

Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel

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[0 : 00] I greet you in the name of Jesus this morning, the one who has been and is so good to us. Turn to Ephesians chapter 6. A while back I preached a message out of Ephesians 6. About the standing against our enemy and the girdle of truth. And then later I preached one on the breastplate of righteousness.

And today I want to look at verse 15. One that maybe I have passed over many times before. But the Lord started opening this up to me in a further way the last weeks. And so I want to look at this this morning.

[1 : 16] We wrestle not against flesh and blood. And in this war we need to stand and we need to know where we stand.

And when we looked at truth. One thing that I remember and that stands out to me still is that. If we do not have this girdle of truth. If we are not standing in truth. Then none of the rest will come into place.

None of the rest. We cannot have any of the rest of the armor of our God. The armor that we need to be effective soldiers in the kingdom of God.

Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth. And having on the breastplate of righteousness. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

[2 : 29] Now what do we think of when we read this? We think of people taking the gospel out into foreign lands and so on.

And that is part of it. But we're not all called to go to a foreign land. We're not all called to sell out here and go to Africa.

Or go to Ghana. Or go to South America. Or wherever it might be. We're not all called to that. But we are all called to be a witness.

And so this is part of the focus here this morning. Let's turn to Acts 1.8. Acts 1.8.

I believe that many times we focus on going. You know Jesus he gave the great commission. He said all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

[3 : 31] Go ye therefore. And many times our emphasis is on go ye. And it's on power. And all of those things.

And it's right and good. But let's look at this here in Acts 1.8. But ye shall receive power. After that the Holy Ghost has come upon you.

And ye shall be witnesses unto me. Both in Jerusalem. And in all Judea. And in Samaria. And unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Ye shall be witnesses. You know let me ask you. Right to start with this morning. Do you have power to be a witness?

Is your life a witness to those that observe you? You know none of us lives to himself. None of us dies to himself.

[4 : 28] We don't live in an island by ourself. That does not influence others.

We all have influence. We all have friends. We all have relatives. We all have acquaintances. We all have business relationships.

And so on. Are you a witness every day? Are you a witness? Or how is your witness?

You have. Let's put it this way. We're all a witness. Is it good or is it bad? Is the influence from your life.

Is it good or is it bad? Well here in Acts 1.8. He says. You will be witnesses. Both in Jerusalem. Judea. Samaria. So our witness.

[5 : 30] First it starts at home. It starts in our local area. And then as wherever we go. We you know we we go further.

We are we still a witness? You know. God might call you. To go elsewhere. But if you're not a witness.

In Jerusalem. If you're not a witness around home. In your daily life at home. He will not be able to call you. To go to the uttermost parts.

Of the earth. Are we a witness? You know our life. Our life. Either. Confirms.

Or denies. Our Lord. Does your life. Confirm.

[6 : 28] That Jesus is Lord. Or does it. Deny. That Jesus is Lord. Now let's. Let's turn. Let's turn to Titus.

Titus. Titus. Chapter 1. And I read verse 15. And 16. Unto the pure.

All things are pure. But unto them that are defiled. And unbelieving. Is nothing pure. But even their mind. And conscience.

Is defiled. They profess. That they know God. But in works. They deny him.

Being abominable. And disobedient. And unto every good work. Reprobate. So here he's talking about a people.

[7 : 31] He says. Unto the pure. All things are pure. And that is hopefully. Where we are at today. That we have a pure heart.

And a heart is turned toward God. And a heart is open. To hear the gospel. To receive the word of God. And we serve him out of a pure heart.

We're not hiding anything. But. But. But. Our life. Is a pure life. And we. And we. Separate ourselves. From the sensual.

And the earthly. And the devilish. And the things that drag down. So he says. Unto the pure. All things are pure. But to those.

That are defiled. And unbelieving. You know. We. We live in this dark world of sin. This whole world is under darkness. And under.

[8 : 27] The power of the enemy. And. And we need to be careful. That we are not defiled by it. We need to be careful. That. We do not. Allow ourselves.

To be. Defiled by the things of this world. But he says. The defiled. And the unbelieving. To those. Nothing is pure.

