude toward the one who's doing the teaching, and apart from the attitude toward the people around you. You may sit in a congregation, half of whom, in your estimate are finks, but that has nothing to do with your learning the Word of God. The pastor-teacher may be a fink as far as you're concerned. That has nothing to do with your learning the Word of God. Usually the one who is your right teacher in the Word of God is not particularly appealing to you. This is because he is often teaching what is offensive to you in your old sin nature, and thus you are finding yourself having to readjust and fight back with yourself over what you've heard him say, and he is not, consequently, a welcomed element in your life. To secure "gnosis," you have to be positive toward being taught doctrine.

**Concentration**

You also have to have concentration on the instruction which is being given. You have to avoid being distracted. You have to avoid distracting others, or you cause them to lose the line of message. So don't sit in church and constantly be opening up your wrappers of Life Savers that you're chewing, and then put them in your mouth and crunch them loudly so that people in an area five feet around you are distracted wondering whether you might break one of your teeth while you're crunching that Life Saver and strategic information is on their mind, so what is being said they miss, and any number of things that you can do to distract. Don't pull out your nail clippers and start clipping your nails so that periodically we have this loud snap reverberating through the room until you get a bunch of people around you hoping that you'll get up to the quick and really hit yourself good so we can really hear something out of you.

When you walk into church for instruction in the Word of God, you better be on your guard, because Mr. Devil is right here analyzing you to see what he can do to cause you not to concentrate on the instruction, and to help use you to keep other people from concentrating. As a matter of fact, when you get a congregation as mature as this one is, where people do concentrate, visitors are very nervous. They're used to looking around and smiling and enjoying and fooling around, and pretty soon they see everybody listening and writing and taking notes, and pretty soon I can just see them looking left and right, and then they begin to look up here, and then they get a little glassy-eyed, and they're trying to concentrate because they're not used to this. This is essential, and your right pastor will be perfect for getting across viewpoint to you. You may not be pleased with him in many ways, and you should pay attention to the information and not the person--him, or anybody else around you. Don't just pay attention to what fascinates you in what may happen to be a fad area of interest.

So, first of all, to get this "gnosis," you have to be positive; you have to be there; and, you have to see to it that you're in church. You're not going to be there according to the weather; whether you're not feeling too well; or, anything else. If you've been up late the night before, you're just going to be there. Secondly, you have to concentrate. And thirdly, you have to have comprehension of what is taught. That requires the filling of the Holy Spirit. Some areas of truth you will grasp very readily. Others will come more slowly because you don't have the frame of reference for it. Your memory has no past information to help clarify the new factors. However, comprehension is essential, and it will come in time.

As of this point, you may hear something and you're just understanding it. You may agree with what you have been taught by the pastor-teacher under the filling of the Holy Spirit, and you have "gnosis." You may not have the frame of reference to see this instruction, so you may be suspicious of it. You may have never heard it before, or you may have some involvement with somebody who's been very influential in your spiritual life, and that person taught you something different. This is often what happens in a group that maybe has helped you, and they teach something different. Therefore, you are negative to what you hear from the pastor-teacher. Or the information conflicts with your own background and your past views. Or you hear something that alerts you to the fact that something very dramatic and drastic is going to have to be changed about your life pattern. So you resist on that account. However, if you disagree with some area of instruction, it would be wise for you simply to set it aside for further consideration as you get further information and further understanding.

Your human frame of reference won't help you here. That's built with human IQ. It's only your spiritual frame of reference that will help you. When it's built up, then you'll have a better capacity for being able to judge what you have heard. This "gnosis" type of information, in other words, what you have here you cannot use spiritually. I don't care how much of the Bible you know or how much of this you learn even under the filling of the Holy Spirit, you cannot use it for guidance of your soul. The areas of natural learning you learn the same way. Natural learning goes from the perceptive side to the directive side, and that goes into actions. All your reading, writing, and arithmetic goes directly over, but not so in spiritual things. Spiritual things come down into our human spirit, and our human spirit is the place of storage.

