Feet Shod with the Gospel of Peace

INTRODUCTION.

B. Obviously, when Paul says “having shod your feet” he is talking about sandals. In understanding this verse, we will look at three things. First, how the sandals were used by the Roman soldiers in battle, secondly, how we as Christians are to use them in spiritual battle, and finally, how we as Christians can put on this third piece of the Gospel Armor.
1. The sandals which the soldiers wore were made out of leather, and would often lace around the ankle and part way up the calf. The sandals worn by the soldiers were fitted with spikes on the bottom of the sole. The soldiers had to battle in all kinds of terrain, in all kinds of weather, and at all hours of the day. The spikes helped the soldiers to maintain their footing. The spikes allowed them to – in the words repeated four times in verses 10-14 – Stand firm in the battle. (Ephesians 6:10-14)
2. Often times the soldiers were fighting in grass or in wet conditions. The spikes on the bottom of the sandals helped the soldier maintain his footing in battles. It helped the soldier stand firm.
3. Marching was an essential part of a soldier's life, and no soldier could march far without sturdy shoes.
4. While the sandals did not provide much in the way of protection, they certainly helped the soldier stay on his feet.
C. When we look closer at Ephesians 6:15 we can see clearly what Paul is telling the Ephesian brethren. “and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;” (Ephesians 6:15)
1. And your feet shod. There is undoubtedly an allusion here to what was
worn by the ancient soldier to guard his feet. The Greek is, literally, “having under bound the feet;” that is, having bound on the shoes, or sandals, or whatever was worn by the ancient soldier. The protection of the feet and ankles consisted of two parts:

a. the sandals, or shoes, which were probably made so as to cover the foot, and which often were fitted with nails, or armed with spikes, to make the hold firm ground; or

b. with greaves that were fitted to the legs, and designed to defend them from any danger. These greaves, or boots, were made of brass, and were in almost universal use among the Greeks and Romans. (1 Samuel 17:6)

2. **With the preparation.** *Prepared with the gospel of peace.* The sense is that the Christian soldier is to be prepared with the gospel of peace to meet attacks similar to those against which the ancient soldier designed to guard himself by the sandals or greaves which he wore. **Christians were to have** the principles of the gospel of peace—*the peaceful and pure gospel*—to facilitate them; to aid them in their marches; to make them firm in the day of conflict with their foes.

1. **THE BENEFIT OF THESE SANDALS TO THE CHRISTIAN.**

   A. Let us move now to what the sandals do for the Christian in the spiritual battle:

   B. The Christian was evidently **intended to be in motion,** for here are shoes for his feet. His head is provided with a helmet, for he is to be thoughtful. His heart is covered with a breastplate, for he is to be a man of feeling. His whole nature is protected by a shield, for he is called to endurance and caution. But that he is to be active is certain, for a sword is provided for his hand and sandals for his feet.

   C. To think that a Christian is to be motionless as a post and inanimate as a stone is altogether a mistake.
D. The Lord never intended His people to be robots worked by clock or statues cold and dead. He meant for Christians to have life, to have it abundantly, and in the power of that life to be full of energy.

E. The Christian who marches meets with rough terrain, or if as a warrior he dashes into the thick of conflict, he is assailed with weapons, and therefore he needs footwear to meet his perils.

II. THE SHOES.

A. The shoes come from a blessed Maker, for the believer’s feet are to be shod with a divine preparation:

1. Every portion of the Gospel is from God, and all the influence that makes it a Gospel of Peace is His, and we are therefore thankful to find that we are to wear “the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.”

2. We are glad to find that the shoes are made of excellent material, and what better material can there be than the Gospel of Peace and the peace that grows out of the Gospel? We believe:
   a. in a gospel that was formed in the purpose of God from all eternity, designed with infinite wisdom, wrought out at an enormous expense, costing nothing less than the Blood of Jesus, brought home by the infinite power of the Holy Spirit;
   b. in a gospel full of blessings, any one of which would outweigh a world in price;
   c. in a gospel as free as it is full;
   d. a gospel everlasting and immutable;
   e. a gospel of which we can never think too much, whose praises we can never exaggerate!

3. It is from this choice gospel that its choicest essence is taken – namely, its peace – and from this peace those sandals are prepared with which a man...
may tread on the lion and the cobra. (Psalms 91:13; Luke 10:19)

a. You will even be able to tread on the fierce burning coals of malice, slander, and persecution. What better shoes can our souls require?

B. The Shoe means, first, that it is a *Sense of Perfect Peace with God*.

1. Let a man know that his sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake, that he is reconciled to God by the death of His Son, and what a joyful pilgrim he becomes!

2. The Shoe means that we know that as the Lord looks on us, His glance is full of infinite, undivided affection; that He sees us in Jesus Christ as cleansed from every speck of sin and “accepted in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:3-6)

3. Goliath had greaves of brass upon his legs. (1 Samuel 17:6) but he is better armed who wears a full assurance of peace with God through the Gospel.

