The Shoes of Peace

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Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Thank you for sharing one of my absolute favorite things about getting to, not just to pastor, but to have the joy of pastoring for a long time in one place.

It's just to see the Lord take people and watch them grow in their spiritual walk. For me to get to see these who were children in our church that grow up, mature in their faith, and to see how the Lord is using them as servant leaders in our church is such an amazing, amazing joy.
Anyway, Friday night, our teenagers gathered here. It's Friday evening, and Kashawn, who's working with our student ministry under Joey, put together a night of praise.
And so the teenagers came and sang some songs and different ones of our pastors. We got up to share some scripture, talk a little bit about the songs and what the scripture was talking about.
We've got about 50 teenagers here on a Friday night that could be out doing anything that showed up just for an evening of worship and Bible reading. It was incredible.
[1:33] Tonight, you see on the platform during the music, adults and teenagers, because they're just servants in our church. And so to see what our youth are doing and what our college students in Crossroads Ministry are doing is just such an incredible thrill.

Tonight, when we finish our evening service, our middle schoolers, we're meeting in the brick with Kashawn and Mary, who work with our youth ministry. They're studying through the book of Philippians. They're in chapter 3 tonight.
And so if you're a middle schooler, you had Sunday school this morning. You had worship service through Mark. In evening service, you got Ephesians 6.
And after church, you get Philippians 3. We are just doing our best to flood our students with God's Word.
And I know Joey would be the first one to say that our church is not the first and primary teaching source of our students, that we want that to be in the home.
[2:39] Mom and Dad are the first teachers and the first godly examples. But we want as a church to be a complete encouragement and help to our students.

We want to be assisting our parents and helping them as we as a church teach them the same things we pray that they're learning at home. We also understand we have a lot of teenagers who come to church whose parents are not believers.
And we want to teach and train those students in praying with them that the Lord would use them to bring salvation to their parents and to their siblings in the home.
And so, you know, you can learn a lot about a church by watching their teenagers. You learn a lot about what a church values.
You learn a lot about what those teenagers care about when you just watch their lives. And you don't have to look at our students very long to realize that this church is not entertaining teenagers.
[3:42] We're raising disciples. With moms and dads trying to do our part as a church, supporting and strengthening families, we're raising disciples.

And if you've got preschoolers, they are learning on Sundays and Wednesdays the very foundational principles of the gospel.
And if you've got elementary students, they are not being entertained on Sunday mornings. They are being discipled. They're being fed.
They're being taught the word. I have the privilege on Wednesday nights, a few times a semester, to go in and be with our Awana students. Just recently, I just finished a little two-week tour upstairs in the kid zone doing Bible Q&A.

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Today, and I'm getting questions from our students just left and right. And love hearing their hunger for the word and the Lord.
[4:46] And I can tell you, if you've got elementary age students, and they're a part of our children's ministry, they're being fed, and they're being fed well. If you've got middle school and high schoolers, they are every week surrounded by godly Sunday school teachers, volunteers who love teenagers, who care deeply for them.

Our teenagers are learning not only to be fed the word, but how to feed themselves. Learning to listen, learning to participate, but also learning how to open a Bible, and through the work of the Holy Spirit's illumination, read and understand for themselves.
On Wednesday nights, our youth students are on the platform in the youth worship area, leading music.
They're serving their peers. They have access to, in Joey's preaching, you won't find a better theologically astute youth pastor in the state of Oklahoma.
They have access every Wednesday to a bright, bright theological mind, who is able to teach and impart to our teenagers, not short sermonettes kind of things, but laboring in the Scripture to help them to understand it.
[6:22] And then, when they graduate from there, and they go into college or go into the workforce, that next stage of life, as Olivia mentioned, we've got in our Crossroads ministry, a quickly growing group who the Lord is using to do so much ministry in our church.

