

Feet Sandaled with the Gospel of Peace

What's the difference between inviting someone to church and inviting them to Christ?

Although sandaled feet don't sound like weapons of war, Paul put this piece of the armor right in the middle of the other pieces.

A Review:

Belt of Truth

- Know Jesus.
- Know His Word.
- Live the Word.

Breastplate of Righteousness

- Live like Jesus.
- Make right choices.
- Resist temptation.

I. STANDING READY FOR THE BATTLE

The peace that God has given us already is available today. In this peace we stand ready for spiritual battles that we might face.

Sandaled with Readiness?

Several versions of the Bible offer slightly different expressions, Ephesians 6:15

“having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (NASB)

“with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace” (NIV)

“our feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace” (NCSB)

“having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace” (RSV)

The differences revolve around the word translated variously as “*preparation*,” “*readiness*,” or “*equipment*.” The term speaks of preparedness, being ready for the battle. The question is, are we ready for the battle?

How ready are you for daily spiritual battles?

(Rate your personal readiness.)

Most believers aren't ready for spiritual battles.

Putting on the armor
is about learning to walk as Christ requires us to walk.

Many churches don't teach believers how to do that. The Enemy doesn't back off... and too often he wins the battle

God may use you to help another believer because you'll be prepared.

How do we get ready for the battle? Getting ready for the battle involves both defensive and offensive actions.

“Standing” on the Defensive

The footwear imagery of this piece of the armor reflects the armament of a Roman soldier, who often wore boots equipped with long nails for solid footing.

**The image shows that
we should anchor down against the Enemy's attacks.**

*“Stand” in Ephesians 6:13 is a military term meaning “take your position and hold it.”
We defend our ground simply by standing firmly.*

Some Scriptures underline the believer's responses that seem to be more defensive than offensive.

Stand firm (1 Cor. 16:13).

Resist the Devil (Jas. 4:7).

Resist him, firm in the faith, (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

***As believers we are to be watchful and alert,
always aware of the spiritual forces around us.***

We submit to God, trusting Him to give us the power to resist the Devil...

ILLUSTRATION: White-water rafting. Just before we hit a rapid, the guide hollers, “Lock in? Lock in?” Which means stabilize your feet to prevent being tossed from the raft.

How do we stand ready to defend against the Enemy?

(Focus on five of many ways to defend yourself)

- 1. Resist temptation when the Enemy seeks to lead you into sin.**
- 2. Stay faithful even when the battle rages.** Peace that God gives us does not necessarily mean an absence of conflict. God gives us calm that the world can't understand. **We resist the Devil when we stand in that peace (Phil. 4:6-7).**
- 3. Refuse to compromise biblical truth.** We stand-against when we learn, affirm, and teach biblical truth.
- 4. Keep your eyes on God in spite of distractions.** We prepare ahead of time by deciding we won't allow our circumstances to overshadow our focus on Him.
- 5. March forward in faith... “No matter what!”**

When God calls us to take a step of faith, the prepared spiritual warrior moves without hesitation. He is equipped and always ready to be deployed.

We are ready for the battle when we are prepared to fight temptation, to remain steadfast, to stand for truth, to keep our eyes on God, and to march at God's command.

How locked-in for battle are YOU?

For each of the five defensive positions, indicate your level of readiness:

- ___ ready to ***resist temptation***
- ___ ready to ***stay faithful***
- ___ ready to ***refuse to compromise*** biblical truth
- ___ ready to ***keep my eyes on God***
- ___ ready to ***march forward*** in faith

Moving Out on the Offensive

Ephesians 6:15 sounds remarkably similar to Isaiah 52:7. A messenger proclaims peace, good news, and salvation – and Isaiah says the messenger's feet are beautiful.

**Having our feet sandaled isn't only defensive but also offensive:
"Wearing the cleats of peace means sharing the gospel." - JDP**

We should always be ready to share the good news of Christ.

(See 2 Tim. 4:2 & 1 Pet. 3:15)

This offensive aspect of standing ready is so important...

Mark each statement as true (T), false (F), or uncertain (U) to reflect your personal readiness.

- ___ I look for opportunities to tell others the good news of Jesus.
- ___ It's been a long time since I told someone about Christ.
- ___ I will pray for opportunities to speak about Jesus this week.

The focus here is on God... who rescued us.
Keeping that focus will help us when we face spiritual battles.

*“By grace you are saved through faith,
and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift —
not from works, so that no one can boast.” - Ephesians 2:8-9.*

II. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

The costs of any war are high.

