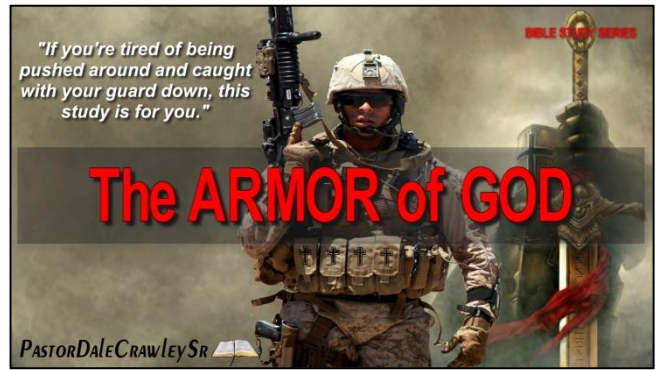


6 - THE SHOES OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE

“14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.”

Ephesians 6:14-15 (ESV)



(Context: READ Ephesians 6:10-20)

“STANDING FIRM” ... How can we stand firm in spiritual warfare? When we became Christians, we gained an enemy. Satan and his demons desire to steal our peace and joy, kill our physical bodies, and destroy our witness and callings.

In this final section of Ephesians, Paul addresses this war and how Christians must stand firm. Paul includes each of the pieces of the armor of God intentionally. The third piece Paul mentions that composes the armor of God is what he calls the [shoes] of the **“readiness given by the gospel of peace.”** We generally don’t consider shoes as being a part of a soldier’s armor. But think about it. If we walk onto the battlefield without any of these elements of armor, we risk fatal blows from the enemy himself, rendered to us. Shoes stand at no exception.

If soldiers don’t have solid, supportive, comfortable shoes that will hold up on the field of battle, they will not be able to prevail. **What purpose did shoes serve for a Roman soldier? What purpose do these spiritual shoes serve for us?**

After highlighting *the Belt of Truth* and *the Breastplate of Righteousness*, Paul now draws attention to the soldier’s footwear, which was distinctive from other types of shoes from that time period. “Civilians wore soft leather shoes called *calcei*. Indoors, both sexes wore slippers called *soleae*. Roman soldiers however, wore heavy military sandals called ***caliga*** “*half boot and half sandal.*”

The uppers were pierced with openwork designs, which gave good ventilation, and many straps allowed adjustment to fit the peculiarities of an individual’s foot. The soles were made of several layers of leather and “were clenched with hobnails, arranged in patterns. These hollow metal studs provided a firm grip on the soil. These spike-like protrusions dug into the ground and kept the soldier sure-footed and stable when holding his ground or advancing against an enemy.



Because combat was always “close” and hand-to-hand, firm footing was essential.

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Of all the things the enemy seeks to steal, kill, and destroy in your life ... “peace” is almost always at or near the top of his list. He intentionally stirs up discord, division, disruption, and disturbance, both within you and around you. He is the lord of chaos and confusion, using every opportunity to upset your sense of well-being and stability. He wants you uneasy, unbalanced, filled with anxiety, worry, and turmoil. **Lacking peace!** A life without peace is simply unprotected, crippled, unable to move forward, hindered from maturing and developing in a healthy fashion.

But what do shoes have to do with the gospel of peace? To answer this question we have to understand what “gospel of peace” means. The word “gospel” “*euaggelion*” means “good news.” The word peace, “*eirene*” means not only “peace” ... but also “wholeness” and “salvation.” It has a similar meaning with the Hebrew word “shalom.” The gospel of peace is none other than the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ!

- **Romans 5:1 says, “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

This is important because the enemy always aims to separate believers from God. It is God who gives believers the strength to put on God’s armor and the power to conquer the devil. Therefore, the enemy always seeks to separate Christians from the source of all that is good. Sometimes he uses lies to foster anger at God. He often begins by cultivating a wrong view of God. Believers start to believe that God doesn’t love them or want what’s best for them—that he just doesn’t care. Satan creates a caricature of God—a God of wrath but not a God of love, a God of judgment but not a God of mercy. However, God is all of these.

We must put on the gospel of peace by remembering that Christ died to bridge the chasm between us and God. He paid the penalty for our sins and gave us his righteousness so that we could know God and come into his presence.

The Gospel of Peace anchors us ... giving us divine confidence that when the battle for souls rages, and the enemy world comes against us, we can stand firm know that: 1) we are saved because of the Gospel, and 2) that we are at peace with God when all around us is in chaos.

To put on the shoes of the gospel of peace means being able to stand firm ... and ready and eager to find opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others! **“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...” 1 Peter 3:15**

The word *readiness* implies constant vigilance ... A victorious soldier had to be prepared for battle. He had to have studied his enemy's strategy, be confident in his own strategy, and have his feet firmly planted so that he could hold his ground when the attacks came. A soldier's battle shoes were studded with nails or spikes, like cleats, to help him keep his balance in combat. He knew that, if he lost his footing and went down, it wouldn't matter how great the rest of his armor was; the enemy had him. When we are ready with the gospel of peace ... we live with the understanding that we are continually under attack from Satan. (cp. 2 Timothy 4:2)

The "peace shoes" that God supplies His soldiers have two purposes: defensive and offensive. In order to defend ourselves against the "flaming arrows of the evil one" (Ephesians 6:16), we must have confidence of our position **in Christ**. We must stand firm in the truth of God's Word ... regardless of how terrifying the circumstances may be. We must understand grace without abusing it, remember that our position in Christ is not based on our own abilities or worthiness, and keep our belt of truth and breastplate of righteousness securely fastened.

When Satan attacks with a flaming missile of doubt, such as ... *"If God really loved you, He wouldn't have let this happen"*, we dig our peace shoes into the turf of God's Word and reply, **"It is written: All things work together for the good to them who love God and are called according to His purpose"** (Romans 8:28).

When Satan stabs from behind with *"Remember what you did?"* ... we dig in more deeply and reply, **"It is written: If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (1 John 1:9).

In addition to standing our ground, gospel of peace shoes are also for moving. God expects us to go on the offensive and take the gospel of peace to others. **Sharing our faith is one of the best ways to maintain our own sure footing.** God knows that, when we are active in speaking of Him to others, we not only charge into Satan's territory ... **but we dig our shoes more deeply into truth and will be much harder to dislodge.** When we have ***"studied to show ourselves approved unto God"*** (2 Timothy 2:15) ... we are ready to stand firm in the gospel of peace no matter what the enemy brings against us!

As Christians, we're called to share the good news of Jesus Christ with other people. Having our shoes fitted with the gospel of peace allows us to carry out our commander's orders in sharing the good news with others!