

Feet Shod

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[0 : 0 0] we continue our study this morning and the spiritual warfare that we're in and the resources in particular that God has provided for the Christian to stand firm in this very real spiritual battle that we are in against spiritual forces that oppose us again we're understanding that ultimately our struggle, our fight, this conflict that we are in is not against flesh and blood but against Satan and his forces at times indeed his activity involves working through people and maybe even some items in the world to act as allurements to the sinful flesh that still exists and operates within the Christian these sinful desires work to allure us away from loving God having as our ambition to please Him to worship Him to walk in obedience to Him but by faith in Jesus Christ and our resultant union with Jesus Christ we are not helpless we are not helpless defenseless soldiers in this battle against this formidable enemy of Satan and his forces the Christian can be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might the Christian is more than a conqueror through Jesus Christ and by God's power working in Him the Christian we can take up the whole armor of God and stand firm against the schemes of the devil we've seen and heard in the past weeks of how we can take up the belt of truth and then the breastplate of righteousness this morning we learn of armor that equips us with a readiness that comes from the gospel of peace turn in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 6 and we'll read those verses verses 10 through 15 reading from the ESV finally be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers against the authorities against the cosmic powers over this present darkness against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand firm stand therefore having fastened on the belt of truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and as shoes for your feet having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace this morning we're focusing on verse 15 and as shoes for your feet having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace we all know the importance of good footwear to be able to effectively do whatever activity you want to do for that time ahead part of getting ready for the activity is selecting the appropriate footwear you did that this morning as you came to church maybe picked out a pair of shoes now these aren't really very comfortable but I won't have them on for very long so I can wear them for this time

and as soon as you get home you kick them off and put on the old slippers and comfortable shoes and there you go well having your feet shod what we're talking about in the spiritual battle you put them on and you leave them on never do we take them off well having the proper footwear is extremely important for the soldier even footwear for today's soldier has specific boot requirements that must be met before it can be used in combat duty the modern boots as I took a look at that those requirements they're designed to provide a combination of grip ankle stability and foot protection suitable again for maybe rugged environment in which they're in but especially for the combat duty that they're going to be worn in much of the success that Alexander the Great experienced with his armies was in part because the soldiers feet were properly attired that made those soldiers ready for conflict their shoes were made of sturdy leather heavy spiked soles that were fastened to their feet and shinned by strong leather straps and the shoes provided stability as they traveled to the battlefield but also especially during combat they also provided protection from the spikes that the enemy at times would put in the ground and cover over and with that thick sole that they had their feet were protected from those spikes but then also it gave them the ability to travel faster over long distances many of the armies that they fought against did not have footwear like the Roman soldiers had and as a result they were slow on the field slow in getting to where they needed to go but the Roman soldiers because they were made ready with this footwear were able to travel faster and certainly gave them a big advantage over the other enemy soldiers so they were made ready for the battle because they were equipped with proper footwear and so for the Christian we have another important element of our Christian life that we're looking at this morning that enables us to stand firm against the schemes of the devil and his forces of evil we have an equipping a preparation different words ways that this word is translated

ESV translates it readiness we have a readiness for the battle that's given by the gospel of peace now I'm going to work backwards on this verse and begin with the gospel of peace the gospel of peace is the source of the Christian's readiness to stand firm against the schemes of the devil so in what ways does the gospel of peace become that source first it's through the gospel of peace that the repentant individual is called to and brought into the kingdom of God and in union with Jesus Christ prior to hearing and believing the gospel of peace the individual is at enmity with God and is the child of his father Satan it might be a hard thing to hear but that was the case for all of us prior to coming to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith in Paul's letter to the Christians at Rome he wrote about the contrast between those who were true followers of Jesus

Christ and those who were not Romans 8 7 for the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God for it does not submit to God's law indeed it cannot those who are in the flesh cannot please God that's the helpless condition of the individual apart from Jesus Christ prior again to repentance and faith with Jesus Christ when James wrote his letter to the churches he also wrote about the enmity between God and those who preferred being a friend of the world system of which Satan is ruler he wrote this to show the impossibility of trying to live in the middle of either following Jesus or the way of the world system that Satan controls and helping the people understand there's no middle ground here James 4 4 he says you adulterous people do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God now indeed