And in a stage in life where a lot of times people stray and wander off, and a lot of times in church even, churches sometimes kind of miss the mark here because they get involved in a youth group and a youth ministry with all these activities and all these ministries and all this help, and they kind of graduate and they're just kind of thrown over the cliff.
And the Lord has used good leaders here for a long time to help us to minister to our college and career age. And today, I believe that ministry is the strongest it's ever been, and we are so thankful for all of those ministries in our church.
And if you want to just know the heartbeat of our church, I think you understand our desire is to take people of all ages and all life stages and teach them the Word.
We want that to permeate everything that we do. You don't graduate at any age, and the study of God's Word is no longer a priority, nor do you come into our church too young for us to think that Bible teaching is above you.
[7:54] Whatever age, whatever stage someone is in, we want to take them and teach them and train them right where they are. And it takes not just great staff leadership, which the Lord has given to us, it takes a massive army of volunteers to do that.

Adult Sunday school teachers, Awana teachers, right now as we meet here, kids praise teachers, those who teach in preschool and elementary and all of our ages, have so many volunteers who love the Lord, love this church, love our students.
And it is just an amazing thing to see the Lord at work among our young people. I get to see it at Ladies on a Theology. I stand out there and I'm the unpaid greeter before I'm the unpaid teacher. And I do that because I like to meet people as people bring friends to see who they are. And what amazes me are all the young people, I'm talking high school, middle school, elementary age, that come to Ladies on a Theology.
They've got their Bible, got their notebook, got their pen, and they're ready to go. And that happens because if whatever age group you're in, there's just an expectation in our church that we want to take people where they are and lead them to spiritual maturity.
[9:15] And you just look around all over our church and you see that. And I'm so, so thankful for how that is taking place all over our church. I told John after a Good Friday service on the way out to our car, I said, I wish we would just have church every Friday night.

He didn't share that exact same passion. I think he said something like, sure, or...
Actually, I think he said that would be a good service for Kashawn to lead, I think was the exact quote. But I think what he meant by that was, sure, I'd love to. And being here on sunny nights to end the Lord's Day with the core of our church, these are just sweet, sweet days for sure.
Well, turn with me to Ephesians chapter 6, if you would. This has been kind of a funny ride. You know, on sunny mornings, we're going through Mark, and it's just with pretty good regularity.

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We're just each week after week after week after week in Mark. In Ephesians this semester, just the way that our church schedule has been with Family Matters and with Easter holiday and with me being in Israel and Shepherds Conference, it's been a little herky-jerky here in Ephesians.
[10:39] And so while we've been here a while, it's also been a while since we've been in Ephesians. So let me once again read this passage so that we can be thinking clearly as we look at this next piece of the armor, the shoes of the gospel.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.
It's this last part here in verse 15 we're looking at tonight. As shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.
When I was in high school, I played basketball. Played is perhaps a stretch and an overstatement, but I was on the basketball team. And one night we had a game.
[12:05] We were playing Norman High School. Now, understand that when I was in high school, if it was game day, all the basketball team wore suits to school.

We didn't wear sweats. We didn't wear jerseys. We wore jackets, slacks, and a tie. And when we got on the bus to travel to away games, we traveled in a suit. We got in a coat and tie.
And we would sit there, and we'd watch the JV game, and we'd watch the first half of the girls game in a suit. And then we'd go in the locker room and get our uniform on and get ready to go play the game.
And this one particular night stands out when we were at Norman High School because we were in the locker room, and as we were getting dressed, one of our starters realized he did not pack his basketball shoes.
He brought his bag, had his uniform, his sweatpants, his shooting shirt we wore in the warm-ups, but he did not pack his tennis shoes. And because on game days we traveled in suits, we wore dress shoes to school, we wore dress shoes on the bus, we wore dress shoes in the stands.
[13:14] And so one of our starters, our leading scorer at the time that year, did not have any basketball shoes with him. And you can't play basketball in dress shoes.

And you're not allowed to play basketball barefoot. And so, right or wrong, I don't know, but our coach asked one of the guys on the team who had no chance of playing that night if he would give his shoes to the starter and not dress out that night.
I don't remember if he asked him to do it or if he voluntold him to do it. I don't know. I do remember thinking, this guy's about to lose his shoes either way.
And so this one player on the team who wasn't going to play took his tennis shoes off and gave them to our leading scorer for him to put on so he could play that night.
Because having the proper shoes were required to be able to play. That's how it works in athletics.
[14:24] It's also how it works in battle. Let me read to you a short portion of an article detailing some of the issues around the Revolutionary War.

