

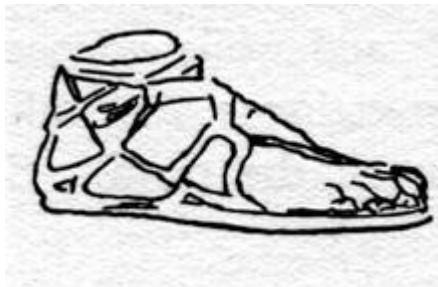
The Armour of God (Lesson Seven)

Section One (3):

Title: The Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace

Text: Ephesians 6:15

Theme: Standing firm in the Gospel of Peace.



Details concerning the Shoe:

- Shaped as the human foot – comfortable. Not made for show; had a straight inner edge.
- Protected the foot
- Good for marching – consider Roman Roads
- Easily put on - Readiness
- Fitted with nails or studs for firmness

Introduction: Protection – Firmness and Comfortable to wear.

The Roman soldier's sandal gave protection to the feet; firm grip on the ground; and made it easy to move. Feet can easily slide without firm footing. Nails or studs under the sole to keep the grip. Sandal shaped so that it was comfortable for the foot.

Difference of emphasis between the fruit and the armour.

Comparison between the Armour of God and the Fruit of the Spirit.

- Peace as the Fruit of the Spirit - emphasis upon the life of Christ in the believer producing fruit in our lives. The fruit of peace is seen as we allow Christ to live His life in us.
- Peace as the Armour of God - emphasis is upon standing against the schemes of the devil. The enemy comes to make us slide. The shoes mean we are standing firm in the knowledge of who we are in Christ.

Peace not appeasement

The peace of God is not appeasement with the enemy.

Those who seek peace with an aggressive enemy are easily deceived.

Introductory Story: 'Peace in our time'.

Peace built on appeasement and not built on truth.

Before the outbreak of war the Munich agreement of 1938 promised peace. The next year the Second World War began.

Neville Chamberlain made an agreement of peace with Hitler in 1938. He flew back from Munich with great happiness to Britain waving the signed agreement and saying 'it is peace in our time'. The next year Britain was at war with Hitler and in 1940 Neville Chamberlain resigned as Prime Minister, making the way for Winston Churchill to take over. Churchill had been called a warmonger because of his negative attitude towards Hitler and Nazi Germany, but in 1940 the people knew he had been right. Peace with Hitler was not founded upon truth.

Peace and truth must go hand in hand.

'And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *with* words of peace and truth,' (Esther 9:30)

Standing Firm

The shoes enable us to stand firm. It means standing firm on Christ, He is our peace (Ephesians 2:14).

The wrong shoes will provide no grip on the ground. The world's peace is the wrong shoes for spiritual warfare. Christians who wear the wrong shoes can easily become discouraged and are soon defeated. Only the 'Gospel of Peace' provides a firm footing against the schemes of the devil.

Christians who seek appeasement above truth are not equipped for spiritual warfare.

Main Points:

1. The Gospel of Peace provides firm footing against the attacks of the devil regarding our salvation. '... we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus', Romans 5:1.

Standing firm in 'Full assurance of faith' (Hebrews 10:22)

Knowing who we are in Christ.

Question: What are you trusting in?

How good a life you are living? or Christ alone for salvation?

If we trust in ourselves we will slide

We must trust in Christ alone.

Story: Faroe Islands – wrong shoes

When walking up a mountain in the Faroe Islands my feet kept on slipping because I was wearing the wrong shoes. I was wearing trainers.

Whenever there were loose stones my feet would slide. It was difficult to keep my footing. In some places it could be dangerous and I had to work hard just to keep upright.

The next time I went walking in the mountains I wore walking boots. My feet did not slip and I was able to move without fear of sliding.

The right shoes made all the difference.

We stand firm on the finished work of Christ and not on our own works.

If we look at ourselves we will slide. It is Christ alone who saves, Ephesians 2:8.

It is not by works but by grace alone through faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:8).

We are reconciled; justified; accepted; adopted.

- **Reconciled (2 Corinthians 5:18).** We have been reconciled to God through the death and resurrection of Christ. We have become ambassadors of Christ with the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:20). No longer the enemies of God but friends of God. We were by nature the enemies of God, but the Gospel brings reconciliation with God through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Justified (Romans 5:1).** We are justified; free from condemnation. We have become the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:21. We are justified by faith in Christ alone (Romans 3:24). There is now no condemnation because in Christ we have become a new creation (Romans 8:1). God the Son dwells in us, God the Father delights in His Son, and the Holy Spirit delights to makes us more like Him.
- **Accepted (Ephesians 1:6).** We accepted in Christ, now we are able to approach God with boldness because we are accepted in Christ (Hebrews 4:16)
- **Adopted (Romans 8:15).** We are adopted into the family of God, and the Spirit of Christ in us is changing us inwardly into His likeness day by day. When Jesus returns our physical bodies will be changed instantly into His likeness, 1 John 3:1-3.