The peace God gives us as His children... cost Him His Son!

The better we understand this gospel of peace, the more willing & able we will be to stand against the Enemy’s wiles.

Apart from Christ, we are at war with God

The Bible teaches we are at odds with God apart from redemption in Christ.
Without salvation, we remain in the “*domain of darkness*” (Col. 1:13)

Ephesians 2:1-3 describes our lives prior to meeting Jesus.

“You were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you previously walked according to this worldly age, according to the ruler of the atmospheric domain, the spirit now working in the disobedient. We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and by nature we were children under wrath, as the others were also.”

Additional passages that describe our desperate situation:

- “All have turned away; all alike have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one” (Ps. 14:3).
- “The wicked go astray from the womb; liars err from birth: (Ps. 58:3).
- “All our righteous acts are like a polluted garment” (Isa. 64:6).
- “Those whose lives are in the flesh are unable to please God” (Rom. 8:8).
- “To those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; in fact, both their mind and conscience are defiled” (Titus 1:15).

All of us are without hope apart from Christ.

If we are at war with God, we have already lost the war and have no hope of winning a single battle.

There Is No Gospel of Peace Apart from Jesus

Jesus is he “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6) whose sacrificial death bridges the gap between us and God. Jesus is our mediator (1 Tim. 2:5). He became sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21), bore God’s wrath against us (Rom. 3:23-26), and now advocates for us with the Father (1 John 2:1). In Christ, our sinfulness has now been addressed.

No peace exists like the peace God gives us when our relationship with Him is restored. Jesus is that peace, and He makes that peace possible.

Peace with God is not only Positional but also Practical

Because we are positionally “*in Christ*,” we demonstrate that position practically by living righteously. Christ in us should be evidenced in our Christian words and actions.

When we sin, guilt and conviction quickly replace the temporary pleasure of sin, and we are rightly robbed of our inner peace. Only genuine confession and repentance followed by God's forgiveness will restore that peace (see 1 John 1:9).

Place an "x" on the following scale at the place that best indicates your "practical" peace with God.

1	2	3	4	5
There's much sin in my life, and I have little peace with God.		I'm learning to walk in righteousness and thus experiencing more peace than before.		By God's grace, I'm living righteously and experiencing God's peace consistently.

Our Peace with God Is Unexplainable

Paul wrote from prison, "*peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*" (Phil. 4:7).

Human minds can't comprehend the peace that God gives us, because His peace isn't circumstantial.

The battles can rage around us, and still we can have an unexplainable peace on the inside.

The world doesn't understand this peace only comes from God.

The Enemy cannot disrupt the peace that God gives.

Amen!

III. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

Note some of the one-another passages in the Bible:

- *“Show family affection to one another”* (Rom 12:10).
- *“Be in agreement with one another”* (Rom. 12:16).
- *“Accept one another, just as the Messiah also accepted you”* (Rom 15:7).
- *“Serve one another through love”* (Gal. 5:13).
- *“Carry one another’s burdens”* (Gal. 6:21).
- *“Be kind and compassionate to one another”* (Eph. 4:32).
- *“Encourage one another and build each other up”* (1 Thes. 5:11)
- *“Let us be concerned about one another to promote love & good works”* (Heb. 10:24)
- *“Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another”* (Jas. 5:16).
- *“Love one another earnestly from a pure heart”* (1 Pet. 1:22).

**A fundamental truth about spiritual warfare:
the Enemy aims his arrows at relationships.**

In the first 4 chapters of Genesis, Satan successfully fosters division and strife in the first family.

The Enemy doesn’t want us to have peace with one another.

***Only when we are first at peace with God
can we be at peace with others.***

(See: Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4; Ephesians 4:1; Ephesians 5:22; and 1 Peter 3:7)

Relationships clearly matter.

Healthy relationships reflect the nature of God.

Solid Christian marriages teach love that is sacrificial, giving, and unashamed. Good Christian parenting shows unconditional love that includes nurturing discipline. Godly friendships show affirming, supportive, and even confrontational love.

***Healthy relationships are a witness.
Others see how Christ loves.***

Relationships that point others to Jesus matter eternally.

Unity Matters

I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in Me through their message. May they all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You. May they also be one in Us, so the world may believe You sent Me. I have given them the glory You have given Me. May they be one as We are one. I am in them and You are in Me. May they be made completely one, so the world may know You have sent Me and loved them as You have loved Me - John 17:20-23

Jesus prayed that the relationships of believers would be just as united as His own relationship with the Father.

