

# ARMOR OF GOD

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS WITH PASTOR JACK

## Knowing our Adversary and the Armor of God

### Week 6: (Ephesians 6:15) Shoes for my Feet

October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

#### Introduction

- A. In our first three weeks we looked at knowing our adversary -- who Satan is and what he does, his plans for those lost in the world, and his strategy against the saints of God.
- B. During our fourth and fifth weeks we focused on the armor of God -- the belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness, what they are and what they mean to us in terms of our protection in the battle.
- C. Tonight we will look at the third piece of armor to be worn at all times, along with the belt and the breastplate, the shoes for our feet. After we finish with the shoes, the next three pieces of armor were not designed to be constantly worn but rather kept by and quickly picked up when needed. But the shoes were always to be worn.
- D. It has always been important that our feet are protected, in our day and in Roman times. Even though there is the practice of wearing shoes for fashion without functional considerations, shoes ultimately provide for our protection and give us stability.
- E. Spiritually, this piece of armor and the sure footing it provides gives greater meaning and emphasis to Paul's words to stand, withstand, and having done all, to stand (6:11,13,14a).
- F. Terms (Eph.6:15):
  1. Shod your feet: (hupodeo in Greek) to bind under, encase, or envelop within
  2. Preparation: to be equipped
  3. Gospel: the good news of Jesus Christ
  4. Peace: rest. In our study tonight, the word peace is applied in three ways for the saints. When we are saved we are given peace with God. As we learn of Him we find the peace of God, and as a result of His love in us, we can have true peace with others.
  5. This verse is not designed to speak of evangelism as some have sought to make it. Instead, in the context, it speaks to us as God's people about the armor He provides to keep us from succumbing to the wiles of the enemy.

#### Peace with God and the Peace of God

- A. (Rom.5:6-11) Paul speaks of what we were and where we were before Jesus came into our lives. We were weak and ungodly, unrighteous and not good, sinners and the objects of God's wrath, and enemies of God at war with Him.
- B. Yet when Jesus came into our lives, He made peace for us with God through His blood (Col.1:20). I now become His child, purchased and adopted into His family. The war has ceased (2Co.5:19).
- C. (Php.4:6-9) As I learn of Him, another peace fills my heart, the peace of God. Knowing Him allows me to live that way, resting in His care, power, provision, and promise. "Don't worry, be happy" works for the saints.
- D. It is a supernatural peace found in the knowledge of God and fellowship with Jesus Christ and it will keep my heart and mind in the battles I face with the enemy of my soul (Rom.8:28).
- E. Peace with God is immediate; the peace of God fills my heart as a process of sanctification.

## Peace with Others

- A. Unique to the saints who have been delivered from the old nature of selfishness and self-centeredness, peace with others is possible because of the new heart I have and the love of God placed in my heart by the Holy Spirit. (Php.2:2-4)(Rom.12:18).
- B. The enemy seeks to use others to trip up my walk. How glorious to love them and die to self and not be moved by others. It is His love for us that allows us to love others, even those who are anything but loveable (Jam.2:13)(1Pe.4:8).

## Concluding Thoughts

- A. Jesus is my sure footing as I stand against the enemy (Ps.40:2)(Ps.18:29-38).
- B. It is quite a contrast from those in the world (Ps.73:18). For me, even if I stumble, my God upholds me (Ps.37:23-24).
- C. I am anchored and immovable in Him (1Jn.5:18).
- D. Both Peter's actions in the garden (Jn.18) and Gideon's dilemma with his reduced army (Judg.7) address this issue of standing on solid ground based on knowing God. Peter was learning; Gideon had learned the lesson well.
- E. Peace with God: (Rom.5:1)(Lk.2:14)(Rom.8:6)(Isa.53:5).
- F. Peace of God: (Php.4:6-7)(Jn.20:19)(Isa.48:18)(Jn.14:27)
- G. Peace with others: (Col.3:13-15)(Gal.5:22)(Rom.14:17)(Pro.16:7).
- H. May we with the psalmist declare that we have great peace, nothing causes us to stumble (Ps.119:165).
- I. Next week we will look at the shield of faith.

All right. Let's open our Bibles this evening to Ephesians 6:15, as tonight we continue our series of studies - Knowing Our Adversary - and then the Armor of God.

