

Session 1 Outline – What is Truth?

Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names] Our panelists provide support for religious formation at St. Philip Benizi Catholic Mission in Cedaredge CO. Our panelists are also in the process of discernment and study to become Dominicans who are also known as the Order of Preachers. So, welcome to our panelists as well as our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn the You Holy Truth. And so we say together:

Our Father...

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray.

Presentation:

Saint Jerome once said, “Ignorance of scripture is ignorance of Christ.” In this same vein, we believe that those who do not know their faith leave themselves vulnerable to the one who would take it from them.

The purpose of our show is to review and discuss scripture, the Catechism, church documents, and church history through which we may put on the “armor of faith.”

So what does it mean to put on the armor of faith?

In Ephesians 6:10-18 we are told:

10 Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power.

11 Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil.

12 For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.

13 Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground.

So what is the armor of God? Saint Paul explains...

*14 So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate,
15 and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace.*

16 In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all [the] flaming arrows of the evil one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

So, let's review the list of St. Paul:

Loins Girded in Truth (some would interpret this as the belt of truth)

Righteousness as a breastplate

Feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace

Faith as a shield against the flaming arrows of the evil one

Helmet of salvation

Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Today, we are going to discuss the first component of the armor of God, which is **truth**.

What is Truth?

On the surface, this sounds like an easy question, but as we experience life, we often find it is not always so easy to know whether what we are being told is absolute truth. Its opposites are deceit and lies. And we know this is the realm of the evil one. It is deception by which Satan seeks to confuse us in faith. We don't need to go very far into scripture before we find the first contest of truth.

Chapter 3 of Genesis begins with a conversation between Eve and the serpent of the garden:

1 Now the snake was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He asked the woman, "Did God really say, 'You shall not eat from any of the trees in the garden'?"

2 The woman answered the snake: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden;

3 it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, or else you will die.'"

4 But the snake said to the woman: "You certainly will not die!

5 God knows well that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, who know good and evil."

6 The woman saw that the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eyes, and the tree was desirable for gaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

We see "truth" discussed throughout scripture, but it was Pilate who asked the key question, "What is truth." We see Pilate ask this in John 18:38 as Jesus stood before him.

So let's ask the panel, what is truth and how do we discern it?

According to Webster, righteousness is defined as:

a (1) : the body of real things, events, and facts : [actuality](#)

(2) : the state of being the case : [fact](#)

(3) : a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality

b : a judgment, proposition, or idea that is true or accepted as true *truths of thermodynamics*

c : the body of true statements and propositions

Scripture:

Those who trust in him shall understand **truth**, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with the elect. (Wisdom 3:9)

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and **truth**. (John 1:14)

16 From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace,
17 because while the law was given through Moses, grace and **truth** came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:16-17)

So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the **truth**. Everyone who belongs to the **truth** listens to my voice." (John 18:37)

Pilate said to him, "What is **truth**?" (John 18:38)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the **truth** and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)

When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of **truth** that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me. (John 15:26)

But when he comes, the Spirit of **truth**, he will guide you to all **truth**. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. (John 16:13)

15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always.

17 the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you.

18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

19 In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me, because I live and you will live.

20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you.

21 Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."

22 Judas, not the Iscariot, said to him, “Master, [then] what happened that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?”

23 Jesus answered and said to him, “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.

24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me.

25 “I have told you this while I am with you.

26 The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that [I] told you.

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. (John 14:15-27)

Catechism:

This catechism aims at presenting an organic synthesis of the essential and fundamental contents of Catholic doctrine, as regards both faith and morals, in the light of the Second Vatican Council and the whole of the Church’s Tradition. Its principal sources are the Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy, and the Church’s Magisterium. It is intended to serve “as a point of reference for the catechisms or compendia that are composed in the various countries.” (CCC: 11)

Magisterium means the teaching office of the church

The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the **truth** and happiness he never stops searching for: The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists, it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to **truth** unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator. (CCC: 27)