4. Achilles received a deadly wound in the heel, but no arrow can pierce the heel of the man whose foot is sandaled with reconciliation by Atoning Blood. Many a warrior has fainted on the march and dropped from the ranks exhausted, but no weariness of the way can happen to the man who is upheld by the Eternal God, for his strength shall daily be renewed.

C. The preparation of the Gospel of Peace must be understood to comprehend more than the legal peace of justification by faith.

1. We must have the exceeding peace that springs from intimate undisturbed communion with God.

2. You know that as a child of God, you will not be condemned and cast away as an alien; but you also know that you may greatly displease God and render it needful for Him to discipline us; and this we should with utmost diligence and prayerfulness labor to prevent.

3. If we continue in the love of Jesus our mind will be kept by the Peace of
God that passes all understanding and our road to Heaven will be a pleasant one.

4. It is also a grand sandal for a pilgrim’s foot when the Gospel of Peace has fully conformed the Christian’s mind to the Lord’s will. He who can say concerning all things, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.” (Matthew 11:26) is prepared for all ways and weathers; and may march on, undismayed. Fully conformed to the Divine Will. (Isaiah 5:27)

5. It is when the heart is completely at one with God that the true beauty of the Christian character is seen. Shod with perfect delight in the Will of the Lord, we are able to surmount all the difficulties and trials of the way, for it becomes sweet to suffer when we see that it is the Will of God.

D. The Gospel of Peace has another side to it, for it not only brings us peace with God, but also inspires us with peace toward ourselves.

1. If the Christian is ill at ease within himself, his course cannot be a happy one. It is a cruel case for a man when his own heart condemns him. Such people have to close their eyes to many passages of Scripture or be uneasy in their consciences.

2. But a man who proceeds with confidence can say before the Living God, “I know that what I am about to do is right, and whatever comes of it, I have a pure motive and the Lord’s sanction to sustain me in it.” Such a Christian is prepared for roughest ways, and will hold on his way joyfully to the end. (Psalms 37:23, 31)

E. Another form of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace will be of essential service to us is peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

1. It is good to go to bed every night feeling, “I have no difference in my soul with any of my brethren. I wish all of them well and love, from my heart.”

F. It is best to travel with this shoe of Peace of all Mankind (Secular Relationships).
1. The apostle Paul wrote, “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.” (Romans 12:18)

2. We must not be easily provoked. We are to return good for evil and seek to benefit even the most unthankful. Hatred, envy, and persecution may come, but a loving spirit materially blunts their edge and oftentimes inherits the promise. (Proverbs 16:7)

3. If you set out to avenge a wrong, you will not journey pleasantly or safely; but if from the depth of your soul you can say, “When Christ made peace with God for me, He made peace between me and my bitterest foe,” you will march on like a hero.

4. Our Lord and Savior Jesus wore these same shoes and having worn them he counsels us to put on the same shoes. (John 14:27; 6:38; 13:1)

5. As for Jesus enemies, He had only prayers and tears for them. He was at peace with all above, around, and within Him.

6. I may add that these shoes are such, as will last our entire journey. The Good News from Heaven never grows stale. The man who wears the preparation of the Gospel of Peace was comforted by it when he was young, and it still cheers him in his later days. It made him a good traveler when he first set out, and it will protect his last footsteps as he travels the road to heaven.

III. LET US TRY ON THESE SHOES.

A. Our joy is great to find that they fit perfectly. No man can travel well, much less engage in battle successfully, unless his dress is comfortable, especially that part of it that relates to the feet; and here we have the grand advantage, that no foot was ever uneasy, once it put on this shoe.

B. The preparation of the Gospel of Peace is a wonderful shoe for giving its wearer a firm foothold.
1. Surely it was one of these shoes that Habakkuk sang, “The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills. To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.” (Habakkuk 3:19)

2. Many believers are attacked with doctrinal error and yield easily; they are assailed by temptation, and out go their feet from under them. But the man who has peace with God and relies upon the Most High, shall never be moved, for the Lord upholds him.

C. The shoe of our text is equally famous for its suitability for marching in the ways of daily duty.

1. Soldiers have little time for considering the comfort of their shoes, or their fitness for mere standing, for they have daily marches to perform. We, too, have our marches, heavy marches involving stern toil and protracted effort.

2. A soul at perfect peace with God is the soundest preparation for progress and the surest support under trials.

D. These Gospel shoes are also an effectual preservative from all the ordinary roughness of the road of life.

1. He who expects to find a grassy walk all the way to Heaven will be sorrowfully mistaken. (Matthew 7:14)

2. The way is rugged and oftentimes so narrow and so far on high that the eagle’s eye cannot discern it. However, the preparation of the Gospel of Peace will guard us; from fears within and fightings without.