### Introduction

#### A. Knowing our adversary

If you've been with us for the last little while, we spent three weeks looking at the enemy - the devil. We looked at who he is, what he did, his work in the world, his plans against God's people. And then we came to this passage. It's the last one that Paul covers as he closes out this letter to the Ephesians, and he talks to them about our spiritual warfare in this world, how we can stand fast in our God though we have a powerful enemy. And beginning there in verse 10, and then going down through about verse 20 or so, we get these directions from the Lord on how to put on this armor and to stand fast in our faith.

#### B. The belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness

So far, we've looked at a couple of pieces of armor. We've looked at the belt of truth. We talked to you that day that, in every one of these pieces of armor, Paul's looking at a Roman soldier. He is bound in chains. He gets to look at him 24/7, and somehow, in looking at this man with an armor on - like the Roman soldier - he began to take every one of those pieces of armor and say to the church, "This is what you need to wear in your spiritual battles." So this belt that kept up the long flowing robe so that a man could fight or he could move - we talked about the belt. But it isn't just the belt - it's a belt of truth. And subjectively, truthfulness means full commitment. Objectively, truth means God's Word. And we talked about that. We looked at the breastplate of righteousness last week. If you haven't been with us, all of the notes and all of the studies are available in the book store. They're also available online in the archives. So, catch up, or go back and catch up.

#### C. The shoes for our feet

But tonight, in verse 15, we want to come to the third piece of armor, and it is the third piece in the first section. Verses 14 and 15 talk to us about the first three pieces of armor, and we've told you for the last couple of weeks these three pieces, including the one tonight, were always worn. So these were three pieces. The belt, the breastplate and the shoes were never taken off. They are set apart in our text by the word "having." Now, beginning next week, we'll look at four, five and six. The next three pieces of armor are all "taking," and those were ones that you would keep nearby. But when the battle cry came, or when the battle came to you, you would quickly pick them up and use them. So this is the last of the three that you are always going to be wearing and standing in.

## D. Our feet must be protected

And tonight, verse 15, "having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Now, look, you need to protect your feet. No matter how strong the breastplate is or how sure your belt is, if you slip and fall, you're done. I don't know if you've ever hurt your foot, but man do you know it, don't you? Step on a thorn, cut your foot, stub your toe, get stuck on the beach and the sand's a million degrees. It's always fun watching people run from towel to towel, even towels that don't belong to them at all. But they're effectively sidelined. You can't move unless your feet are working.

Several years ago, I was running around our neighborhood, and my wife would ride the bicycle behind us. There was one of these manhole covers, but it was the little one for the water service, and it was sticking up about 2". I didn't see it, and I kicked and broke three toes. And I went right down, and we were two miles from home. Yes. I used to run two miles, thank you very much, (Laughing) you bunch of doubters. But I couldn't even walk. So my wife had to go home and get the car, and for the next.....I just taped those suckers up, and they turned black and blue. They were awful looking. Well they don't look good anyway, but they looked really bad then. And I mean to tell you, you get to know that you need your feet, don't you?

So the ancient warriors, even in battles, often they put sharp sticks with poison on the tips along the paths because not everything was paved. And pursuers would step on them, and it would basically disable them; like the ancient IEDs, they would just take you out.

## E. Shoes provide sure footing

So, it is that which Paul focuses on tonight. And it is important to our spiritual lives because notice what we've, I think, pointed out more than once, verse 11, "Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand." Stand. Important. Verse 13, "Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." Verse 14, "Stand therefore." So God's interested that you keep your footing, keep your balance.

Shoes are pretty much an integral part of most cultures. They certainly are a part of western culture even though a lot of people choose them for their fashion statement rather than the function. I still don't get how wearing two sizes too small at an 80 degree angle to the ground and costing \$400 a pair is good for you. But people buy them. "I look good." Yes, but you don't feel good, do you? We have some friends who live in Kauai, and they have four kids, and until recently, when they changed the law, kids didn't have to wear shoes to school - which was good. But their kids' feet looked like rubber. They looked like Goodyear plants. They could walk, I'm pretty sure, on just about anything. Today, they make shoes for everything, don't they? Athletes and sensible people buy shoes primarily for their function - want to protect your feet, comfortable, mobility, balance, stability. I was online the other day looking for some tennis shoes, and it's amazing to me that they make a shoe for everything. Walking, they've got walking shoes. Running, they've got running shoes. Jumping, they've got jumping shoes. I'm pretty sure there're some tiptoeing shoes although I couldn't find them; not in my size. They have sitting shoes, I'm pretty sure. Cross trainers. There's a shoe for absolutely everything. I

think they're the same shoe. I'm pretty sure they just change the color. Well you get the idea. Enough of a good thing already. It's functional overload. Wide feet, narrow ones, no arch, too much arch, pronate, supinate. I'm going nuts. I just want some tennis shoes. Thank you very much.

