

Watch Your Step!

Ephesians 6:15; 2:13-18

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- Different shoes for different occasions and activities
- The Protective nature of shoes
- The two pieces of permanent spiritual armor
 - “Belt of truth” protects us from the lies and deception of our adversary
 - “Breastplate of righteousness” protects our emotions and affections
- We need “spiritual combat boots”.
 - Ephesians 2:14-15-- *“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”*

Watch Your Step!

A. What are our “Spiritual Combat boots”?

1. Roman soldier’s boots
2. Our spiritual combat boots are made of one material—“preparation” or “readiness”. Two interpretations:
 - a. Readiness to share the gospel with others.
 - Ephesians 2:17 -- *“He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.”*
 - Isaiah 52:2-- *“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”*
 - b. Preparation or base of operation—solid ground on which to stand. The “gospel of peace”

B. What is the “GOSPEL OF PEACE”? Ephesians 2:13-18

- Ephesians 2:13-18-- *“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 the 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 far off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”*
1. **Centers around the Person of Jesus Christ! He is OUR PEACE!**
 2. **Has both “horizontal” and “vertical” dimensions**
 - a. **Horizontally, we who are diverse can be “one in Christ.”**—Ephesians 2:11-15
 - Ephesians 2:14-15-- *“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 the ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace.”*
 - 1) **Jesus Christ has made two into one! Who are the “two”?**
 - Ephesians 2:11-13-- *“Therefore, 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 covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”*

- a) The Jews are those who were “near” for they had all the spiritual advantages.
 - Romans 9:4-- *“adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.”*
 - b) The Gentiles were those who were “far off”
- 2) **Jesus Christ reconciles the human race by...**
- a) **Destroying the barrier that separated Jews and Gentiles.**
 - Galatians 5:1-- *“Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”*
 - b) **Creating a new entity known as the “church, the body of Christ”**
 - 1) The church does not “replace” national Israel.
 - 2) As Gentile believers, we’ve been grafted in the spiritual blessings promised to Abraham.
 - 3) National Israel has been temporarily set aside in the church age until the *“fullness of the Gentiles comes in”*
 - Romans 11:25-27-- *“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away the ungodliness of Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.’”*
 - 4) When God is finished calling out Gentiles to be saved, He will turn his attention again to national Israel at the second coming of Jesus Christ and will save national Israel.
 - Zechariah 12:7-- *“the LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah.”*
 - (a) He will destroy the nations that have come against Jerusalem . Zechariah 12:9
 - (b) He will change the hearts of the Jews towards their Messiah at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - Zechariah 12:10-- *“I will pour out on the house of David, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication: then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”*
 - (c) At that point, *“all Israel will be saved”*. Romans 11:26
 - (d) The redeemed Jews along with the returning church will enter into Christ’s kingdom here on earth.
- b. **Vertically, we who once were separated from God can now have “peace with God” .**
 - Ephesians 2:16-- *“and that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”*
 - 1) **What was our condition prior to reconciliation?**
 - Romans 5:8-11 -- *“But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God 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.”*
 - a) *“sinners”*—v. 8
 - b) *“under the wrath of God”* -- v. 9
 - c) *“enemies of God’*—v. 10

2) **How is reconciliation possible?**

- a) *"Christ died for our sins."*—v. 8
- b) We are *"justified by His blood"*—v. 9
- c) We were *"reconciled to God through the death of His Son"* and *"saved by His life"*. We now have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!

C. But, how does this "GOSPEL OF PEACE" prepare us for the spiritual battle?

1. **It produces CONFIDENCE to STAND.** (Vertical aspect of the "gospel of peace")

a. **Confidence comes through an UNDERSTANDING our POSITION IN CHRIST.**

1) *"Before" and "After"*

- Ephesians 2:12-- *"without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in this world."*
- Ephesians 2:19-- *"Now therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."*

2) Robert McGee's book, *"The Search for Significance"*, peer pressure and the fear of rejection

3) Jesus foretold that the world will misunderstand and reject us.

- John 15:18-20-- *"If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet, because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the words that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.'"*

4) How do we handle rejection? By understanding who we are in Christ! We are deeply loved and totally accepted by God as His child. And thus we can have confidence to stand because of our position in Christ.

b. **Confidence comes through EXPERIENCING the PRESENCE OF CHRIST**

1) With the presence of Christ in our lives, we have a constant companion.

2) Paul, when facing the trial of his life, experience Christ's presence which in turn gave him confidence in facing future trials and hardships.

- 2 Timothy 4:14-17-- *"Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words. At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."*
- 2 Timothy 4:18-- *"And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for his heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!"*

2. **It promotes COOPERATION to STAND together!** (Horizontal aspect of the "gospel of peace")

a. *"United we stand; Divided we fall!"*

b. One tactic of our adversary is to *"divide and conquer"*

c. **Jesus' High Priestly Prayer** in John 17:9-15

- John 17:9-15-- *"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I*

kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one."

- 1) While on earth, Jesus protected His own from Satanic attacks, only losing one—Judas Iscariot
 - Luke 22:3-- *"Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot"*
 - 2) Jesus prays for protection from division in Christ's body, the church.
 - John 17:11-- *"keep them through Your name those You have given to Me, that they may be one as We are."*
 - 3) The validity of the "gospel of peace" is proven by the peace and cooperation among us.
 - John 17:23-- *"made perfect in one, and that the world might know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."*
- d. **Another tactic of our adversary is ISOLATION**, that we can go it alone and don't need others.—
- Hebrews 10:25-- *"not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much more as you see the Day approaching."*

D. How do we put on our "spiritual combat boots"? Three "R's"

1. **RELATIONSHIP** with Jesus Christ
2. **REFLECTION** on who we are in Christ.
3. **RECONCILIATION** with one another .