But even their mind. And their conscience. Is defiled. And we see people. Who. Whose conscience is seared.

And they. They do. They do things. That bring. Disgrace. And dishonor. To our Lord. Even though they profess. To be Christians. Their conscience is seared.

It says here. He's talking about them here. Now in verse 16. They profess. That they know God.

[9 : 25] But by their works. They deny him. That is why I say. That by our life. We either confirm. The Lord Jesus.

As Lord of our life. Or we deny him. You know. You can't. You can't. You can't.

Change the fruit. That comes out of your life. We talked about fruit. Not long ago. But in Matthew. Jesus said. He said. A good tree.

Cannot bring forth. Evil fruit. And a bad tree. Cannot. Bring. Good fruit. And so here. The apostle writes. And he says.

That these people. They profess. That they know God. But their works. Deny. Our God. Their works.

[10 : 20] Deny. That they belong. To God. Their works. Show something. Different. These people. It says. They are abominable. They are disobedient.

And. And then look at this. Last little phrase. Here. Unto every. Good work. They are reprobate. They are useless. They are useless. In the kingdom of God.

They are useless. When it comes to good works. They are useless. When it comes to the testimony. Of Jesus Christ. He goes on here.

He says. But speak thou. The things which become. Sound. Doctrine. And. And as we go through this. We will just pick out a few verses.

We won't read. The whole. Portion here. The whole of chapter two. But we'll look at. Parts of it. As we go through this.

[11 : 17] But one word. That I've noticed. That comes up. Over and over here. In chapter two. Is sober. He says.

The aged men be sober. He has the same word. For. For. For others. For. In other verses. Sober. So soberness.

Is one thing. That our God. Is looking for. In us. You know. I believe that. You know. It's not that we walk about. With a sad face.

But. We live our life. Soberly. And righteously. In the fear of God. He says. Grave.

Temperate. Self-controlled. Sound. In faith. In charity. And in patience. Verse six.

[12:12] Young men. Likewise. Exhort. To be. Sober minded. There it is again. That word. Sober. To be. Sober minded. You know. In our day.

There's a casualness. And a light heartedness. That wants to. Engulf everyone. But our God. Directs us. To be sober. To be sober minded.

To. To show forth. A pattern. Of good works. Not being corrupt. In our doctrine. In our gravity.

Sincerity. You know. In doctrine. In doctrine. Showing uncorruptness. Gravity. Sincerity. A graveness. A seriousness. A seriousness.

I believe. Sound speech. That cannot be condemned. And this is very interesting here. Thinking of our witness. To those around about us.

[13:14] Thinking of. What people observe. In our lives. This verse 8. Sound speech. You know.

Not. Frivolous speech. Not. Light heartedness. But sound speech.

That cannot be condemned. And the reason for this. That he that is of the contrary part. May be ashamed.

Having no evil thing. To say of you. You know. If. You know. James says that. That. Whoever doesn't offend. By.

By. In word. He's a perfect man. And. In our words. They say so much about us. And it's the first place. I believe. Where we offend.

[14:08] Where we go wrong. Where we. Make mistakes. Sound speech. That cannot be condemned. That those that are.

That are. Observing. Those that are. Are looking for fault. In our lives. They have no evil thing. To say about us. That we might adorn.

The doctrine of God. Our savior. In all things. And now. The. These last. Verses. Here. I believe. Kind of. They kind of.

Bring a conclusion. Kind of. Pulling everything. Together. Here. So. Let's read. Let's start reading. In verse 10. We'll read from verse 10. To the end of the chapter. Fair.

[15:17] hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Go back again.

Verse 12. Well, verse 11 says, The grace of God that brings salvation. It has appeared to all men. And this grace of God, it teaches us. The grace of God teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts.

You know, in Jude it talks, and in Peter also talks about men have turned the grace of God into lasciviousness by saying, by allowing all kinds of ungodliness and so on, but that is not the grace of God.

[16:49] The grace of God will teach us to deny ungodliness and to deny worldly lusts, to live a life free of those things, to live a life that is not a friend of the world, that is not a friend of the world system and not a friend of the things of this world.