But here is the Roman soldier, and he's a warrior, he's a battler. He's fighting 1<sup>st</sup> century, and he needs to keep himself on his feet because the minute he goes down with his armor, he doesn't get up. He's done. He's cooked. He's had it. So here's a fellow that fights to the death. Shoes are absolutely essential, and he would wear shoes for a couple of different reasons - first and foremost for protection. If you're in jungle warfare along roadways with lots of rocks and difficult things that can hobble a soldier, Roman shoes tended to be very thick-soled. So if you see anything from that time period, you'll find very thick-soled shoes. Second of all, they came with stability. They had to be stable, especially in the places they would fight. These shoes were oftentimes leather sandals with very thick soles, but attached to the bottom of them, or hobnailed to them, were metal stud-like cleats. It could almost be the 1<sup>st</sup> century golf shoe, you know? They had some stuff on the bottom that they could absolutely stand on the side of a hill. It gave them tremendously good stability. So you'd wear them for protection, you'd wear them for stability, and you'd wear them for mobility. They were lightweight. Though they were thick, they tended to be very light. I don't know if you ever get any running shoes today, but they weigh nothing. It's like you don't even have them on. But it allowed the soldier to move quickly and yet stand his ground, and so he had two of them for balance. So they were to protect him and to stabilize him and to keep him upright. That's the whole issue behind the Roman soldier's footwear. It wasn't very pretty, but it was tremendously functional. And maybe the guy that made the best use of it was Alexander the Great, who preached the message of mobility and surefootedness. His main concern was world conquest. By the time he was thirty, the world was his. He wept because he didn't have anybody else to beat up, and he moved soldiers by miles and miles and miles each day.

So this third piece of armor that is lifted from the Roman soldier who daily watched Paul in prison and that Paul used to paint a spiritual picture of what we might use to stand, is that the Lord says to us, "Now I want you to stand. Withstand. Having done all to stand. I want you to have good footing. I want you to be protected, and I want you to be stable. And I want it to be lightweight and easy for you to move in them. I don't want you to get knocked over or taken out."

#### F. Terms (Ephesians 6:15)

1. But here, then, is our sure footing as God's people, which will maintain the ground that the enemy has given up. And here's the answer - you should "have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." This is what we want to be wearing. Now the word "shod" is the Greek word "*hupodeo*," and it means to bind on or to envelop in. So, that which wraps around your foot. That's literally what it is. Make sure you put these things - good to your feet.

2. The word "preparation" is the word for equipped or made ready, if you will. So Paul is writing to the church here, "Make sure that you tie properly to your feet the equipment of the gospel of peace because that'll make you stand."

3. The word "gospel" means what? Good news. Right? The good news of peace.

4. And the word "peace" is the one that you would normally find in the Scriptures almost everywhere you look. It's a word meaning to rest. And at least for you and me, as believers, this rest that God gives us to stabilize our walks falls under three categories that we would like to look at. There is the peace with God, that God gives you. There is the peace of God, that God would want to rule your life by. And then there is the peace with others, that you never had before the Lord came to save you. It is the good news of Jesus Christ that will protect your feet in the battle with the enemy, and the good news of Jesus' peace for you that will provide stability and mobility and balance to your life without you being sidelined, without you being delayed, without you being slowed down, without the enemy getting the upper hand. Your feet aren't going to slip and slide. You're going to stand fast.

5. There are some commentators who would take this verse, and if you read commentaries maybe you've run across it, and they say, "Well, here's a great verse about evangelism. We should preach the gospel to the lost," and they will oftentimes quote Romans 10:15 which says, "How shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!' " And they say, "You see, there's those beautiful feet upon the mountains." And I say that's a great verse, and the feet that proclaim the gospel are certainly beautiful feet in God's eyes. The problem is - because of the context, that cannot be what this verse says. This verse is all about protecting you. It's all about taking care of you and your battle with the enemy. Having done all that you might stand. God doesn't stop and go, "By the way, share your faith, and then go back again to the armor." That's not His intention. It certainly is a verse that, then, becomes taken out of context because God wants you to have victory over the devil, and having done all, that you might stand. So I think the focus is upon what God puts under your feet for the battle that you want to find the direction in here. That which He provides to stabilize your walk by faith is the good news of His peace so that you might not stumble or fall. Now, we'll come back in a few minutes.