Four times in these verses He called for such unity because...
that unity would be a witness to the world.

The true Church marches forward under a common vision to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

God unites His church.

When a broken, messed-up world sees divine oneness...
they see a miracle!

NOTE: Only God can make such things happen. (The unity I speak of here is a unity built solidly upon biblical truth. Unity that comes at the compromise of biblical truth is not godly unity at all.) Conversely, when the world sees believers who quarrel and bicker, they have little interest in being a part of God's church.

Evaluate your church's unity.

Evaluate if/how your contribution is to unity or disunity.

My church is...

1	2	3	4	5
Terribly divided	somewhat divided	somewhat united	divinely united	

My contribution...

1	2	3	4	5
I am a source of disunity	I sometimes cause disunity.	I somewhat strive for unity.	I promote and sacrificially seek unity.	

Forgiveness Matters

STEPS TO FORGIVING OTHERS

1. Admit my anger and ask for God's forgiveness.
2. Ask God to help me to let go of my pain.
3. Meditate on God's grace toward me.
4. Pray for the other person.
5. Focus on doing good toward others.

(The change of focus away from my anger will be liberating.)

HOLINESS that is found in unity & forgiveness:

Because unity matters, so does forgiving one another.

In you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift - Matt. 5:23-24

*If you forgive people their wrongdoing, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. But if you don't forgive people, your Father will not forgive your wrongdoing
- Matt. 6:145-15*

Jesus teaches us that our peace with God relates directly to our peace with others.

He doesn't allow us room to be bitter and unforgiving.

He calls us to take the initiative toward reconciliation.

We model God's forgiving love when we forgive others (see Matt. 18:21-35).

In an unforgiving world, God's love bears a unique witness.

God demands obedience, not-forgiving is disobedience.

He commands us to forgive others even when we don't feel like it or when the guilty party doesn't ask for forgiveness.

Forgiving others frees us from the bondage of our pain.

While we may not forget the pain, it no longer controls us.

Forgiving others closes a door through which the Enemy seeks to enter our lives.

He continually searches for entrances, and an unforgiving heart leaves a wide-open door.

Do you need to forgive someone?

IV. GETTING READY TO TELL THE STORY

Christ died for us... while we were still sinners (Rom 5:6-8).

Through God's grace, we can have peace with Him.

Christ died for us. What awesome news!

Remember:

...believers who are prepared for the battle are those who stand steadfast & ready to **PROCLAIM *the* GOSPEL which is a declaration of (spiritual) war!**

Make Sure You're Wearing the Full Armor of God

Wearing the full armor of God is essential to faithful Christian living...
not just to witnessing...

Understand that Unbelievers Are Blinded by the Enemy

***** A critical step toward evangelizing the
unsaved is to make certain our theology about lost
persons is correct. *****

*“If in fact, our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. Regarding them:
the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers so they cannot see the light
of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” - 2 Cor. 4:3-4*

The Apostle Paul was committed to telling others about the good news of Christ. In fact,
he knew that God had called him to do just that. God would use him to *“open their eyes
that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they
may receive forgiveness of sin” - Acts 26:18*

**Paul knew that no human power could change
the minds the Enemy had blinded.**

We find this truth hard to swallow if we have friends and loved
ones who are nonbelievers...

However,
the truth of the Scriptures always trumps
our emotions.

One step in getting ready to share the gospel is simply
accepting & believing the truth
that persons who don't know Jesus as Lord are lost.

List the names of those you believe are blinded by the Enemy...
Now commit to asking God to open their hearts to His truth.

Get others to Pray for You

When Paul concluded the list of armor in Ephesians ch.6,
he then asked the believers to pray for him.

Read Ephesians 6:19-20. Write Paul's prayer in your own words:

"Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. For this I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I might be bold enough in Him to speak as I should." - Ephesians 6:19-20

Paul asked the believers to pray that he would
"make known with boldness" the good news of Jesus.

Paul understood that evangelism is spiritual warfare...

We'd better BE-ready for the Enemy to fight against us.

*The Evil One doesn't give up his captives easily,
he aims his arrows at believers,
hoping the wounded won't be good witnesses.*

Think about how Satan disarms us thru our fear of rejection.

We convince ourselves friends are “good enough” or, we think “I’m not good enough to be a witness for God...”

Sometimes our sin is so obvious that we lack credibility in our witness.

The Enemy wins when we choose not to engage in evangelism.

Paul understood the Enemy’s attacks, (he was imprisoned for preaching the gospel - Eph. 6:20).

