Week 5: Gird up the Loins of your Mind

Through the eyes of a 1st Century Jew the basic garment was the tunic. The tunic was normally a long flowing full cut robe. Under the tunic was a loincloth (girdle) made of leather or cloth and used to hold the tunic. It could also hold money, tools, or weapons. When someone needed to work, run, or fight – they would tuck the hem of the tunic into the girdle to allow greater freedom to move.

Peter uses this terminology as a metaphor for "getting ready, being prepared" in your mind. "Gird up the loins of your mind" preparing our minds for work, service, or battle.

It is important to know that God has not left us naked before the enemy. Years ago, I worked for a Christian sports camp in Texas we had a T-Shirt made with a cartoon and it had the tag line "Don't Fight Naked". God has provided us with spiritual weaponry that has the ability to counter attack and defeat any scheme that the devil would try to use against us.

How do we know the devil has a scheme? (2 Corinthians 2:11)

The word schemes or devices is taken from the word *noemata,* depicts plots and wicked schemes to attack and victimize the human mind. Some expositors of the text have translated 2 Corinthians 2:11 as "*We are not ignorant of the mind games that Satan tries to pull on us."* Take some time to read the entire paragraph **2 Corinthians 2:5 – 11**. Take note that the devices of the enemy are associated with forgiveness. Read the text and write out your thoughts.

How does Ephesians 4:25 – 32 strike some similarity to the 2 Corinthians 2 passage?

Paul used the word "devices" to describe "attacks" that he personally resisted. He like all of us had to deal with the adversary's mental assaults from time to time.
What else did Paul challenge the church at Corinth to do? (2 Corinthians 10:5)

The devil has one battle ground, and that is our minds. He attacks our soul/psuche: which entails how we think feel and our decision making. Our adversary as stated in 1 Peter 5:8 Delights in filling our emotions and senses with illusions that captivate our minds. Satan is the master of mind games. Remember he cannot rule you he can only fool you.

Now take time to read what prefaces (1 Peter 5:8 – 11) What does it tell you about your adversary?

How do we prepare or gird up our minds so we do not conform to our old ways of thinking? Look at Romans 12:2 what does it tell us to do?

We also mention the significance of the loincloth as the covering (protection) for the loin area of the body. The loins of course produce the seeds for the next generation. The Holy Spirit revealed to these biblical writers that ideas, thoughts, concepts, beliefs are all like seeds in our minds that reproduce when allowed to grow.

Look at Galatians 5:1 What type of captivity is Paul talking about?

Peter needed new believers to understand how to walk, think, and relationship as followers of Christ just as we are still learning today. Girding up of the mind gave them a picture of equipping and changing their previous ways of thinking.

Look at 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 What are we challenged to demolish and take captive? Think about how these strongholds can exist in relationships and in our own heads.

Peter acknowledges the fear and anxiety of this new community of believers. They were stepping out of acceptable norms of religious behavior for that day and this made them targets of ridicule and persecution. We are also challenged to step out of the norm of convenient or ritualistic behavior as believers. This can stir up fear and anxiety. Isn't it amazing that God's word deals with these challenges. For example, look at 2 Timothy 1:7 how is fear described by Paul? And what does Paul tell us to do with anxiety in Philippians 4:6-9?

Like Paul we must make a mental decision to take charge of our minds, "bringing into captivity **every thought** to the obedience of Christ. The challenge brothers and sisters is to stop *listening* to ourselves and start *speaking* to ourselves. Let's begin to take the Word of God (The Truth) and speak to our emotions and senses, telling them what they should believe!