### Peace with God and the Peace of God

A. What we were and where we were before Jesus came into our lives

Could I get you to flip over to a couple of places with me, beginning in Romans 5? Just go back a few books to Romans 5, and we'll begin at verse 6, as Paul speaks to us about what we were and where we were before Jesus came into our lives. Verse 6, "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." What does he say about the lost here? We were weak, without strength, and we were ungodly. We were ungodly. Verse 7, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die." So we are unrighteous, and we're not good (by implication). Verse 8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We are weak, we are

ungodly, we are unrighteous, we are not good, we are sinners. Verse 9, "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." We were enemies of God. We were at war with God. That's the condition of every human being that doesn't come to Christ. Right? Those descriptions are pretty clear. Weak and ungodly, and unrighteous, not good, sinner, the object of God's wrath, the enemies of God. "When we were yet the enemies, God reconciled us through His Son." That's the good news, verse 10, "Through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation" or this atoning work. One of the good things that happened when you got saved is God and you made peace. Right? You were an enemy of God. You were ungodly. You were weak. You were rebellious. You were in the dark. You were living your own life. You weren't listening to a thing God had to say.

B. Through His blood, Jesus made peace for us with God

And then one day, through however God brought you to Himself, you got saved, and something marvelous happened. Besides all of the obvious salvation that God works in your heart, you and God were no longer at war. You've surrendered. You put up the white flag, you cried out, "Save me, forgive me, help me. Lord, I'm sorry." And Jesus came, and by His blood, He made peace between you and God through His shed blood. Right? "By Him, He reconciled all things to Himself, whether they're on earth or things in heaven, He's made peace through the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:20). I have peace with God. That's the first thing you need to know as you stand fast in this battle. I have peace with God. Me and God are no longer enemies. I used to be His enemy, but I was blessed enough to be able to wise up. How about that? And God showed me what I needed to do, and He brought me to Himself. So, when I came to the Lord, I was given peace with God. And though I was an enemy with God because of my sin and rebellion, through the work at the cross and the resurrection, I've been brought near. Right? Here's what Paul said to the Ephesians in chapter 2:11-18, "Remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh - who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands - that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world." That's not a good description, is it? "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." We are now at peace with God. How important is that, that we grab hold of that? God is my friend. God is my ally. God is my Father. Not angry with you anymore. Not out to get you. He's purchased you, He's adopted you, He's placed you in His family. Where war once raged, and you were going to lose, peace now rules. Which is exactly what Paul said in that 2 Corinthians 5:19 passage where he says, "that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation," atonement. We now have a message. We can say to people, "Hey. You want to

make peace with God? Just come to Him through His Son." But that's the stability that we need, right? We have peace with God.

### C. The peace of God

You're in Romans? Okay, go the other way to Philippians 4. Still on this issue of peace with God. Have your feet encased in the equipment of the good news of peace. Peace with God. Verse 6 of chapter 4 says this, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you."

Peace with God - vital. Right? I come to Jesus, the war is over. But something else happens now because, as I get to know God, as I relate to Him, I'm given the peace of God. Not just peace with God. That's this way. The peace of God is what can rule my heart. And God has that for you and for me. Notice in verse 6 here, we read, "Be anxious for nothing," or literally, "Worry about nothing." And you read that, and you go, "Right! Nice advice. But how is that possible? I got straight A's in High Blood Pressure University. I worry about everything." And yet, it is an injunction attached here to the assumption that you're a believer in Jesus, and if you believe in Him, Paul's counsel is that you can follow by God's grace, for God now rules your life. First I have peace with God. But now that He's the Lord of my life, I can have His peace. In other words, I'll just let God handle it. Unless the Lord is worried, I'm not worried. Unless He's sweatin', I'm not sweatin'. Unless He thinks things are broken, and He can't fix them, I'm just going to leave them with Him. I now begin to let the Lord run my life. If I truly believed all that the Scriptures declare of me, and don't be angry with me here, you should never worry. Never worry. You don't need to worry because the Lord didn't go, "I quit on Tuesday. I'll be back Friday though. Good luck." In a perfect world, you might say, "Well, I'm only human!" And I get that. That's right. Which is why we need our steps protected with this piece of armor - to know that I have peace with God, and then, as I get to know God, that the peace of God begins to change me and makes me immovable when the enemy tries to rock my world. God's still in charge. God's still on the throne. Worry paralyzes movement and is the opponent of faith. Yet if your feet are equipped with the good news of peace, you will be free to act and to follow and be steadfast and to move forward, and you can gain ground that you never had before because God's peace is ruling your heart now. So you can have some worry-free living days. Oh, it may not be perfect yet. But more often than not, I'm saying, "I'm not going to worry about that. I'm just going to let the Lord have that." And it isn't just a quaint saying, it's my conviction. It's your conviction. We believe that God will take care of all that we are going through. I can begin to live an anxiety-free life. I can have peace with joy. I can have a real rest in God's care. And it isn't foolish, it's just true, isn't it? It's our experience. You will have His peace. And trust me, He's not worried about anything. I have yet in my mind to see, in a biblical sense, the Lord going, "Oh, man. This is going to be a tough day! I hope I make it