Satan being the father of the unbeliever again the position that we were all in is seeking the ultimate destruction even of a non-believer but prior to our salvation it's important to understand you have a greater enemy than Satan and that enemy is God himself and so it's not like you're standing in this position of safety an ultimate enemy of God himself that's a desperate condition to be in Paul also wrote of the true condition of the Christian prior to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ even in this book that we've been working from Ephesians 2 1-3 and you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world following the prince of the power of the air the spirit that's now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind he's writing to these people who are now

[10 : 21] Christians but trying to get and help them understand this is what your true condition was prior to your relationship with God through Jesus Christ and notice in these verses the various elements of the enemy that we have are mentioned he talks about the course of this world we were following the course of this world system in which we live and that they were living follows the prince of the power of the air they think that they're coming up with these ideas in and of themselves but indeed their mind is corrupted by sin and living out of that mind that is ruled by the prince of the power of the air the spirit that not work in the sons of disobedience he mentions he mentions the so there we have those enemies that we are facing today we warred against God prior to our salvation in

Jesus Christ and he was at war with us we were objects of his wrath and judgment and in desperate need of being saved out of Satan's domain of darkness and brought into the kingdom of God and the way that God provided for our rescue was through the gospel of peace and I just love that phrase when I even thinking about that and the desperate condition that I was in at enmity with God a heart that wanted nothing to do with him in righteousness that pushed it away suppressed it in my unrighteous life even if outwardly I looked like a moral person I was still God just manifesting it in a different way but it was God who carried out his plan for peace to be achieved between him and the repentant sinner in that case me and how did God do that in a very paradoxical way through the death of his son on the sinner's behalf a verse that

I've used before but just fits in many occasions 2nd Corinthians 5 21 for our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin that in him we might become the righteousness of God and then Romans 5 8 through 9 therefore since we have been justified by faith we learned something of that last week declared righteous by

Jesus Christ by faith in Jesus Christ now we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ of course verses that we learned from childhood John 3 16 through 18 for God so loved the world those that were at enmity with him that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him whoever believes in him not condemned but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only son of God other verses that I've got written down here that I know I couldn't include but you're getting the idea you understand you're familiar with these verses that I've already read so the repentant sinner has heard the gospel of peace with

God through faith in Jesus Christ and the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that individual who has heard it and believes that good news of the gospel of peace is declared to be at peace with God and he obtains that right to now be called the child of God and it's that gospel of peace that equips the repentant sinner now the child of God to stand against the schemes of the devil he's now equipped for battle he has a readiness that he didn't have before because he was standing in opposition to God he had none of these resources even in the beginning of Ephesians Paul had already written they're blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus faith in Jesus Christ union with him now we have what we need for the conflict that now we enter as followers of

[15 : 56] Jesus Christ so readiness equipped for battle in what ways is he ready for the battle well this is where as I was preparing the lesson I was coming up with quite a grocery list of things and it's almost like I'll just be overwhelmed by all these things so there's just a few things that I've included here I've not included all the spiritual blessings that we have in Jesus Christ but I trust what I am able to share this morning gives you a sense of the readiness that you have that is given through the gospel of peace the first way in which we're ready he's on the Lord side of the battle now God is with him throughout the ages God's people have found reassurance in knowing God was with them even in Psalm 23 David wrote even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death a time when conflict can be the greatest remember

Pilgrim he had gone through so much but he had to cross the river finally and still there was that concern the slight bit of anxiety as he would go through that river of death David saying even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for you are with me your rod and your staff they comfort me and then psalm 1680 wrote again I have set the lord always before me because he is at my right hand I shall not be shaken so so there's a reality of the relationship that exists with David and his relationship with God and he's bringing that to bear in his mind and in his situation it's not truth that's just out there floating around it's truth that he's bringing to bear in the midst of the conflict that he's in and he sets the lord always before him we can read of

God's reassurance even through Moses to Joshua when Joshua was going to lead the people of Israel against their enemies and Moses said to him it's the lord who goes before you he will be with you he will not leave you or forsake you do not fear or be dismayed I mean are those the truths that you bring into the time of battle when the conflict seems so strong and the flesh and the mind that needs to be renewed is trying to convince you that you can't do it I just can't stand I failed before on and on this is the truth that we bring to bear in the battle God's reassuring words to his people were spoken through Isaiah Isaiah 41 10 fear not for I am with you be not dismayed for I am your God I will strengthen you I will help you