IV. THIS SHOE IS GOOD FOR FIGHTING.

A. One of the essential ingredients in fighting the good fight is having your feet protected and well shod. In the 1st chapter of the book of Judges we read about what an ancient king did to the kings that he defeated. It was rather gruesome, but it’s noteworthy. This cruel king Adoni-bezek said, “Seventy kings with their
thumbs and big toes cut off used to gather scraps under my table; as I have done, so God has repaid me.” Then they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.” (Judges 1:7) He used to cut their thumbs and big toes off. This was to make them powerless cripples who could not wield any weapon effectively.

B. So we need to protect our feet. A literal translation of our text would be, “and put on your feet the readiness of the gospel of peace.” In other words you are always to be ready to tell others about the gospel of peace.

C. The Apostle Paul, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7)

D. We are not to let anything stop us from spreading the Gospel of Christ. (Matthew 5:14-16)

1. We are to let our light shine.
   a. Consider the example of the apostle Paul. (1 Corinthians 9:16)
   b. We have an obligation to be a good in our efforts to teach others. (Philippians 2:14-16)

2. Peter urged Christians to tell people about the good news of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 3:15) We are to let nothing stop us from telling the good news.
   a. Many countries today have laws against Christian evangelism.
   b. How are Christians to respond to such bans? We have an example in Acts 4 and 5. The Sanhedrin commanded Peter and John not to teach. (Acts 4:18)
   c. Peter and John were not going to let an obstacle like that stop them. Peter and John replied, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:19-20)
   d. In Acts chapter 5 we read that the Sanhedrin was again upset with the apostles because they refused to stop telling people about Jesus.
Peter and the other apostles replied saying, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29-32)

After being flogged and ordered not to speak in the name of Jesus, the apostles left the Sanhedrin rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name of Jesus.

3. In our society Christian’s are not threatened with imprisonment or beatings when we tell others about Jesus. However society is doing what it can to stop Christian evangelism.

4. Jesus said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6) The apostle Peter said that salvation is found only in the name of Jesus. (Acts 4:12)

5. Christianity offers the one thing that human beings need—relief from the curse of sin and a new life with God. In the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve were told that if they sinned they would die. The death that was involved was both physical and spiritual. Their physical death was but a precursor to the awful reality of the second death, which the Bible describes as being cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:14) Truly the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23)

6. There is some wonderful news for us. (John 3:16) God sent His Son to die in our place. (John 3:14,15)

   a. Jesus came and died for the sins of His people. Whoever believes in Him and obeys his commandments has their sins washed away. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

   b. Therefore, we should not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ but we should be like the apostle Paul and know that it is the only way for people to be saved.
1) The Gospel is the only way for people to come to God. (Romans 1:16)

2) Paul also urged Timothy to be like him. (2 Timothy 1:8-11)

7. We are to be a good witness for Jesus whether or not it is easy to do so, whether or not it is politically correct to do so. Remember Paul’s charge to Timothy. (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

8. We must remember that the world needs the gospel. Remember the great privilege that is yours in presenting the Gospel. (Isaiah 52:7)

9. We should never be ashamed of telling others about our wonderful Savior Jesus and how, they too, can find life in Him.

E. Remember that it is the Gospel of Peace that we are proclaiming. We must let our conduct show that.

1. As we tell others about the Gospel, we must shoe them love, kindness, mercy, and respect. That will protect our feet and nothing will stop us from moving forward.

2. There is no doubt that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will bring opposition. (Luke 12:51-53)

3. The Gospel message is one of repentance. It preaches against sin and urges people to turn from it and turn to God. That invariably creates animosity against Christians. Remember how the world reacted to Jesus. It hated Him. (John 3:19-20)

4. So many will hate Christians when we preach the good news of Jesus Christ.

   a. The Gospel is one of peace and we are to be men and women of peace. It calls on people to repent and be reconciled to God. The Gospel brings peace between people and God and between human beings.
b. We are to have this peace in us. The apostle Paul urged Christians to exhibit this character in all circumstances. (Philippians 1:27)

5. We are not to use the weapons of this world. (2 Corinthians 6:3-10)

6. We are to follow in the footsteps of our Lord. (1 Peter 2:20-24)

7. What a all Christians to have? Love for their enemies. (Matthew 5:43-45)

8. Sometimes we who are Christians behave very badly in that we give the impression that we hate those who sin. We preach against sin and sometimes that comes across as a distinct lack of love for those who sin. That should never be. (1 Peter 3:15, 16)

9. It is no wonder why the apostle Paul told the Christians to: “. . . having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” (Ephesians 6:15)

CONCLUSION.

A. Let us all be doing our best to prepare ourselves with the Gospel of Peace.

B. It is with this preparation that we will be able to stand against the devil and his efforts to defeat us.