through." The Lord is handling it, isn't He? And you just won't be hanging in there, you'll be overcoming. The peace of God will rule your heart. That's what we read. And if that's true, then it will establish your walk, your feet, for you'll know He's God, and you can rely upon Him, and you can rest upon Him. So rather than worry, verse 6, you can pray with thanksgiving. "Lord, I'm just giving this to You. I'm so thankful You're in charge. I'm so thankful You haven't vacated the throne. I'm so thankful that I know that You can do anything I can think of and then a whole lot more."

#### D. This supernatural peace

And the result will be, verse 7, I have the peace of God. Not just peace with God. That's when the war's over. I can now begin to live my life in the understanding of who He is so that He can keep my heart and my mind. I start to worry, and I go, "Yeah, I would worry if the Lord wasn't around, but He is! He's the Lord." And so it allows you, then, rather than worrying, to go to verse 8 and to begin to fill your thoughts with other things. Beautiful things. Joyful. Noble. Just. Pure. Lovely. Praiseworthy. Virtuous things can begin to fill your mind rather than you being overwhelmed always with worry. And not only that, verse 9, it will enable you to begin to do all that you've been learning. And again, the God of peace will be with you. If you've learned it, go do it. "If you've heard it, if you've seen it, if you've heard it in me and seen it in me, go do those things, and the God of peace will be with you." We have peace with God, first, through our salvation. Then we have the peace of God. To know that "all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and are the called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28) - to really know that will keep you stable, won't it? Something happens, people go, "Man, you're really going through it." "Well, the Lord's in charge. He's working this all for good." "Hey, buddy. Is that just positive thinking?" "No. That's Bible thinking." Positive thinking people do that aren't saved, and it just fools you. "Everything's gonna be good." Until you go to hell, then it's not going to be good, Mr. Positive Confession. This isn't positive confession. Oh, it's a positive confession, but it's based on the reality of faith and the truth of God's Word. So, it'll keep me moving forward. If I don't have this kind of peace, then I'm soon going to be defeated because the cares of the world and the worries of life and the strife that we face and the condemnation that the enemy wants to bring and the setbacks that are built into life, and people will let you down, and sin will impede your progress, and you'll lose ground every day. And each day will be kind of a defeated life, and pretty soon you'll just be reduced to getting by. "Oh, just hanging on with Jesus." (whining) "Just hoping I make it through. Pray for me, man!" You're always needing prayer. "Pray for me, man!" Never have time for anybody else because I'm always kind of locked up with me. And yet, if I have the peace with God and then walk by faith and experience His peace, then I can begin to make huge strides forward because I'm not going to be so easily moved. God's got it, doesn't He? He can handle it.

I may have told you. But in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, we moved to Bellflower where I had to walk to school in the snow, uphill, barefoot, for ten miles. (Laughing) We moved to Bellflower, and we did have to walk to school, but there was a kid that terrorized me for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This kid - I'm pretty sure he was 15, and he was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade - he was just an idiot kid. So I used to go to school early to kind of beat him out of the house because he would just beat me. He would just punch me in the head and kick me in the butt, and, "Ah ha ha," and then he would lumber off to

his car and drive to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. (Laughing) But he always seemed to find me. Wherever I was, he would find me, and then he'd nail me. Well then I met a kid at school, at the end of 5<sup>th</sup> grade. His name was Kevin, and Kevin was just a monster. I'm pretty sure he was a freak of nature. I'm not even sure he was a real kid. It could have been an angel. But he was so big, and he liked me. He liked me a lot. He was my pal, and so I told Kevin about this rotten idiot kid down the street from my house. And he said, "Well he'll never bother you again." I said, "Well thank you, Kevin. Very cool." And he went and had a talk with this kid, and he just put this kid against the wall, and I think he busted the back of his head open. He said, "Don't you ever make me come over here and hurt you anymore." And then I would walk past this kid's house really slowly (Pastor Jack is waving), hoping he'd be looking out the window (Laughing). He could still kill me, but I had Kevin to rely on. It didn't really matter to me. My steps were just.....I remember it like it was yesterday. It's really weird what you'll remember when you get older. I have no idea what we had for dinner, but I remember this whole deal very clearly.

