

“THE ARMOR OF GOD” (Part 4)

“...shoes for your feet, having . . .”

Eph. 6:15

INTRO: As Christians we battle every day to stand for Christ. We are not alone: God’s power is in us and His armor protects us, if we put it on (not automatic). If we are to “stand” (4xs), our feet must be protected. **REVIEW** already examined figurative meaning of the belt (commitment) and the breastplate (holy living), **TODAY** the shoes. (PIC). Many kinds again.

I. THE IMPORTANCE AND FUNCTION OF SHOES

Shoes are a major part of culture, mainly as a fashion item. But originally, shoes were used to protect feet against the terrible terrain of thorns, rocks, heat, obstacles on the ground, etc.

A. TO AN ATHLETE – Today we have shoes for every conceivable kind of sport, and everyone serves a particular function. All these different shoes provide a certain specialized function.

B. TO A ROMAN SOLDIER – A Roman soldier wouldn’t go into battle with a normal leather shoe on – he’d be slipping and sliding all over the place. He had to have a special shoe for fighting, as well as a special shoe for marching over tremendous amounts of terrain. Many wars have been lost because soldiers didn’t have adequate shoes. The soldier’s shoe basically served as:

1. *Protection* – In the time of the Roman wars, there was a common military practice (similar to the land mines of today) of planting sticks in the ground which had been sharpened to a razor-point and concealing them so that they were almost invisible. This was a very effective tactic because, if the soldier’s foot was pierced, he wouldn’t be able to walk; and if he couldn’t walk, he was totally debilitated. He could be the best soldier and have greater strength than any other man, but, if the bottom of his feet were hurt, he was finished!
2. *Stability and Mobility* – In addition to the thick sole on their boots, they also had little pieces of metal protruding from the bottom, like the cleats of a football, track or baseball shoe. This gave them a grip on the soil which provided them with a *firm footing* to stand in the battle. Pete Stuver . . .

So, Paul sees a Roman soldier standing firm, able to hold his ground and able to make quick moves without slipping and falling.

C. TO A CHRISTIAN – The Christian needs shoes too! You can get out there in the battle with your loins girded (commitment) and your breastplate on (a godly, righteous life); but unless you can stand on your feet, you’re going to fall. You must have a solid base.

II. INTERPRETATION OF PASSAGE “And your feet shod (fitted) with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (v. 15)

A. “THE PREPARATION”

1. **Improper Interpretation** – Many commentators assume that “*preparation*” refers to going and preaching the “*gospel of peace*.” It has nothing to do with going anywhere, Ephesians 6:14 says “*Stand firm*.” The point here is not evangelizing the lost and preaching the gospel; the point here is fighting the devil. Paul is not talking about evangelizing an unbeliever, he’s talking about the Christian’s conflict with Satan (Eph. 6:11, cf. 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 4:1). If our feet are fitted with the “good news of peace,” we will be able to confidently stand our ground. We won’t slip, slide, or fall when under attack, as do many Christians, esp. when life gets hard.
2. **Proper Interpretation** – Paul is saying that your feet should be made ready by being shod – securely fitted on our feet. With what?

B. “THE GOSPEL OF PEACE”

Definition – Since “gospel” means “good news,” the “*gospel of peace*” is the “good news of peace.” “**What is the good news of peace?**” Romans 5:1-11 tells us that **before we were saved** we were weak (v. 6), unrighteous (v. 7), sinful (v. 8), unjustified, unsaved, and an object of God’s wrath (v. 9). Summed up, we were enemies of God (v. 10). But what did God do to change this? “*Christ died for us*” (v. 8), saved us from the judgment and wrath of God (v. 9), and reconciled us to Him (v. 10). The “gospel of peace” is that **man was at war with God, but Christ made peace!** Romans 5:1 states, “*Therefore being justified by faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” **The “good news:” is that we are at peace with God; we are on His side; we are reconciled** (2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:20; Rom. 8:31-39). This means that a Christian who stands firm says, “Look Satan. You come against me all you want. I have shoes that anchor me in the ground and I’m immovable, because God is on my side.” Jn. 14:27; Ph. 4:6-7.

Confidence in God: Peter in the Garden (Jn. 18); Gideon against the Midianites (Judges 7); Peter and John (Acts 4:18-20); The apostle Paul . . .

We can stand in absolute confidence when we realize that *God is on our side!* When Satan comes to attack, our feet should be firmly rooted on the solid ground of the “*gospel of peace*.” No matter what Satan brings, we can “*Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might*” (Eph. 6:10).

CONC: Answer these questions: Do I have on the belt of commitment to know and live the truth? Do I seek a holy life (do I have on the breastplate of righteousness)? Am I bold in the battle (are my feet firmly rooted in confidence in God)? Victory is available for a Christian. If you can answer these three questions “yes,” you’re a winner and God’s going to do exciting and revolutionary things with your life for His own glory.