It says, again, this word sober, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world.

You know, I was thinking about this being sober and sound speech that cannot be condemned.

And, you know, the thought just came to me that, you know, a moment of carelessness, a moment of lightheartedness can destroy so much that God has, that the testimony that we have with those around about us, that God has worked in us, that we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present evil world.

Well, we are redeemed from all iniquity by the blood of Jesus. And it says here in verse 14, he gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity.

That word iniquity, to redeem us from the power of this world, to redeem us from our own way, to redeem us from those things that would destroy us, actually, to redeem us from the powers of darkness.

[18 : 50] And to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. You know, if we will live this life, if we will live our lives in this way, if we will be a true testimony of Jesus Christ to those around about us and to those that we meet, to those that we come in contact with, if we will live this life, we will be a peculiar people because the majority of humanity is on the broad way and we're on the narrow way.

If we're this peculiar people, then we are on the narrow way. Straight is the gate and narrows the way. And the majority of humanity is not serving God.

And the majority of professing Christianity is on the broad way. And so that makes the people that are truly serving God in this way peculiar in this world.

Are we a peculiar people, zealous of good works? Let's turn to James chapter 1.

Start in verse 21. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls.

[20 : 46] But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man, like unto a man, beholding his natural face in a glass.

For he beholdeth himself and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

So here, this short portion of scripture, he admonishes us to receive this word, the word of God, to receive this word because it is able to save our souls, to receive it with meekness, to receive it with meekness because it will change us if we allow it.

[22 : 25] But if we are proud, if we do not receive it in meekness, then we will be, like it says here, we must be doers of the word and not hearers only.

You know, many times we hear the word, but before it changes us, we forget it and we keep going about our life and we forget about what God spoke to us.

But he says, we are deceiving ourselves if we do that. We're deceiving ourselves. Why?

Because God has written this word to change us and to direct our lives. And so as we hear this word, we must receive it, the engrafted word.

The engrafted word, it wants to, it needs to be implanted in our heart. That's what engrafted means. Implanted and rooted in our heart.

[23 : 37] You know, if we do not allow it to become that, then it will not bear the fruit that God is looking for. It says, if we are hearers of the word and not doers, we're hearers only.

We're just like a man that looks in a glass in a mirror and he sees there's dirt on his face and his hair are very out of order.

But he goes away and he says, well, I don't see it anymore so everything's just fine. That's how the man is that doesn't allow the word of God to change him.

He just hears the word and refuses to respond to it. Verse 26, We talked about that.

Soberness and the words that we speak and speaking words that even those that are looking for fault cannot find fault in our words.

[25 : 02] pure religion to visit the fatherless and widows to meet their needs to meet their needs and to visit them in their affliction.

I believe it's not just to go and spend an evening with them but it is to also to meet their needs and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

There it is again. unspotted from the world. Is that our life? You know, that is that is how we will be a true witness.

And Acts 1.8 says ye shall receive power. We will receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon us to be what?

To be witnesses. Jesus. And that includes every day of our life. It includes today in church. It includes tomorrow at home and on the job and everywhere we go to be a witness.

[26 : 11] What are people observing in your life? What is it? How is it? Are you a true witness? Are you keeping yourself unspotted from the world?

Are we deceiving our own selves? You know, Peter says God is not willing that any should perish but that all would come to repentance.

You know, you might have an influence on someone in a different way than anyone else. And God might be depending on you to be a witness to point that person to the Lord Jesus.

How is your life? Is it a witness? Is it a witness? You know, we live our lives, we live our lives and we live hopefully a true witness and a shining light to those that see?

You know, in Isaiah, maybe we'll turn there, Isaiah 55, very familiar verses here.

[27 : 37] the familiar verse here is that the word of God that goeth forth, it will not return void but it will accomplish that which I please.

But I want to start reading here in Isaiah 55. Let's start in verse 6. We want to look at this a little bit deeper.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. You know, this verse would infer, it would say to us that if we reject the voice of our God, he might not always be near to us.

God said, my spirit will not always strive with men and we are warned not to quench the spirit and not to grieve the spirit of God.

