



A Good Foothold

Adapted from “Spiritual Warfare” series by Dennis Marquardt

No doubt you have heard the expression, “I have good news and bad news.” Here are some examples.

The good news is the church offerings increased 25% this last quarter. The bad news is both the money and the treasurer are missing.

The good news is Mr. Troublemaker is finally leaving the church. The bad news is he is taking half the congregation with him.

The good news is the elders voted to give the pastor a \$3,000 a year raise. The bad news is they also voted to get a new pastor.

The gospel is good news. The bad news is that sin destroys. But the **very good news** is that the gospel

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of Jesus destroys the hold sin has over us.

The follower of Jesus Christ is instructed by Paul to be sure to have on the sandals of the gospel of peace. Considering that the [*hobnail sandals*](#) worn by Roman soldiers had large nails or pegs on the underside of the sandal is indicative of what Paul is trying to say.

These hobnail sandals enabled the soldier to have sure footing in shifting sand and on slippery slopes, it gave sure footing as well as insulating the soldier from the dirt beneath his feet. The gospel is good news to the Christian because it provides sure footing in a world of shifting sands and slippery places, and it also insulates our lives from this world so we can walk with God. It is also good news in the sense that our mission is to announce “peace with God” through Jesus Christ, which of course is the essence of the gospel.

We live in a world of spiritual warfare, and having our feet fitted with the gospel of peace will enable us to stand against the spiritual enemies of this world.

Read this powerful illustration:

An unbelieving lecturer gave people an opportunity to reply to him after his oration, and he was of course expecting that one or two rashly zealous young men would rise to advance the common arguments for Christianity, which he was quite prepared, by hook or by crook, to battle with or laugh down.

Instead, an old lady carrying a basket, wearing an ancient bonnet, and altogether dressed in an antique fashion that marked both her age and her poverty, came up on the platform.

She began by saying, "I paid three pence to hear of something better than Jesus Christ, and I have not heard it. Now, let me tell you what religion has done for me. I have been a widow thirty years, and I was left with ten children. I trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ in the depth of poverty, and he appeared for me and comforted me, and helped me to bring up my children. None of you can tell what the troubles of a poor lone woman

are, but the Lord has made His grace all-sufficient. You say that's all nonsense. Those who are young and foolish may believe you, but I know there is a reality in religion. Tell me something better than what God has done for me, or you have cheated me out of my three pence."

Such a mode of controversy was new to the lecturer, and therefore he gave up the contest, and merely said, "Really, the dear old woman was so happy in her delusion he should not like to undeceive her."

"No," she said, "That won't do. Truth is truth, and your laughing can't alter it. Jesus Christ has been all this to me, and I could not sit down in the hall and hear you talk against Him without speaking up for Him. I've tried and proved Him, and that's more than you have." The testing and proving of God, getting His love really shed abroad in the heart, is the great internal evidence of the gospel.¹

¹ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Quotable Spurgeon*, (Wheaton: Harold Shaw Publishers, Inc, 1990).

“COURAGE” Level Questions

C1: In the introduction, you read about a good foothold. When have the shoes you have worn helped you accomplish the goal at hand?

C2: How can the hobnail of the early solders relate to the spikes on certain athletic shoes today in keeping a good footing for the sport being played?

C3: When a golfer steps up to the tee, he first makes sure his feet are securely planted, then he swings at the ball. How can you relate needing secure footing in your walk with Christ?

Exercise 1: Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 6:15 (ESV) And, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

Isaiah 52:7–12 (ESV) How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Depart, depart, go out from here; touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of her; purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the LORD. For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go in flight, for the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

C4: Proper footing kept soldiers safe from shifting sands, slippery places and insulating them from the dirt. How can you, by proper footing in Christ, keep safe from the shifting, slippery, and dirt of the world in which we live?

C5: If you ever wore a pair of shoes that caused a callus or blister, why do you think the callus or blister appeared?

C6: Relate the wearing of ill-fitted shoes to how you share the gospel. Does the way you present the gospel turn people away?

Exercise 2: Over the next 30 days, each time you put on footwear, think about “putting on the *readiness* of the preparation given by the gospel of peace.” Then, ask the Holy Spirit to bring someone in your path with whom you can share the Good News that day.

“STRENGTH” Level Questions

S1: Have you ever walked on uneven ground? How much strength did it take to walk on uneven ground?

S2: How important are the shoes we wear under certain conditions?

Exercise 1: Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 6:15 (ESV)

Isaiah 52:7–12 (ESV)

S3: Why is it important to have your feet covered with the “preparation of the gospel of peace” in sharing Christ?

S4: When a soldier has good footing, he can advance the cause for which he is fighting. How does having good footing in the Word of God help you advance His Kingdom here on earth?

Exercise 2: On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate yourself on how well your feet are covered with the “preparation of the gospel of peace.” Write out a plan to improve.

Exercise 3: Read and answer the following.

Deuteronomy 8:4 (ESV)

Deuteronomy 29:5 (ESV)

S5: What did you learn from these verses in regards to having your feet covered with the “preparation of the gospel of peace?”

Exercise 4: Over the next 30 days, as we put shoes upon our feet, rate yourself in how well you are preparing yourself for sharing the gospel of peace. Begin an action plan of covering your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace by listing specific ways you can share Jesus with those you interact with daily.

“ENDURANCE” Level Questions

E1: In the introduction, you read about good news verses bad news. Describe how you can relate the good news of Christ’s work on the cross verses the bad news of the reality of sin in the world to another man?

Exercise 1: Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 6:15 (ESV)

Isaiah 52:7–12 (ESV)

E2: For a soldier, footwear is extremely important for his performance in battle. How is covering your feet with the “preparation of the gospel of peace” important in the spiritual battles you face daily?

E3: We face spiritual battles that require us to minister to others in peace. Hm? What are some ways we can share the gospel of Jesus with others in peaceful ways?

E4: A soldier of Jesus Christ needs to be properly equipped to share the gospel. Describe specific ways you are preparing yourself and other men for the spiritual battles that lays ahead?

Exercise 2: Over the next 60 days, get together with three other men and have a conversation about the footwear of today and how it relates to the footwear of the soldiers from this lesson. Next, talk about how you can disciple other men to find the courage, strength and endurance to share Jesus Christ by having the proper spiritual footing?