I will uphold you with my righteous right hand so a lot of the comfort stability and confidence that we have flows out of this understanding that we have of who God is we understood God of some weak ineffective God against our enemies that would not bring us much reassurance in this time of battle but Isaiah is helping these people understand the reality of who God is and then also the final victory over the devil and his angels that we can bring to bear as well Revelation 20 10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever well it's again from this central position of peace with God that the Christian truly is equipped to stand he's made ready to stand against the schemes of the devil and we can be peaceful in the midst of the battle because of how we are equipped and made ready all that the

Roman soldier could do because his feet were shod properly for battle we can apply to the Christian's readiness for our spiritual conflict because our feet are shod with readiness given through the gospel of peace so we're bringing into our day as we get up in the morning and thinking I don't know what to head but I know there's some problems some difficulties I'm going to have to wrestle with but we have to understand but I'm not entering this ill equipped for whatever comes across my path I'm bringing back to my mind the reality of who I am and what I have in this readiness to stand against the schemes of the devil in whatever way they might come so we want to take a look now at how the Christian is equipped and made ready with what I call new battle advantages that he had just like that Roman soldier had he carried some definite advantages into the battle because his feet were made ready so now by the gospel of peace we too have a readiness that we bring to the battle what are some of those advantages that we have well one peace because he knows his commander is greater than his enemy in the book of first

[21 : 52] John John wrote warning the people of false prophets who are trying to turn the Christians away from Jesus remember schemes of the devil our battle is not ultimately against flesh and blood but he will work through flesh and blood and that's what was happening here and John was writing to them and warning them of what was going on but also reassuring them 1 John 4 verses 1 and 4 beloved do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God for many false prophets have gone out into the world little children you are from God and have overcome them for he who is in you is greater than he is in the world so you see what John is doing these individuals were in the midst of the battle Satan was scheming through flesh and blood in this case to get them to turn away from

Jesus Christ falter in their fate and John comes alongside and helps them remember wait wait a minute who are you he says you are from God what's happened in your life you've overcome them you're not as susceptible to them as your mind is trying to get you to think you are for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world going back to our focus on God recently I heard a message from Pastor John or we all did of how Jesus had authority and power over the demons they had to leave at his command again our commander is greater than he who endeavors to shake us we saw that Jesus didn't even have to be in the presence of the little girl that was possessed by a demon upon her mother's persistent statement of faith remember that from last

Sunday morning Jesus said for this statement you may go your way the demon has left your daughter authority of God over the enemies that we face even Jesus when he was tempted of Satan multiple times in the wilderness was victorious Luke 4 13 and when the devil had ended every temptation we just have three of them recorded in the scriptures remember he was there 40 days so it wasn't just like here's the temptation let's take a break for five or six days here's another one take another break for a few days 40 days being tempted by the devil over and over and over again wasn't like us maybe it takes one temptation we're down for the count Jesus being God his enemy had to come against him numerous times with all kinds of temptations and yet he stood against him and

Satan departed from him until an opportune time Hebrews 2 14 since therefore the children share in flesh and blood he himself likewise partook of the same things that through death he might destroy the one who has power of death that is the devil and such has he done peace with God peace in the time of battle but we also have the advantage of confidence the individual who has believed the gospel of peace he delivered from Satan's authority unto a new commander and he can stand against this prior commander that was ruling in his life even sin in Satan Romans 6 focuses on this union we have with Jesus Christ we're one with him and his death and resurrection so that as it says in Romans 6 4 we too might walk in newness of life

I love that phrase we can walk in newness of life whatever was in the past that I thought was so glorious and wonderful cannot compare to this newness of life that is mine now in Jesus Christ a new confidence that I can have as I moving through my day listen to these other phrases that he uses in Romans 6 verse 6 no longer enslaved to sin verse 14 for sin will have no dominion over you verse 18 having been set free from sin have become slaves of righteousness verse 22 but now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God the fruit you get leads to sanctification and eternal life so as we submit to God and love and obey him in times of temptation