And so I believe that when he speaks to us, it is important that we yield ourselves because he might not speak to us again in this way.

[29 : 08] But he goes on here, let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon.

If we are found in some fault, let us return to the Lord and as we return to him, he will have mercy on us, he will forgive us.

Today is the day of salvation. Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart but come unto him and forsake whatever wicked way that he has spoken to you about.

God speaking here in verse 8, for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

You know, we see things through the eyes of man but can we see, can we see things through the eyes of God? We'll talk about that later.

[30 : 26] But in our natural, we do not think the way God thinks. We do not see the way he sees. He says, my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways are not your ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

You know, can we acknowledge that our God, he is so much higher than us. His thoughts are far beyond what our thoughts are.

And it is only through the revelation of the Spirit of God that we can get a glimpse of the ways of God and the thoughts of God.

We can get a little glimpse of it through the revelation that the Spirit of God brings. You know, I was reading a book on pride here in the last couple months, or whenever it was, and it's always, when we look at the greatness of God, and we look at humanity and God created us and the frailty of our being and how much greater our God is than us.

And his thoughts and his ways are so much higher than our ways. Notice what it says here, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways.

[32 : 16] And my thoughts than your thoughts. Such an awesome God, but yet humanity lifts up in pride against him.

How could we? How could we? For that's the nature of man. verse 10, for as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven and returneth not thither, remember rain and remember snow.

It comes down from heaven and it doesn't return, but it waters the earth, and it maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

The word of God that comes from his mouth, it will not return void, but let me say also that we as the servants of God, and as the people of God, as the church of Jesus Christ, he has called us to be a witness, and he has called us to spread this gospel, he has called us to carry this gospel wherever he will take us.

[34 : 01] us. And we are not so responsible for the results and for what will come out of it, but we are responsible to speak forth and to be that witness that he has called us to be wherever he takes you, whether it's right here in Plains, Montana, and in this area where you live, or if it's in Africa or wherever he might take us, that we are faithful to live this life a witness for Jesus Christ, and that we are faithful also in speaking the word of God as he gives it to us.

and he has promised that this word will not return void. There's other scriptures also, but we won't take time to turn to them, I don't think, but his word will accomplish what he sends it forth to do.

Can he speak through you his word? His word. His blessing will come. His blessing will come.

Now, let's remember again the rain and the snow that comes down from heaven. He says here, this, but it comes down from heaven.

It watereth the earth. It maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.

[35 : 48] So shall my word be. You know, the word of God, it's as rain. It's raining. The word of God is as rain and you hear it today and you hear it.

But there's also the word of God that comes as snow. And what, you know, we see the snow up on the mountains. And this, you can, you can for a long time, you'll be able to find snow way back in the mountains, in the higher elevations.

water, you'll be going to find out there. And it melts there. And it runs down the stream. And it brings life wherever it goes. You know, the word of God is just like that.

It brings life where it goes. Some of it comes as rain and it brings fruit immediately. And other of the word of God, it will come as you need it.

Are you storing up the word of God in your life? Are you storing up the word of God in your heart? Thy word have I hidden in my heart that I might not sin against thee.

[37 : 02] You know, when we, when we store up this word, we hide it in our heart and we fill our heart with this word. You know, when you're out there and it, you need this word.

You need a word. The Holy Spirit can reach in there and bring it out. Yes. That it might bring forth fruit unto eternal life.

How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good news. In chapter, chapter 52.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publishes peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publishes salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth.

Are your feet beautiful? Are your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace today? How is it? Are you a true witness?

[38 : 22] Are you showing forth the holiness and righteousness of our God to those that you come in contact with? Are you speaking forth words of life to those that you meet?

Are your feet beautiful feet as it says here? Are you saying Isaiah 52 verse 7? We must be a faithful witness today and every day so that God can use us in a greater way tomorrow.

You know, you might think, well, what am I doing for God? How is he using me? I'm, you know, I have my job. I go about my work.

I, you know, I go to church. I, you know, the things that we do. But as we walk faithfully, faithfully, as we walk faithfully where God has us today, he will use us in a greater way in the future.