Paul didn’t give up! (Neither should we!)

Instead, he asked believers to pray for him so that he wouldn’t miss a single opportunity to tell about Jesus.

Paul needed the prayer support of other believers (*“to speak boldly”*) as the Enemy tried to disarm him.

If Paul needed the prayer support of armed prayer warriors, we do too.

Ask God to give you the names of believers who will pray that you will be a bold witness.

Now, ask them to support you in prayer.

“GOD’S HEART”

Praying for our evangelism...

G = that believers will appreciate *God’s grace*

O = that believers will be *obedient*

D = that believers will have a *desire* to tell others

S = that believers will *speak* the gospel fearlessly

H = for nonbelievers to have a receptive *heart*

E = that their spiritual *eyes* will be opened

A = that they will have God’s *attitude* toward sin

R = that they will be *released* to believe

T = that their lives will be *transformed*

Ask God to Restore Your Fire for Evangelism

What do you think causes us to lose our fire?

One possibility: we get too busy...

We get disconnected from a hurting and dying world.

We lose our burden for lost & dying nonbelievers.

*The Enemy delights when good stuff distracts us
from doing evangelism.*

***Only when we're ready, seeking & sharing
the good news are our feet sandaled
with the gospel of peace.***

Ask God to reignite your fire for evangelism!

If you are not at peace with someone...

...seek reconciliation today.

V. TELLING THE STORY

Experts suggest that 95 to 97 percent of professing American Christians do not share their faith...

If a maximum of 5 percent of believers tell others about Jesus, how will we reach the millions of nonbelievers in this country?

Moreover, who will reach the 1.6 billion people around the world who have no access to the gospel?

God is ultimately responsible for the Church's growth (Matt. 16:18). But He has called all of us to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Wearing the armor of God means that we are ready to tackle this challenge.

Be Prepared to Tell Your Story

Evangelism is simply telling others what God has done in your life & then helping them know the good news of salvation.

How did the Apostle Paul tell his story? **Read Acts 26:1-23**

Paul's life before he met Christ (vv. 1-11).

Paul needed to follow Christ (vv. 12-18).

Paul's life change (vv. 19-23).

Tell your story by following Paul's pattern:

BC @ AD

(before Christ) (@ the Cross) (after death to self)

Think about your own conversion... and now transition into the FULL Gospel...

m M m

(miracle)

(Messiah)

(mission)

Be Alert to Opportunities to Tell Others the Gospel:

NOTE: we struggle to move conversations toward the gospel...

Practical Help:

Intentionally develop relationships with nonbelievers.

What options do you have to make sure you have relationships with unbelievers?

Know people—and always be prepared to minister to hurting people:

- *Be careful not to manipulate people when they are in pain, still be ready to offer Christian help and love when needed.*
- Ministering might pave the way to telling your story.

Do a prayer survey of those you encounter daily.

Ask people, all day everyday, if you can pray for them!

Take the initiative to ask others about themselves.

Be ready to respond appropriately when someone asks about your day:
Be prepared to answer “I’m having a great day because Jesus loves & saved me.”

**Learn to “bridge conversations”
to talk about your personal faith in Christ.**

- Bridging is the process of moving a conversation in a direction that may give you an opportunity to speak about Christ.
- Learn to take these steps naturally so your approach to evangelism isn’t contrived or fake.

Jesus never missed an opportunity to speak the gospel...

Jesus was a master at bridging conversations.

He spoke of being “*born again*” to a Jew who assumed his physical birth made him God’s child (John 3).

He talked about “*living water*” to a woman at a well (John 4;1-29).

He used the story of a *sower* to talk about the human heart (Matt. 13).

**Think about ways to bridge a conversation to talk about Christ
so that you don’t miss an opportunity.**

Some potential evangelical conversation starters...

1. ***ATHEIST*** A. “God is very real to me. Help me understand why you think He doesn’t exist.”

2. ***GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL*** B. “I pray for you every day, because the Bible tells us to pray for our leaders.”

3. ***SPORTS FANATIC*** C. “Did you know that a writer in the Bible – Paul, talked a lot about sporting events?”

4. ***ENGINEER*** D. “Have you ever thought about how God designed and put the world together?”

5. ***TEACHER*** E. “The greatest teacher I’ve ever known is Jesus.”

Try to “practice” this and other BRIDGE personal-evangelism training on a regular basis until it becomes a faithful & fluid part of your BE-ing in-Christ :-)

Gospel Telling Tools



2 Timothy 3:16-17.....Matthew 28:18-20