December 1777, George Washington's army suffered from inadequate supplies. The soldiers, many of them ragged and shoeless, left bloody footprints in the snow, marking the grueling progress of this army at the American Revolution toward winter quarters at Valley Forge.
The whole of them, said General John Sullivan, were without watch coats, one half without blankets, and more than one third without shoes, many of them without jackets, and not a few without shirts.
None had enough to eat. Some had gone hungry for days. Exhausted and ill, men were deserting in great numbers, heading home to their families and farms. It was a dark moment for the Revolution and for Washington.
From his makeshift headquarters, he wrote to warn Congress, quote, unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place, this army must inevitably starve, dissolve, or disperse.

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[15:53] Because you cannot win a battle without the proper gear. You cannot win military conflict barefoot.

We return to Ephesians 6, and I want you to remember, we've got two things in mind as we walk through Ephesians 6. One is Paul is almost certainly looking at a soldier.
He may have been chained to a soldier as he writes this. Undoubtedly, the very specific imagery is in front of him as he looks at what the Roman soldier would be wearing, he is seeing these pieces of equipment that he is making analogous to the Christian faith by looking at the Roman soldier.
Second, he has in his mind the Old Testament. As we've looked at each week going through this, the idea of the armor of God is not an Ephesians 6 story, it's an Old Testament prophet Isaiah.
The Holy Spirit revealing his word to Isaiah 700 years before the birth of Christ speaks of God himself in the armor.
[17:17] And so our objective as Bible readers is to ask ourselves as best we can, what did Paul mean?

What did Paul intend? We have a course in the Institute called Hermeneutics designed to help our men learn how to rightly interpret the Scripture.
And what you have to understand is the context first and foremost as you're looking for what we call authorial intent. What was the intention of the author?
What did the author mean in that day to his audience? We go back in time to understand, to interpret, then we come forward to the modern day to apply.
You cannot afford to get those backwards. If you try to interpret the Scripture without going backwards, you're going to miss what the author intended.
[18:20] So our question, our objective, is what is in Paul's mind when he says, verse 15, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

So, let's look at a few things. Number one, what did Paul mean when he mentioned gospel shoes?
What did Paul mean when he mentioned gospel shoes?
Now, there are two primary thoughts as to what Paul meant. Let me give them both to you. Number one, evangelism.
One way that people understand the gospel shoes is to think in terms of evangelism. That you put on your shoes and then you run and spread the gospel.
You put on your shoes and you go and you tell people the gospel. Certainly, that is a biblically sound thing to do. and it has its roots in scripture.
[19:21] Isaiah 52, verse 7. We read earlier today Romans 10, 15. This statement that Jeremy read Romans 10, 15 is a quote from the Old Testament of Isaiah 52, 7.

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who say unto Zion, and our God reigns.
And then Paul picks up Isaiah 52 in Romans 10 and refers to it again as the one who has beautiful feet that goes and tells the gospel.
It's not a foreign thing for Paul to speak of evangelism. Colossians 4, 3 and 4, he says, at the same time, pray also for us that God may open to us a door for the word to declare the mystery of Christ on account of which I am in prison that I may make it clear how I ought to speak.
So Paul was very accustomed to asking people to pray for him to have open doors for evangelism and to ask people to pray for him that he would have the courage and boldness to speak the gospel.
[20:43] By the way, that's a good prayer for you to pray for others in your family. That's a good way to ask people to pray for you. Ask for the Lord to present open doors for you to share the gospel and when the open door presents itself that you would have the boldness to say what you ought to say.

So that's one way that this text is primarily interpreted interpreted that Paul is saying that we are to put on the shoes of the gospel so that we can go and tell run and tell and spread the gospel message.
There's a second way that this is often interpreted and it's what we'll call spiritual stability. The idea here is that we put on our shoes so that we do not stumble and we do not fall so that we can stand in combat.
Now, is it true that we are to take the gospel and spread it? Absolutely. Is it true that Old and New Testament tell us, Isaiah 52, Romans 10, that we are to use our feet to go and spread the gospel?