Yes. Yes. You know, in Zechariah, there's a verse that says, for who hath despised the day of small things?

[39 : 49] You know, you might look at your own life and you might think, well, you know, I'm not doing much for God. You know, let's not despise where God has us now, but let us apply ourselves and do the best that we can for him.

Let's apply ourselves. Let's grow in the word of God. Let's grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And as we grow, we'll become more useful. And someday, you never know what God has for you in the future.

Amen. Let's turn to Matthew chapter 9. I see here the heart of our Lord that he had for the people there when he was here on this earth.

And I believe that he still has the same heart for humanity in our day. Matthew chapter 9.

[41 : 26] I want to start reading in verse 35. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherds.

Then saith he unto his disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

It says here that our Lord Jesus, he looked out at the multitudes and his heart was moved with compassion.

His heart was moved with compassion because they fainted and they were as sheep having no shepherd.

[42 : 46] And I believe that today he looks on humanity and he looks out across and he sees humanity as sheep having no shepherd.

They're going here, here, there and yon, here and there and back and forth and no purpose in life. They don't know the purpose of life.

They don't know why they're here. They don't know why they're on this earth. They have no purpose for living. They're sheep without a shepherd.

He'll tell you. They don't know why they're on this earth. I looked out across the hillsides in Africa. Village after village after village.

People without purpose in life. people in the snare of the enemy bound by ancestor worship bound by the witch doctor bound in the snares of the enemy people multitudes sheep without a shepherd you know what do you think of you know just imagine out on the open range you have a flock of sheep and there's no shepherd it's vulnerable it's vulnerable to the wolves it's vulnerable to false doctrine it's vulnerable no direction in life wandering aimlessly no protection from the enemy vulnerable to deception you know Proverbs tells us there's a way which seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof is the ways of death in Jeremiah it says it is not in a man that walketh to direct his steps you know we've all gone our own way but humanity as a whole is still walking their own way they're lost without a shepherd

[45 : 57] Jesus had compassion on the multitudes and he said the harvest truly is great and the labors are few it's the same way today the harvest is great and the labors are few he told the disciples he gave them this eternal prayer request as long as time continues this prayer request is for us it's for time pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labors into his harvest there's a harvest that yet needs to be brought in are your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace are your feet shod are you prepared are you prepared to do your part to bring this harvest are your feet shod are you prepared to bring the word of God to the lost and the dying to the sheep that have no shepherd to those that have not heard to those who have rejected the word of God are you a true witness are you a true witness in this last day

I believe there's yet a harvest to be brought in and he has called us he has called the church to take this gospel to those round about us to those out there and to those across the oceans are we faithful are we faithful are we faithful you know it's it's so easy it's so easy to just get used to this life here it's so easy to just get into a routine we go to church on Sunday we play games this afternoon Monday we go to work and we work and we do whatever we do and it's so easy to just put some money in the offering and that's the extent of it you know he has called us to put that money in the offering and maybe a lot more than we do I don't know I don't know your heart but he has also called us to be a witness he's called us to be available he's called us to live a sober life a peculiar people zealous of good works he has called us with a high and a holy calling are we being faithful in that calling today are your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace you know for each one of us

I believe that means that that has a different meaning God has a different calling for each one of us my challenge today is are we faithful are we are we faithful with what God has given us as we are faithful with what he has given us as we are faithful with where he has put us he will give us more

he will give us more responsibility he will give us more talents he will give us more gifts of the spirit as we walk faithfully yes and let us be faithful to pray the Lord of the harvest that's our God he is the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labors into his harvest field and let us be faithful in going where he directs us let's pray

Lord we thank you for your word today and Lord I thank you that your word will not return void but it will accomplish what you have sent it forth to do if we will allow it if we will yield to it if we will if we will look into that mirror and allow that mirror of the word to change us Lord help us today that will be us we will surrender to you and allow you to change us and to make us useful in your kingdom help us Lord to just lay down our lives for you that you can take us and use us as you desire Lord have your way in our hearts today we pray in Jesus name amen amen

[52 : 15] Thank you.