

**Message: Christ, Our Sufficient Provision for Spiritual Warfare, Part 4**

**Text: Ephesians 6:10-14**

**Introduction**

- A. We are in the midst of hearing from Christ through his apostle Paul's final paragraph of exhortation in Ephesians, urging us to find strength in the Lord to fight by faith sin, temptation, Satan and his spiritual forces of darkness. We fight by a faith that puts on the Lord Jesus Christ like armor, meaning that we put on all of His godly virtues of truthfulness, righteousness, peaceableness, etc.
- B. Last week we heard and (I hope) received His word to put on the practice of righteousness like a breastplate. This morning we will hear Christ through Paul call on us to always be prepared to be peacemakers, and not give the devil a foothold in our hearts, in our relationships, in Christ's church.

Ephesians 6:14 Stand firm therefore, **HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH**, and **HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**,<sup>15</sup> and **having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE**;

- C. Have you been aware of being in a battle this past week? I have. (Incident coming home from a pleasant, peaceful getaway in Greenville. God brought home to me with great poignancy my need for God's power to fight sin with righteousness, and to fight hostility with peaceableness the focus of today's text.

**I. Put on Christ's peace.**

- A. If you are like me, looking at 6:15 at first blush we would assume that this verse speaks about being prepared to carry the gospel to others, that this is an evangelism/missionary verse. Two words, "gospel" and "feet" appear to be touch points to those famous words of Isaiah quoted elsewhere by Paul ...

Isaiah 52:7 How lovely on the mountains are the **feet** of him who brings **good news**, who announces peace and brings **good news** of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Romans 10:15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE **FEET** OF THOSE WHO BRING **GOOD NEWS** OF GOOD THINGS!"

- B. But in studying 6:15 within the context of the whole letter of Ephesians, it appears to me that Paul is not focusing here on carrying the gospel of peace to others, but on living the gospel of peace among other. I.e., about being a peaceable people, about being peacemakers.
  - 1. Peace should be understood in the Hebrew sense of "shalom," which is not only the absence of hostility, but also the presence of wholeness, wellness. So Paul opens his letter to the church ...

Ephesians 1:2 Grace to you and **peace** from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- 2. When Paul talks about the gospel of peace in chapter 2, He is emphasizing how Christ death on the cross reconciled believing Jews and Gentiles (traditional enemies) into one new humanity, creating peace, both between them and God, and also between themselves.

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.<sup>14</sup> **For He Himself is our peace**, who **made both groups into one** and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,<sup>15</sup> ... so that in Himself He might **make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace**,<sup>16</sup> and might **reconcile them both in one body to God** through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.<sup>17</sup> **AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;**<sup>18</sup> for **through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father**.

3. Because we are called by the gospel to peace with God and with one another, Paul begins exhorting us in chapter 4 to work hard at preserving unity and peace among ourselves.

Ephesians 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, **implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,**<sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,<sup>3</sup> **being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

4. Later in chapter 4 in the midst of his clothing metaphor (put off, put on) Paul again urges us to put off peace-breaking by holding on to anger, and mixes in a military metaphor related to feet. Don't give the devil a place, don't give ground (NIV: "foothold") to the devil.

Ephesians 4:26 BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger,<sup>27</sup> and **do not give the devil place** (topos).

5. Remember that we previously demonstrated that Paul introduces no new subjects in his final paragraph of exhortation in 6:10-20, but summarizes and ramps up the intensity using a military warfare metaphor or imagery. So 6:15 is repeating the call to preserve the peace that Christ by His cross obtained for us.

Ephesians 6:15 and **having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;**

- a. A Roman soldier's footwear had a type of nail/spike hammered down through the soles so that in battle his feet would not slip, leaving him and those in formation beside him vulnerable.
- b. Imagine a football offensive line defending against the rush of the defensive linemen, where a guard, instead of wearing his spikes, was wearing flipflops. He would be unprepared for the battle he is facing, and would be unable to hold his ground, to stand firm. So also are we unprepared to stand firm against the attacks of the devil if we are not prepared as peacemakers.