[27 : 02] Satan has to flee again James we heard that in Jeremy's lessons James 4 7 submit yourselves therefore to God resist the devil and he'll flee from you even as he had to do with Jesus we have a new confidence because we're delivered from the authority of Satan and his dominion over us but also we have the indwelling Holy Spirit it's by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit that the Christian is moved to holiness we're not trying to generate this holiness and righteous manner of life in our own strength no God has granted us the spirit of Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit to live within us and so now there's a brand new difference something different going on within us prior to our salvation there was no Holy Spirit just the flesh operating in enmity against God hostile to

God manifesting itself in different ways but now by faith in Jesus Christ this Holy Spirit has come to dwell within us Galatians 5 16 through 17 but I say walk by the Spirit and you'll not gratify the desires of the flesh for the desires of the flesh are against the spirit and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh for these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things that you want to do but the fruit of the spirit is love joy peace patience kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness self control against such things there is no law and then 2 Corinthians 3 18 focusing on the work of the Holy Spirit is doing in us and we all with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another for this comes from the

Lord who is the spirit so again we're not in this battle on our own in our own strength fighting for righteousness and holiness no we are energized by the indwelling Holy Spirit who is in us manifesting this fruit of the spirit as we move through our days so what we're doing is acting on the reality of that truth of his indwelling presence and I'm keeping in step with what he is leading me to do in those times of conflict when the flesh is endeavoring to get me to turn away from righteousness and holiness and following Jesus Christ and true love the spirit of God is leading me in these paths of righteousness and I keep in step with the Holy Spirit and enjoy the fruit of the Holy Spirit in my walk in the times of battle so we can be confident in the battle because Jesus is our Lord and his Holy Spirit is leading in those paths of righteousness another advantage we have fellow soldiers who also have been made ready for battle through the gospel of peace commands that we're reading about here in

Ephesians 6 that we're studying were given to the whole church I mean individually we must put on the whole armor of God but it's as they do it as one body with many members the church stands firm against the schemes of the devil I fear at times the church in America with our focus on independence we've moved away from the reality of the importance of the corporate body of Jesus Christ even when it comes to this whole matter of spiritual battle the success of an army in battle is dependent upon each soldier using his skills in different areas for the benefit of the whole army and victory over the enemy even a sniper sometimes you think a sniper is out there on his own he's not out there on his own he has a spotter right next to him who is assisting him in his time of conflict and usually he's out there in a support role of other soldiers who are out on the field so they really are acting as a unit and their success against the enemy is dependent upon each one doing what they've been made ready to do okay army fellow soldiers unit contained here in grace fellowship church out independent our victory in the battle today and through the week is directly related to how each one of us is putting on this readiness that we have through the gospel of peace think back over the past week how have you acted on behalf of another soldier of

GFC what have you done to give them the support they need during the week do you know the different soldiers we're going to know certain soldiers better than others but whatever we're doing what we need to do acting on behalf of the other soldiers of our church so that each one successfully meets the enemy and stands firm so you need to think how involved really am I in the lives of the fellow soldiers here at Grace Fellowship this is the reality that we're in so it is again with the various members of the church only as each member exercises his holy spirit given gifts and love for God and the whole body does the body grow in holiness and glorify God and think of the different commands the one another commands of scripture how many of them when practiced even within an army setting would contribute to victory in the time of battle

[33 : 31] I mean any commanding officer in an army giving these one another commands don't even let them know they're from scripture yeah these would really help us to act as a cohesive unit in the battle I mean there's twenty some at least in the scriptures don't worry I didn't write all twenty down some are love one another biblical love for one another sacrificial love for one would that be helpful in a unit of soldiers in the battlefield honor one another that would be helpful agreeing with one another no you go over no I don't really want to go over here I'd rather go over here and do this doesn't help live in harmony with one another forgive one another bear one another's burden on and on we could go all these one another commands and scriptures really make us ready as a body to act in the time of battle let's keep moving another advantage that this individual has the