1. **Storage**

That's the next step--the storage of truth. I want to be sure that you understand this. Knowledge in your perceptive mind is believed. That's an act of faith. When you believe it, then God the Holy Spirit stores it down here in classifications of truth in your human spirit. In other words, God teaches your spirit His viewpoint. The Bible refers to this as full truth, or this is what we call "epignosis." This is full understanding that we have here in the human spirit. "Epignosis" accumulated in the human spirit in various categories is the belt of truth. This is the belt. That's what we're driving at. Instead of conveying the belt of truth from some insignificant, useless, pointless word, I'm trying to show you how you can really produce a belt of truth. God has given you eight things that were necessary for you to be able to learn spiritual things. Here are the steps how this system of grace functions. It goes from "gnosis" to "epignosis" as the result of your faith; your positive volition; and, your believing what you have heard. This is how you put on the belt of truth.

James 1:22 calls a certain type of Christian a hearer of the word. That is a Christian who has "gnosis." He calls the other Christian a doer of the word. That is the Christian who has believed it and has "epignosis." This "epignosis" has now cycled up to the directive side of the mind, and therefore guides a person's actions. Without "epignosis;" without knowledge in your human spirit; and, without this belt of truth, you cannot function on God's viewpoint. This is how you function on God's viewpoint. Reading, writing, and arithmetic goes from the learning side of the mind to the acting side of the mind. Zap. That's all. However, you cannot take spiritual things in that way. Spiritual things do not go from the learning side to the acting side. They must be filtered through the human spirit which is the point of contact with God.

Many are deceived about themselves toward the Word of God, as James 1:22 points out. Many people have a great deal of "gnosis," and they think that they're fine wonderful Christians. They try to act upon that "gnosis," and they have no guidance of the Word of God, and they think they do. Unless you are using this grace system; you are open to it; and you're functioning on it, you don't have anything in your human spirit. This is the first concern of the Christian life. What is the Christian life all about? A lot of preachers will tell you it's getting out there and serving the Lord, and it is not. The first concern of the Christian life is to put on the belt of truth. That means filling your human spirit with God's viewpoint with Bible doctrine. Spiritual phenomena can only be applied to life from this human spirit storage area.

1. **Effects of the Truth**

Step number four in this system includes the effects of the truth. What will the effects of the truth be? Well, Bible doctrine stored in the human spirit is "epignosis." It is cycled up into the directive mind under the filling of the Holy Spirit. It takes again the filling of the Holy Spirit. While you have a human spirit full of God's viewpoint, it still takes the status of spirituality for it to cycle, but then it cycles automatically. As you come into life situations, zap, up comes the information from the human spirit and it gives guidance to the thinking; to the acting; and, to the emotions.

In the directive mind, this doctrine is believed, and it produces several things. For one thing, it creates a frame of reference. That gives you a basis for learning other doctrine of a more advanced type. Also, it gives you the ground for discerning what is false doctrine. Your frame of reference here in the directive mind is very important.

Secondly, it will form a new conscience. This conscience will get off of the old standards of the world system, and it will be filled with God's values and God's standards. That will govern your decisions. "Epignosis" knowledge will also create divine viewpoint in the directive side of your mind. You see the issues of life as they really are. 2 Corinthians 10:5-6 tell us about that. You see the issues of life as per the mind of Christ.

One of the things that this will also do for you, to fill your human spirit with every "epignosis" knowledge, it will clear up the guilt hangups which you may have brooding in your subconscious mind. This works like this. Here is your conscious mind, the perceptive mind and directive side, and here is the subconscious mind. You did something that you were aware of that was a sin. It may have been any number of things, but you had a great deal of guilt about that. What you did with that was that you suppressed the guilt by getting yourself into a lot of church activity, or into a lot of social activity in the community, and you created a lot of human good. Therefore, you took that thing and you pushed it down here, and you squelched it down into your subconscious mind. You have suppressed this thing so that you're not aware of it anymore.

The subconscious is going to affect you. Some of the things that happen to you when you're asleep are the result of your subconscious mind acting upon you. You may not know why you're having a certain experience. You may not know why you're having certain nightmares. You may not know why you're having some restlessness. You may not know why when you're awake, you have a certain sense of a lack of peace, and there are certain attitudes that you're struggling with in your mind. It's because something has been pushed down into the subconscious. When doctrine from the human spirit is used to guide the conscious mind, when doctrine guides, you know how to deal with sin. You know how to confess sin and remove guilt. You know that you don't have to run around asking anybody's forgiveness. You know that you don't have to make public confessions. You know that it is between you and God. It is between you and the Lord. "Against you, and you only," David said, "have I sinned." That's where the sin is dealt with.