## II. The necessary preparation for peacemakers to stand firm.

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and **having done everything, to stand firm.**<sup>14</sup> **Stand firm** therefore, ...<sup>15</sup> **having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;**

- A. What preparation do we need so that when our buttons are pushed, so that when we are met with hostility, obstruction to our plans, disappointments, insults, inconsiderateness, hardships, we will be ready to respond in a peaceable manner? Notice how the virtues in 4:2 form part of such preparation for our preserving unity and peace.

Ephesians 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> with all **humility** and **gentleness**, with **patience**, showing **tolerance** for one another **in love**,<sup>3</sup> being diligent to **preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

- B. Notice how these virtues are related. Pride produces harshness, impatience, intolerance.

1. Humility preserves the peace, diffuses rivalry, but pride, arrogance breaks the peace, stirring up fighting.

Proverbs 28:25 An arrogant man stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.

2. Gentleness is linked to humility and preserves peace, harshness breaks the peace, and devalues its objects.

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Proverbs 15:18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute.

Proverbs 16:32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.

Proverbs 25:28 Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.

3. Patience is linked to humility, in that it doesn't require its own way/agenda to be uninterrupted. Impatience breaks the peace.

Numbers 21:4 Then they set out from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and **the people became impatient** because of the journey. <sup>5</sup> **The people spoke against God and Moses**, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food."

2 Timothy 2:23 But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. <sup>24</sup> **The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome**, but be kind to all, able to teach, **patient** when wronged, <sup>25</sup> with **gentleness** correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, <sup>26</sup> and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

4. Tolerance, bearing with one another, promotes peace, in that we don't retaliate or push back - "I don't have to take that from you."

Proverbs 19:11 A man's discretion makes him **slow to anger**, and **it is his glory to overlook a transgression**.

- C. Notice that Christ is all of these things. When we put on these virtues by faith, we put on Christ.

Matthew 11:29 "Take My yoke upon you and **learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart**, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.

1 Timothy 1:16 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, **Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience** as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

- D. All of these qualities are the product of a faith/trust in the Lord that works through love. Love gives birth to humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another

Ephesians 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance **for one another in love**,

1 Corinthians 13:4 **Love is patient, love is kind** and is not jealous; **love does not brag and is not arrogant**, <sup>5</sup> does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, **does not take into account a wrong suffered**,

### III. The necessary power for peacemakers to stand firm.

- A. Our strength to be a peaceable people, a peacemaking versus a peacebreaking people, comes from the Lord. Our only ability to stand comes from Him.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, **be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might**. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

- B. God's power directed toward us who believe is of the same magnitude as His power by which broke the devil's power of death and raised Jesus from the dead, and exalted Him above all power, authority, dominion, names.

Ephesians 1:19 and what is **the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe**. These are **in accordance with the working of the strength of His might** <sup>20</sup> **which He brought about in Christ**, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

- C. Notice the relationship between Paul's description of God's power in us at the end of chapter 3 and his calling us to work hard to preserve unity and peace among us at the beginning of chapter 4. We might too often detach the first clause in 3:20 from the second clause, rightly believing God can work mighty things outside of us (creating the universe out of nothing, sending rain, holding off a storm, kind providences which we had no thought of happening), but missing the point of this power working in us, enabling us to work in a manner worthy of a calling in Christ Jesus, enabling us to be humble, patient, gentle peacemakers like Jesus.

Ephesians 3:20 Now to **Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,**<sup>21</sup> to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. 4:1 **Therefore** I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,<sup>2</sup> **with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,**<sup>3</sup> **being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

## Conclusion

- A. So let's join together and pray as Paul, but his example, teaches us, that God would strengthen us with His power in our innermost being, that Christ may truly and powerfully dwell in our heart through faith, that we might be filled with His fullness, that we might put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father ...<sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man,**<sup>17</sup> **so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;** and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,<sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,<sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, **that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.**

---

Romans 13:12 ... **put on the armor of light.** ...<sup>14</sup> But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ,** and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

- B. And for any here for whom Jesus is not yet your peace whereby you have access to God through His Spirit, call upon Jesus as your Lord and Savior for the forgiveness of your sins, for His power against your enemy the devil, and for the promise of eternal life in the presence of His glory when He returns in glory.

Ephesians 2:14 **But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.**<sup>14</sup> **For He Himself is our peace, ...**<sup>18</sup> **for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.**