

Christian Warfare

Lesson 13: The Armor of God, Part 5

- I. The shoes of readiness given by the gospel of peace, Eph 6.15.
 - A. A Roman soldier's footwear was extremely important. It not only provided protection from slipping and sliding, but it also gave the soldier mobility so he could move freely and quickly. His shoes were thus a necessary part of his defense. They enabled him to navigate rough weather and rough terrain. Without his shoes on, he'd be injured, handicapped, and ill-equipped for the dangers of the field and the demands of warfare.
 - B. Gurnall says what the *foot* is to the body, so the *will* is to the soul. Wherever we go, our will takes us. And what the *shoe* is to the foot, so the *Christian's spiritual readiness* is to the will. "The man whose feet are well shod is not afraid to go through thick or thin, foul or fair, stones or straws; all are alike to him. But the barefooted man, or the one with fragile shoes, *shrinks* when his feet touch the mud, and *shrieks* when he stumbles on a sharp stone. Thus when the will and heart of a person are ready for any work, he's shod and armed against any trouble he must go through to complete it," Ps 57.
- II. The point then is this: the gospel of peace is God's great instrument by which He works into the will of His people *a preparation* for suffering and trial, Lk 1.16-17.
 - A. By announcing the good news of *peace* between God and man sealed by the blood of Christ, Acts 10.34-36; Rom 5.1-2; Eph 2.13-20, God prepares His people for war.
 - B. Assured of our peace with God through Christ, we're equipped with courage, boldness, endurance, and perseverance; our will is prepared with stability and mobility for the warfare into which we've been called, Rom 5.1-5; 2Tim 3.10-14; Acts 14.19-23.
 1. When the soul is assured that God is merciful and all enmity is killed at the cross, and that everything that befalls us is the fruit of His love, it's harnessed and shod to go on in the ways of tribulation, Acts 20.22-25; 21.7-14.
 2. The peace of God poured into our hearts, which assures us of peace with God, is the first and foundational blessing of the gospel, Eph 1.1-2; 2.13-18; 6.23-24; 2Th 1.1-2; 3.16.
 3. And it's this gospel peace that readies and prepares the Christian to face any trouble that might come, whether by way of affliction, trial, or outright persecution, 2Cor 12.10; Phil 1.29.
- III. It serves to reason, then that the devil will seek to disarm us and unfit us for battle by disturbing our peace. How does he do this?
 - A. He labors to keep us from pursuing and prizing this peace by deceiving us into deducing our peace with God from our comforts and ease.
 1. Therefore we must remember that peace with God isn't founded on any outward thing but on the forgiveness of our sins, Rom 5.1.
 - B. He tries to convince us that we have no part in this peace because of our sins, Isa 48.22.
 1. It's true that the wicked who continue in sin have no peace, but a sinner who's turned to Christ from his sin has peace with God, Col 1.13-14, 19-23.
 2. Moreover, we must remember that if we ever had this peace, we have it still, because the covenant of peace made with us through Christ is an everlasting covenant, Isa 54.10.
 - C. He capitalizes on the troubles which come by the gospel, to say that if you were at peace with God, then no troubles would befall you.

1. On the contrary, the promise of peace by the gospel is joined everywhere in Scripture not only with the promise of suffering, but also with the promise of blessing on the sufferers, Mt 5.10-12; 1Pet 4.12-14.
- D. He tells you that all your troubles prove that God is angry with you.
1. The Scriptures testify instead that anger and love stand together in God just as they do in our earthly parents and that any sign of anger is not the anger of Him as our Judge, but rather the displeasure of Him as our Father and His commitment as our Father to sanctify and improve us, Heb 12.5-13; Ps 89.28-36.
- IV. Directions for wearing this spiritual shoe.
- A. Examine the sincerity of your obedience.
1. The same motives of genuine faith and love which take a Christian into Christ's service will guide him through suffering whenever God calls for that to happen, cp. Ps 78.9, 8.
 2. The power of true faith in Christ will manifest itself as perseverance in the day of adversity, Heb 11.32-39.
- B. Pray for a willingness to suffer for Christ's sake, Phil 1.29.
1. The flesh loves to be pampered, not crucified, so we need to pray for a willingness to endure suffering for Christ's sake, ensured that if He leads us into the storm, He stands ready to carry us through it, Mk 4.35. He won't abandon us, Heb 13.5-6.
- C. Meditate on the suffering of the saints before you, Heb 10.32-12.11; 2Cor 11.22-12.10.
- D. Accept God's will daily.
1. All resistance to suffering stems from the root of distrust in God's will for you. An unbelieving heart stands on a promise of God like a man walks on ice—full of uncertainty, grasping after anything more secure than it feels the ice to be, constantly expecting the ice to crack and vindicate our distrust.
 2. But if you entrust your whole heart and all your ways into God's hands every day, you'll come to know His power, faithfulness, goodness, and the reliability of all His promises in times of peace, which will fortify you for days of war.
 3. And if you do experience a disappointment, you'll see God fill that emptiness with something better than what was lost because He either gives you what you ask or better, but never worse, Jer 32.40-41; Ps 84.11; 42.11.
- E. Make self-denial a part of your life, Mk 8.34-35.
1. If we're unwilling to deny ourselves in the little things, we'll never be able to give up the great things God may come to take, things like our comforts, our reputation, our family, our possessions, our freedom, and our life.
- F. Remember that the most important provision Christ made for us was not to leave us a quiet world to live in, but to arm us against a volatile and troublesome world. And He did this by reconciling us to the Father and pouring His own peace into our hearts, Rom 5.1-5. With this, not only can we endure any suffering, but we can rejoice in it, trust God in it, and even die under it, if it's His will, Rom 8.35-39; Acts 20.22-25; 21.7-14.