E. Peace with God is immediate; peace of God fills our hearts

Well it's kind of like the same way with Jesus now. He's on my side. I belong to Him. He's never going to leave me. So why should I worry? If I worry.....I'll tell you why I worry. I worry because I'm not sure He's going to do the right thing. "Well, what if the Lord does this? What if He does that? What if He comes up with this? What if He doesn't do it the way I want? Oh, Lord, come on, man!" Try to make my case with God who knows better and best far better than I do. And I begin to question His commitment to me. So, look, I have peace with God through the sacrifice of His Son and the blood that He shed. I learn of God's love for me and His power and His promises, and I find His peace ruling my heart so that every step I take, I'm secure, and I can be unwavering, and I'm stable, and I'm mobile, and I'm making progress. I'm making progress. I'm not there, but I'm making progress. Pretty good to know, isn't it?

### Peace with Others

A. Peace with others is possible because of the new heart we have

Well then we have also one other peace. We have the peace of God in terms of our relationship to one another. You know, the weird thing about peace is before you get saved, you don't really have much peace with anyone. Oh, you love your friends, hate your enemies. That's pretty much what the world does. But your love is very selfish and self-centered. And one of the consequences of getting saved is that God places His love in your hearts by the Holy Spirit, and it's a love for others so that you begin to read in the Bible the things God writes to Christians. And if you're a young Christian, especially, on the one hand you grab hold of that, "Oh, this'll be awesome," while the other hand you look at it and go, "This isn't possible!" When you read Paul's letter to the Philippians in chapter 2:2-4, and he says, "Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others," you go, "Oh, yeah, that'd be awesome. No one's doing that." And yet God begins to do that in your

heart, and He begins to change us. Paul writes in Romans 12:18, "as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."

B. The enemy seeks to use others to trip up our walk

So there is, in that battle with the enemy, first of all, peace with God. So the enemy can't get to me there. He can't tell me God hates me, He's not for me, He's not going to forgive me. All that is lies because I have peace with God, through His blood shed by His Son at Calvary. That's why we're having communion. This is my hope right here, and this is your hope. Right? So my peace with God is established in concrete. Unless He changes, that doesn't change. I then have God's peace because I know He's for me and not against me. He'll never leave me. He'll never forsake me. All of the things He does are for my good.

Well then I'm left with you, and you're left with me, and we need to be able to have peace with one another. So what do we do? We start to walk with God, and God begins to give us a love for one another, and rather than people being the reason our progress is stopped, and our walk is stumbled, we're starting to overcome even that. Because what the enemy will seek to do is he'll try to get people to fight with each other because if they fight with each other, they can't get anything done. So Satan will use others to rob you of the good news of peace. "Oh, I love church. I just don't like the people. I love the ministry. It's the people." And you watch that in marriage counseling. You see it a lot. Couples are convinced by the enemy that the real enemy is sitting next to them on the couch. "Who's your enemy?" And they'll go, "Hmmm mmmm" (glancing over to the other person). That's not true. You'd be closer to point to yourself. You watch the little wicked verbal attacks that saints in little groups with whispered tones can lay on each other in apparent spiritual evaluation, forgetting that but by the grace of God, none of us would ever be forgiven, not realizing that over again in these hushed tones, the Lord calls us to give mercy as we've received it. But if you don't put on the shoes of peace, then the whispering and the backbiting and the phone calls and the supposed spiritual indignation are just going to destroy you. Because all that stuff is sin, and it offends God to no end. The Bible says, "If we forgive, we'll be forgiven. If we forgive not, neither will our sins be forgiven us" (Matthew 6:14-15). You can interpret that verse any way you like. Let it just shock your theology. I'm just telling you, God expects mercy from those who have gotten mercy from Him. God begins to give us peace with one another. "Judgment is without mercy to those who have shown no mercy" (James 2:13). Not a memory verse either, but it's a horrible kind of thought. Scary verse. Because it's God's way of protecting us from the wiles of the devil. Right? So we can see who the real enemy is, and with love, we can overcome him. "And above all things have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins' " (1 Peter 4:8).