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Absolutely. Without question, one thing we must do is take the gospel message and walk, run, and spread it.
[22:15] But I think that is the secondary application. It's a good biblical application, but I think it's the secondary application in this text.

And I want to show you why that is and then show you how evangelism is a proper response to this text, but not to miss the primary understanding that fuels the secondary.
So let's do a little hermeneutics. Is there anything in this passage that would tip us off to what Paul's primary authorial intent may be?
Let's go back to the text, verse 10. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to, here's his overarching thesis, that you would be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.
In the metaphor of the Christian soldier putting on the armor, all of the armor is to help you stand. Verse 12, we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the present places.
[23:47] Therefore, take up the whole armor of God. He's restating his thesis that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, than having done all to stand firm.

Verse 14, stand therefore. What word do you think is the emphasis here? Say it with me. Stand. We get that in the context.
It's one of the ways you understand how to interpret the scripture. You're looking at the whole context. And what we have seen repeatedly in just a few verses are four different times that Paul encourages the believer that you must stand.
We're not first talking about running, not yet. We're first talking about standing. And the picture in verse 12 is a wrestling match.
You're wrestling against the schemes of the evil one and if you fall, you get defeated. You have to stand. Even in church history, we're familiar with that language.
[25:04] October 31st, 1517, a priest and professor named Martin Luther goes to All Saints Church in Wittenberg and nailed his 95 thesis.

When given the chance to recant, here are his words. My conscience is captive to the word of God. Thus, I cannot and will not recant because acting against one's conscience is neither safe nor sound.
Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. So I think in the context, the first thing we understand are that the shoes the soldier wears are first to help him stand.
We are to stand in the gospel. We are to stand firm in believing the gospel. If you run around doing evangelism and are not clear on the gospel, we've got problems.
So Isaiah 52 and Romans 10 are wonderful applications for us from this passage, but you must make sure that in your zealousness to do evangelism, you stand in the gospel.
[26:27] If you've got a young man who wants to be a preacher and loves to preach, but he's not willing to be a student and learn the text, that person is a danger.

If you take a gifted communicator, a gifted orator, and he doesn't know the theology of the Bible, that man is dangerous. So we've got to make sure that we are able to stand in the gospel, that we know the gospel, that we believe it, that we can articulate it, that we can defend it, that we can explain it, that we can help an adult know what the gospel means, and we can help a child know what the gospel means, and remember there's only one gospel.
There's not a gospel for adults and a gospel for children, it's the same gospel. What we must be able to do is know it so well that we can articulate it to whoever we're talking to.
Not a different gospel, one gospel. So we first must be able to put on the shoes of the gospel, and to do that means we must know it.
Now, when you know the gospel, you're supposed to tell it. You go and tell it. Which is why it says how beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news.
[28:00] If you go and you're spreading the gospel, but you don't first know the gospel, then you're a danger. If you're going and spreading the gospel, and you yourself don't even believe the gospel, then you're a fraud.

If you know and believe the gospel, and you don't tell it, you're disobedient. So we must first know it. First, it speaks to spiritual stability.

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Then, once we're clear on the gospel, our follow-through is to do the work of evangelism. So let's go back 2,000 years ago.
What were the purposes of shoes in Paul's day? It's an important question. There's a reason why Paul picks the metaphor of shoes with gospel peace.
So if you're going to understand what Paul meant, you've got to go back 2,000 years ago and say, what were the purposes of shoes in Paul's day? Let me give you three words. Number one, protection.
[29:05] Shoes were critically important for protection. Now, that's true in our world today. although, today we have carpet, rugs, paved roads.