(In other words, if we are to find truth, we must also seek to discern the love of God. Jesus gave us insight to this when He declared the two greatest commandments were to love God and one another (Matthew 22:36-40))

God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the **truth**”: that is, of Christ Jesus. Christ must be proclaimed to all nations and individuals, so that this revelation may reach to the ends of the earth: God graciously arranged that the things he had once revealed for the salvation of all peoples should remain in their entirety, throughout the ages, and be transmitted to all generations. (CCC: 74)

(If we look at the section which precedes this, we read:)

God has revealed himself fully by sending his own Son, in whom he has established his covenant for ever. The Son is his Father’s definitive Word; so there will be no further Revelation after him. (CCC: 73)

“In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these

last days he has spoken to us by a Son.” Christ, the Son of God made man, is the Father’s one, perfect, and unsurpassable Word. In him he has said everything; **there will be no other word than this one.** St. John of the Cross, among others, commented strikingly on Hebrews 1:1-2:

In giving us his Son, his only Word (for he possesses no other), he spoke everything to us at once in this sole Word— **and he has no more to say . . . because what he spoke before to the prophets in parts, he has now spoken all at once by giving us the All Who is His Son. Any person questioning God or desiring some vision or revelation would be guilty not only of foolish behavior but also of offending him, by not fixing his eyes entirely upon Christ and by living with the desire for some other novelty.** (CCC: 65)

“The Christian economy, therefore, since it is the new and definitive Covenant, will never pass away; and no new public revelation is to be expected before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Yet even if Revelation is already complete, it has not been made completely explicit; it remains for Christian faith gradually to grasp its full significance over the course of the centuries. (CCC: 66)

Throughout the ages, there have been so-called “private” revelations, some of which have been recognized by the authority of the Church. They do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ’s definitive Revelation, but to help live more fully by it in a certain period of history. Guided by the magisterium of the Church, the *sensus fidelium* knows how to discern and welcome in these revelations whatever constitutes an authentic call of Christ or his saints to the Church. Christian faith cannot accept “revelations” that claim to surpass or correct the Revelation of which Christ is the fulfillment, as is the case in certain non-Christian religions and also in certain recent sects which base themselves on such “revelations.” (CCC: 67)

***sensus fidelium* means sense of the faithful**

“Christ the Lord, in whom the entire Revelation of the most high God is summed up, commanded the apostles to preach the Gospel, which had been promised beforehand by the prophets, and which he fulfilled in his own person and promulgated with his own lips. In preaching the Gospel, they were to communicate the gifts of God to all men. This Gospel was to be the source of all saving **truth** and moral discipline.” (CCC: 75)

“The sum of your word is truth; and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever.” “And now, O Lord God, you are God, and your words are true;” this is why God’s promises always come true. God is **Truth** itself, **whose words cannot deceive.** This is why one can abandon oneself in full trust to the truth and faithfulness of his word in all things. **The beginning of sin and of man’s fall was due to a lie** of the tempter who induced doubt of God’s word, kindness, and faithfulness. (CCC: 215)

Quotes:

“Following Christ, the Church seeks the truth, which is not always the same as the majority opinion. She listens to conscience and not to power, and in this way she

defends the poor and the downtrodden." (Familiaris Consortio adhortation, 1981 – Saint John Paul II)

“Seek out this truth where it is really to be found! If necessary, be resolved to go against the current of popular opinion and propaganda slogans! Do not be afraid of the love that places demands on people.” (Apostolic Letter to the young people of the Word Dilecti Amici, 1985 – Saint John Paul II)

Points for discussion:

Quotes from Scripture and Catechism

Disinformation and misinformation

In the media

Tactic of politics

Tactic of attacks against the church

The most difficult deception to deal with is one wrapped with elements of truth.

The Holy Spirit will guide us in truth, but only if our hearts are open to Him.

Wrap Up: Well, we have come to the end of our hour. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we pick up our discussion with with righteousness as our breastplate.

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may share the blessings and **truth** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: Righteousness as our Breastplate