So, He's the Lord so I can rest in His peace. I have peace with God. His peace rules my heart. All things work together for good. And I'm learning how to get along with you, and you're learning how to get along with me, and we've got plenty of issues, but we're under the blood, aren't we? We're covered. We can deal with them. God can bring us together.

## Concluding Thoughts

### A. Jesus is our sure footing

So Jesus is to be my sure footing for life, as I stand against the enemy of my soul. David wrote in Psalm 40:2, "He has brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps." That's our stability, right? And as Paul looks at this Roman soldier with the cleated, thick-soled leather sandals that would make this soldier a terror to fight, it's pretty awesome that that would be what the Lord would want us to know in terms of our standing. We need to know we are right with God, we have His promises, and we have each other. Here's what the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 18:29-38, "For by You I can run against a troop, by my God I can leap over a wall. As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield" (that's next week) "to all who trust in Him. For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God? It is God who arms me with strength, and makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of deer, and sets me on my high places. He teaches my hands to make war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great." Isn't that a wonderful verse? "You enlarged my path under me, so my feet did not slip. I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them; neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed. I have wounded them, so that they could not rise; they have fallen under my feet."

### B. It's a contrast from those in the world

Now that's quite a difference from the Psalms Asaph will write about his own experience and how he had almost gotten away from the Lord when he began to look out into the world and see how easy the world seemed to have it. And then he said (Psalm 73:17-18), "Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end. Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction." So that the world, though it looks like they're having just the time of their lives, You're going to cast them down into destruction; that kind of stand is not going to last for them. It's not going to last. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD." Remember that verse? Psalm 37:23. Great psalm, by the way, about standing. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the LORD upholds him with His hand." Paul says, "You want to withstand, and having done all to stand? Get your feet wrapped around the peace of God, the peace with God and the peace with others."

### C. I am anchored and immovable in Him

I'm anchored, right? I'm anchored. You can accuse me of all kinds of things in terms of what God will do to me or what I should be doing for Him. But His promise is that I have peace with Him. The blood of Jesus washes me from all sin. In God's economy, my sins are gone because His blood is sufficient. I know for some of you, you hold grudges against me, maybe. I'll just use me as an example rather than point you guys out.....in row 11 and row 14. No..... (Laughing) And I have the peace of God. I know He's the Lord. I know He's on the throne. I know He's in

charge of everything. I know He does all things well. I know that He rules. And I can have peace with others because God has dealt with me and wants me only to walk in the same mercy He's given to me, dying to myself for their sake. Peace. Nothing will move me, and the wicked one will not be able to touch me. That's a pretty good place to be, isn't it? That's where we are. "We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18). Now the verb tense would say does not continue constantly in sin; he's moving away from sin. And the good news is the wicked one doesn't touch him. Praise the Lord. That's how we want to win.

#### D. Standing on solid ground based on knowing God

You remember Peter (in John 18) was in the Garden, and he saw the tremendous power of Jesus. You remember that when they came to arrest Him with what would have easily been a thousand soldiers armed to the teeth, and they said, "We're looking for Jesus of Nazareth." And Jesus just said, I AM," and they all just went backwards - just fell down. Must have been quite a noise. It's one of those places in Israel that you can hear for blocks on end. And they all fell down. And I suspect that Peter, looking at that, figured that he couldn't lose the battle because it's right after that he whips out his sword. So, he takes aim at Malchus, the high priest servant's head. He's a fisherman, so he's not good with a sword. I suspect Malchus maybe did one of these things - moved or something. But however, he lops off his ear, and you remember Jesus having to pick it up and fix it. I know it's an act of the flesh. I know it's sin. I know the Lord calls Peter on it. But I have to believe that he was motivated in part by the confidence he had that Jesus could take on the whole army. "I can beat up a couple of guys because the Lord could just say 'I AM' again really loud." I think his motivation was, "The Lord is with me, so I'm pretty good at wherever I go." Had it not been Jesus' purpose to be arrested and to be slain, He could have gotten away. He got away for 3½ years every time they tried to grab Him. Peter was right. And though Peter is sinful in that situation, he does realize he was on Jesus' side, so he goes for it. And so can we.