Standing firm – the servant of righteousness.

Standing firm because we have been brought out of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God. Colossians 1:13 'Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:'

Standing firm because we are no longer slaves of the devil. We have been set free to be the servants of righteousness. Romans 6:17-18, 'But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness.'

Standing firm We have the power to resist the devil in every trial and temptation. 1 Peter 5:9 'Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.' Resisting the devil by standing firm in the faith.

2. The shoes provide firm footing against the attacks of the devil when he seeks to destroy our relationship with one another in the body of Christ. We are able to stand firm because we have peace with one another in the body of Christ. He is our peace, Ephesians 2:14..

Stand Fast – The Devil wars against the church by causing divisions of race; social standing; and gender.

All barriers have been removed in Christ.

There is one body in Christ.

The only requirement – you must be a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Galatians 3:28 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'

- No racial barriers, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek...' There is no place for racial prejudice within the body of Christ. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile. There is no difference between nationalities - we are one body.
- No social barriers. There is no place for social prejudice between rich and poor, '.there is neither bond nor free'. Every member of the body of Christ is needed, 1 Corinthians 12.
- No place for prejudice between men and women. Men and women are of equal importance within the body of Christ. Men and women have different roles but there is no difference in status within the body of Christ. All are one in Christ Jesus.

Stand Fast – The Devil wars against the church through self seeking leaders and preachers who cause division by good words and fair speeches.

The shoes enable us to stand against the devil when he seeks to divide the body of Christ.

The God of peace will overcome the devil's schemes.

Romans 16:18-20 17 'Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.'

- The Gospel of peace sets us free to serve one another. We can rest in being who we are in Christ. The greatest in God's kingdom is the one who serves most. This is how the body of Christ should function. We are labourers together in Christ. 'Let all your things be done with charity' (1 Corinthians 16:13).
- The devil seeks to divide the body of Christ through competitiveness. The body of Christ is not hierarchical or competitive, 1 Corinthians 13. Ministers of the Gospel are not in competition with one another. Those who seek to be highly honoured on earth will not be highly honoured in heaven.

3. The Gospel of peace provides firm footing against the attacks of the devil in our daily lives.

Shoes of the Roman soldier were well suited for long marches through difficult places.

The armour of God is well suited for walking through difficult trials and afflictions.

We have the power to resist the devil in every trial and temptation. 1 Peter 5:9 'Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.'

Resisting the devil by standing firm in the faith.

Standing Fast against temptations

1 Corinthians 10:13 'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'

Confidence in the face of temptation.

We are able to stand in the face of all temptations because the Lord will not allow his people to be tempted beyond that which they are able to resist.

Standing fast in the knowledge of Romans 8:31-39

'We are more than conquerors through Christ who strengthens us'. Romans 8:37.

There is no 'created thing that can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Romans 8:39.

4. The shoes of the preparation of the Gospel of peace.

Prepared means readiness, 'the preparation of the Gospel of peace' (Ephesians 6:15).

The Christian must be prepared at all times against the attacks of the devil in our daily lives.

We must be equipped with the shoes of the Gospel of peace.

If our feet are not firm then the enemy will be able to pull us down because we are not ready for his attacks.

How do we keep ourselves in a state of readiness?

1) By being filled with the word of God.

Colossians 3:16 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.'

2) By prayer

The peace of God will guard and keep us. Philippians 4:6-7 'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of

God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.'

The peace of God will keep our hearts and minds.

Stress will cause heart attacks and mental breakdowns, but the armour of God will keep us from the attacks of the enemy.

The peace of God is sufficient for us to be at peace in all circumstances.

Anxiety in believers is evidence that he or she has not learnt to put on the armour of God against the attacks of the enemy. Isaiah 26:3, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusts in You.'

Standing Firm even in the severest trials

The Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace give firmness in the face of death.

Perfect peace even in the face of death.

Peter slept in the face of death in prison, Acts 12:6.

John Wesley said that even the enemies had to agree 'We Christians die well'.

John Wesley's dying words were 'The best of all is, God is with us'.

D.L.Moody said on the day of his death 'This is my coronation day'.

Summary:

We can only be ready for the attacks of the enemy if our feet are prepared with the Gospel of peace.

The shoes in the armour of God do not provide room for appeasement with the enemy.

The shoes provide firm footing in all situations and circumstance.

1. The enemy seeks to attack our assurance of salvation. The Gospel of peace enables us to stand firm in regard to our salvation because we know that we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Our faith must be in the finished work of Christ alone.
2. The enemy seeks to attack our relationship with one another in the body of Christ, our feet must be protected by the Gospel of peace. All barriers have been broken down in Christ. The shoes will keep us when the enemy seeks to divide the body of Christ
3. The gospel of peace is well suited for walking through difficult trials and afflictions.
4. The Christian must be prepared at all times against the attacks of the devil in our daily lives. The Christian must always be ready to face the attacks of the enemy.