When you wipe out your conscious guilt by confession of sin because doctrine has given you the guidance for handling that sin, it also has the effect of wiping out the subconscious guilt. This is why a Christian who finally comes to understand how to use the technique of the confession of sin, for the first time perhaps in a long time, really comes to peace in his life. He thinks it's just because of the things he knows that have been brought at ease in his life. However, it is also the things he has suppressed and has forgotten that have also been wiped out of his thinking. Now that has been brought to the place where he is at peace with God and with himself.

This will also provide us with the content for prayer. It gives us accurate information or proper motivation in our Christian service. "Epignosis" will. It will also govern the expression of the will and the emotions.

1. **The Application of the Truth**

Step number 5 is the application of the truth. We will apply this truth in the grace system in two directions. You apply it toward God and toward man. Here you have a human spirit filled. You've got God over here on one side, and you express it that way. You have man over here on the other side, and you express that toward him. All of this is coming up here from the directive side of your mind, expressed toward God, and expressed toward man.

What you have here is a life which is functioning on God's "epignosis" truth. What does this do? Well, one of the things it does is that it removes all spiritual calluses that Ephesians 4 describes for us as building up upon the facets of your soul, which makes us insensitive toward God. It expresses itself as love for God. It expresses itself as faith rests toward God. It is the basis for maintaining our temporal fellowship with the Lord. It finds expression as prayer to God. All of these are expressions that normally then will flow out of your life as a believer. Toward man, it will have certain expressions also. Here again callouses are removed from the soul because you're operating on divine viewpoint. These are calluses which may have been produced on your soul by sexual immorality; by use of drugs; by use of alcohol; or, by mental attitude sins. All of these things build up those calluses relative to people that destroy our relationships with people.

"Epignosis" truth begins peeling that off. As you start breathing out toward people from God's point of view, that hardness begins to be removed. It provides divine viewpoint and grace in all of your human relationships. It releases you from the spirit of demanding your rights--that spirit of vengeance. This is one of the most marvelous things of your breathing out toward people of God's viewpoint. You'll get off this hang up of demanding your rights. There is more hellish trouble raised in human relationships between people who must insist upon their rights and who are going to have their rights with a vengeance because they're operating on Satan's point of view than almost anything else you can imagine.

When you have this human spirit filled with God's viewpoint, you're not going to go around demanding your rights. You may have certain things that maybe should be coming to you, but you're going to leave things with the Lord. Furthermore, you leave people with the Lord. I remind you again that if you've got real troubles with somebody; if you've got somebody that is really mistreating you; and, if you've got somebody that's really out of line, I'll tell you what the worst thing in the world you can do to that person. Commit him to the Lord. Then you sit back and keep watching them every service and see what happens. You're going to see some very fantastic things. That's the way to deal with people who are really mistreating you and who really are sinning toward you. Don't pursue your rights. It enables you to give expression of genuine love for your friends, and your husband or wife. It produces divine good among people instead of the do-goodism of human good.

1. **The Product of this Truth**

Step six, to tie this up, is the product of this truth. Remember that all of this is what's going to happen as the belt of truth. The belt of truth is, first of all, the instruction in truth. This is how you get it. Then you get the understanding of the truth; the storage of truth; the effects of truth; the application of truth toward God and man; and, now the product of truth. The product of truth, the end result, is going to be the building of spiritual maturity in your life. That's the whole name of the game. This spiritual maturity is the direct result of the belt of truth which you have built in the human spirit through doctrine which you have taken in through the grace system of perception that God has provided.

This spiritual maturity is viewed in the Bible as a structure in the soul, and it is built from this "epignosis" information down here in the human spirit. The spiritual maturity structure is the next thing that Paul talks about in verse 14 as the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate of righteousness in Ephesians 6:14 is where we have come to. I have taken the trouble to review this thoroughly because this you must absolutely know. You will have no defense in the spiritual conflict unless you understand these eight things that God has provided for you, and the six steps of the grace system of perception's operations so that you can get into it. You can listen; you can ignore it; you can forget it; or, you can thoroughly review these things and get them in your mind and get yourself functioning on this basis. The result will be that you will build a belt of truth, and from the belt of truth--which must come first, you will then be able to put on a breastplate of righteousness which is very crucial in your life as a Christian, and we will take that in full detail next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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