When Gideon was about to fight the Midianites (in Judges 7), he finally was given a 32,000-man army which was still about one-fourth of what he was facing with the Midianites. And Gideon was terrified. Here was a guy that God called. He found him hiding. He told him he was a mighty man of valor. He called him everything in the book that Gideon said, "Those shoes don't fit me either." He was terrified, he was a young man. And over this process, the Lord convinced Gideon of who He was. He told him to send people home that were afraid, and 22,000 of the 32,000 went, "Gotta go." Now he's got 10,000 left. Now he's outnumbered 13 to 1. And he said, "Lord, now what am I supposed to do?" And the Lord said, "Now, let's ask them all to get a drink of water, and if they lay down next to the brook, and they stick their face in the water, not looking around, put them in one stack. But the guy who kneels down, keeps his head up, and brings the water to his mouth, but he looks like he's looking around - he's a battle guy, put him in the other side." 9,700 of them facing the water, not even paying attention. The Lord says, "Get rid of those guys. Now you've got 300." "What?! Now we're cooked!" And the Lord said, "I'm not done yet. I want you to break them up into three groups of 100." "Great." "And then have each soldier take a pitcher, put a candle in it, take a trumpet, and wait for your signal. At the right time, I want you to have them blow the trumpet and break the pitcher and

light the candle and hold it in the air so everybody can see where you're hiding. And then I'll give you victory." And I'm sure to every mind it would have been, "That's nuts! We're going to show them where we are. A hundred of us over here! A hundred more over here!! And my little light in the darkness." But Gideon so wanted to trust the Lord, and finally the Lord said to him, "Let Me give you some help," and He sent him down to the camp of the Midianites. And he overheard them talking, after dinner, sitting outside the tent, and one man said to the other, "Oh, man, I hear it's the sword of Gideon that's coming to get us and that we're going to be wiped out!" And Gideon went back and went, "All right. God's got this." And he did it just like he was told. That's peace. With God. The peace of God. And the ability to walk out and know that God was with him. Gideon left that thing with sure footing, didn't he?

Peter and John were arrested twice, early on in the book of Acts. Once they were warned to quit preaching. The next time, they were grabbed with a bunch of other people, and they were beat up by the Romans and by the Jews, and they were warned, "Don't do it again." And their response was, "Well, we have to obey the Lord. We can't really do anything else." But you find these men had sure footing. Peace with God. Peace of God.

#### E. Peace with God

So, this third piece of armor is vital for your walk. It's vital for your walk. Hopefully in your mind is firmly implanted the understanding of what God has done. He has brought you peace with Himself through His Son. Romans 5:1, "we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus dies, His blood is shed, we receive His offering, we have peace with God.

The angels were there (we're heading for Christmas, so I'm thinking Christmas already) in the early morning of the birth of Jesus; there in Luke 2:14, the angels cried out, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" This is what God came to bring man - peace with Him. We don't want a war with God. Paul wrote to the Romans in chapter 8:6, "to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Isaiah spoke of His death, "He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

So if you know Jesus tonight, you have peace with God. If you don't know Jesus, you don't have peace with God, and you'd better hurry and get peace with God because that's a battle you can't win.

#### F. Peace of God

But you also come to know the peace of God. When Jesus rose from the dead, and He met with the disciples on what we know to be Easter evening (that Sunday evening), there in John 20:19&21 and in Luke 24:36 as well, He stood in their midst, and He said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And He gave them the Holy Spirit, and He breathed upon them, and they went forward in His peace. Isaiah would write, 700 years earlier, "Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river" (Isaiah

48:18). You'd just have peace like a river. God wants to give you His peace. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

#### G. Peace with others

Keep your feet, man. Keep your shoes on. Every time you start to worry, just go, "I've got to go put my shoes on." It's the fruit of the Spirit. It's a mark of God's kingdom. "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).

#### H. We have great peace, and nothing causes us to stumble

Ready to move. On the march. Stable in battle. Standing when the smoke clears. Victory in the Lord. Making good progress. Because you've got the right equipment on. His peace. So the Psalmist writes, "Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble" (Psalm 119:165). Pretty good, right? Got your shoes on?

#### I. The shield of faith

Next week, we're going to do the shield of faith. You don't want to be caught without one of these. I love the shield. You've got to be here next week. Don't miss the shield! If you're going to miss anything, miss four weeks from now. But don't miss the shield.

Submitted by Maureen Dickson  
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