Christian has has a new resolve a new commitment and desire to do what is right and please his commander prior to believing the gospel of peace this is how Paul is described as Saul but Saul still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus so that if he found any belonging to the way men or women he might bring them bound to Jerusalem after hearing and believing the gospel of peace this is Saul or Paul for some days he was with the disciples at Damascus and immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogue saying he's the son of God what what happened as a new resolve and a commitment and a desire to please his new commander peace or the saints in

Thessalonica finally then brothers we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God just as you are doing that you do so more and more now this is their testimony after they heard the gospel of peace and believed it chapter 1 verse 9 gives us a hint of what life was like prior to that it wasn't their mindset to do what was pleasing to the Lord he says talking about them how you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God prior to that their desires were focused on other idols their desire was not to serve and please the living God but dead idols things that they could act as saviors for them in their life providing them peace in life they hadn't heard the gospel of peace Paul brought the gospel of peace to them they heard it the spirit of

God worked they believed it and now then they were made ready to stand in a new way for the Christians in the city of Corinth 1 Corinthians 6 9 through 11 describes what their life was like prior Paul helping them reflect on that he says do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God do not be deceived neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who practice homosexuality nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor revilers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God and such were some of you but you were washed you were sanctified you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God so God was at work rescuing them out of Satan's domain you see all these descriptions of these people sometimes we would be tempted to think when we see such a person no there's no way that person is going to get saved

I've fallen into that trap before before I know it the person hears the gospel and they're saved and they have a new mindset new resolve new commitment that they bring into the battle I need to skip the last couple here and go on to the next one and advantages he can stand with a new mental clarity and discernment Ephesians 5 15 look carefully then how you walk not as unwise but as wise making the best use of the time because the days are evil therefore do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is in the same book in Ephesians 4 verse 17 he was encouraging the saints don't walk as the Gentiles walk in the futility of their mind darkened in their understanding so you see when the gospel of peace came they believe it they acquired a new mental clarity of what reality was reality about themselves as sinners in need of a savior reality of who

[38 : 58] Jesus was as the only savior and now they were able to have clarity for daily life that they needed that's what we how we are made ready for now life in this world as a Christian pastor Colin had preached in 1st corinthians 2 how we receive the spirit of god and now we have the mind of christ proverbs 9 we've heard that passage before the fear of the lord is the beginning of wisdom it's the beginning of wisdom we have a new clarity for life through this gospel of peace we're ready for the spiritual battle because our thinking is being renewed unto a true knowledge of god true knowledge of ourselves true knowledge of the way of life these are the advantages to the one who has believed this gospel of peace it's almost like a soldier who has the advantage in wearing night vision goggles he's not aware of what's going on in the darkness any longer he has a clarity of the situation because he's equipped for battle so it is for us as

Christians we enter this battle equipped but then he also has the advantage of a new boldness in the battle that the gospel of peace can do the same for others that is done for him Romans 1 16 now Paul says I'm not ashamed of the gospel wow what a change so as we move through the day and are facing spiritual enemies enemies we face those enemies and move into his territory with a confidence and a boldness I'm not ashamed of the gospel because it's the power of God under the salvation of this person this person my coworker my neighbor my husband my wife my children there's a boldness that we can bring into this battle and he can stay in the battle because he knows present and final victory is through Jesus Christ we've read the verses submit to

God resist he'll flee from you there's victory there an ultimate victory we know in 1 John 2 15 the world is passing away along with its desires but whoever does the will of God abides forever are you ready for the spiritual battle well if you've heard the gospel of peace and believe the gospel of peace you have a readiness that you can be equipped and prepared and ready for the battle it says in his shoes for your feet having put on it's not like putting on taking off putting on taking off no having put on it's been put on it's still on the readiness is always there it's yours to possess I guess the question is are you acting with the readiness that is yours in Jesus

Christ in the battle not drawn back kind of wimpy timid oh I just can't stand I just can't sit it's not the reality you have a readiness for the battle today take it up let's take it up and act on this readiness that are given us through the gospel of peace let's pray heavenly father what can we do but thank you for this readiness that we now have through our union with Jesus Christ indwelling Holy Spirit who empowers us now to act in this readiness act like those who are ready to meet the enemy in whatever form it comes we continue to admit we need your help to act as ready soldiers and follow you faithfully even today as we move through our day so for that we pray and ask in Jesus name amen thank you you are dismissed