

The Gospel of Peace Shoes (Ephesians 6:15)

Getting started:

Allow each person to introduce themselves (if needed) and share “high, low, buffalo.” (**High**= something good from the week, **Low**=something not good from the week, **Buffalo**=something surprising from the week, or something random). *Note: Anyone can choose to pass and not participate.*

Expect to experience God in prayer:

Pray together, asking God to open hearts to see his holiness and mercy in making atonement for sin.

Expect to experience God in fellowship:

Choose the Icebreaker Activity ~or~ one Conversation Starter:

Icebreaker Activity:

The group leader or a designate brings a pair of footwear (shoes, boots, slippers, sandals, etc.) to the meeting. The shoes can be new, old, unique, fun, or boring. The owner of the shoes tells a story about the shoes that is entirely true, entirely false, or some mix of both. The game starts when a member of the group asks the host a question about the story to try and determine the veracity of the story (the question cannot be if the story is true or false). The owner answers, then the turn passes to the group member on the right who asks a new question and the host answers, and so on, until all members have asked a question and received an answer. Each person then guesses whether the story is true, false, or a mix. Once the guesses are complete, the owner reveals the answer.

Conversation Starter:

Texas is subjected to many types of extreme weather including hurricanes, tornadoes, drought, and severe winter storms. Such weather requires us to be ready all year around. Share with the group how a particular weather event (e.g. Harvey, 2021 deep freeze, etc.) changed how you prepare for future weather events. In a similar way, how do/should you prepare for spiritual storms?

Expect to experience God by reading and discussing God’s Word together:

Background:

The Apostle Paul used the metaphor of armor to demonstrate how to walk with God through a fallen world. Why armor? Armor, which in Paul’s time would have meant that worn by the Roman army, helped protect the legionary from enemy attacks as he fought to meet a tactical objective.

This week, we focus on the **Gospel of Peace Shoes** (Ephesians 6:15). As is evident in the photograph, the Roman soldier’s shoes were well-made leather sandals with hob nails on the soles for traction during battle. Like his belt and breastplate, the



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shoes were worn constantly during battle. The term "Gospel of Peace" is a profound designation for the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, emphasizing reconciliation between God and humanity. This concept is deeply rooted in the New Testament and reflects the transformative power of the Gospel to bring peace to individuals and communities. When the peace of God replaces the turmoil of a sinner's heart, the believer is made ready for the spiritual battles that will come.

Together, Read Ephesians 6:10-20.

Discussion Questions (choose from these questions to discuss as a group):

1. How do you define the peace of Christ?
2. Paul wrote in Romans 15:13 that God '...fills us with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, you may abound in hope.' What does it mean for peace to come from believing rather than from our circumstances?
3. Where have you been waiting for circumstances to change before you feel peace?
4. In Romans 15, Paul writes that we can 'abound in hope'. Where do you need hope to overflow in your life right now?
5. What obstacles might be in your life that keep peace from entering freely?
6. Considering the analogy of shoes to the Roman soldier, how does the peace of Christ prepare believers for spiritual battles?
7. Given the answers to the above questions, how would you explain to a non-believer what Christ's peace is and how this peace will positively impact their lives? Try to make your explanation interesting so that the non-believer will want to know more. Also, consider asking one person in the group to act as a scribe and document your group's explanation so that you will be ready.

Readiness Check (a simple way to add intentionality to your daily spiritual preparation):

In today's scriptures, Paul urges the soldier of Christ to be **Ready** by the way the gospel of peace has brought joy to his or her heart.

- We believe that the armor of God protects us as we walk through the trials of life. Consider posting a sticky note on your bathroom mirror that says something like "Remember: You are a soldier for Christ!" Each morning, thank God for his spiritual armor.
- Pray that in every encounter with believers and non-believers that you demonstrate the Good News of the Gospel.

Expect to experience God by closing in prayer together:

Pray for awareness of spiritual battles and to make a daily habit of wearing the Gospel of Peace Shoes. So armored, pray for the courage to stand firm in the victory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.