Hypothetically, if you had no shoes, you may not be able to play in a basketball game, but you could probably navigate yourself around okay. if you lived in Paul's day, that was a world filled everywhere with loose rocks, stone, uneven roads, jagged surfaces.
shoes, the soldier had to have shoes for protection. A soldier's shoes were made of leather called kaliga, and you would put these leather shoes around your feet, and it would have these straps you would tie up all the way around your calves and your shins.
If it was cold, you could take animal fur and stuff it inside the straps so that you could keep your legs and feet more warm. It would protect him as he walked around rough terrain, rocks and thorny areas.
Have you ever been barefoot where there's stickers? It's awful. Every summer, my family comes over, and we have this great big, huge wiffle ball game.
[30:35] It's quite the sight. Family's big enough now. We played last year, and it was nine on nine. We even had a catcher. We have a catcher in family wiffle ball. The family's too big. And there's always some of the young teenage nieces that want to play barefoot.

And they always ask me the same questions. Uncle Michael, are there any stickers out here? I don't care how athletic you are or how fast you are. If you're barefoot and you hit a sticker, you're out. You're not making it around the bases. Well, in Paul's day, if a soldier were out walking without shoes, shoes, he would be in a terrible situation.
Protection. Another purpose of shoes in Paul's day specifically was for stability. So what they would do, they would take these shoes, known as Caliga, and they would take metal studs or short nails and put on the bottom of it that made it like a cleat.
And that nail could dig into the dirt, dig into the soil, and it gave them stability. It kept them from slipping. If they came across a particularly slick area.
[31:49] Incidentally, you could also put nails on the bottom of your shoe. Not only would it be stability, but if you got in face-to-face, hand-to-hand combat, you could lift that shoe up.

You've got a nail on the bottom, but now you've also got a weapon. Third, mobility. The soldier's shoes were not designed to help them to run long distances, but as a soldier, that wasn't what would be required.
But you needed to be mobile. You needed to be able to move. You needed to be able to get out of harm's way. You needed to be able to fight and to wrestle.
You needed to be able to be on the move. So what do we conclude from this? There's another word that helps us.
go back to verse 15. As shoes for your feet, having put on, what are you putting on in the text?
[32:51] Are you putting on shoes? Not really. As far as the shoes for your feet, the armor of God, what you put on is the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

As for the shoes of the Christian soldier, he must put on the shoes of being ready. At all times, he's got to be ready.
Can you imagine the scene if you're playing a basketball game and your coach turns to the bench and says, hey, brewer, get in the game. And you say, oh, I need my shoes. Get my shoes.
I'll put them on real quick. Is it going to work? No. You don't have time to do that. It's too late. You need to be ready before that. If you're in a football game and somebody says to you, hey, Davis, go in the game, and he doesn't have any cleats on, the game's not stopping.
It's too late. He needed to put the cleats on before he was put in so he would be ready. The element that Paul is talking about here is that Christians must be ready.
[34:16] Ready to do what? To stand against the schemes of the devil. And you must be ready before the battle.

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Our key word to tip us off here is in verse 15, what you're putting on is readiness. Hetoimacia is the Greek word.
The readiness you put on your feet for the gospel. Be ready for what? Let me give you three specific things to make note of.
Ready to stand strong against our enemy. And just notice the language here. Verse 14, stand therefore having fastened the belt of truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and as shoes for your feet having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.
The participle put on is just like the participle of having fastened. it modifies the imperative to stand. [35:32] That's our linguistic cue. All of those participles modify this single imperative, you must stand.

Why must the Christian stand? because as a believer in Jesus Christ, you've got two options. You stand strong in the gospel or you fall and cower to the world.
And you better be prepared. See, when I talk about raising our students and when I talk about raising this young generation of our church that we talked about a few moments ago, we're not talking about raising people that can grow up and do well at Bible trivia.
We're talking about raising a next generation of people that can stand when everyone else in the world falls. We're talking about raising men and women who are firm on the gospel so if nobody else believes, they will stand.
We're talking about raising leaders so that when you look around the world and say, is there anybody who still stands for the gospel? The answer is yes. That's what we're devoted to. [37:06] I'm not real impressed by how many people enter a church building, ours or some other. what is impressive are asking yourself, are we making disciples?

Big difference. If we're just bringing a lot of people inside a building to watch, who cares?
Our task is to raise Christians who know how to stand in the gospel. To explain it, to defend it, to live it, even if all others abandon to stand.
We must be ready to stand strong against our enemy. Number two, we must be ready to move as the Lord instructs us. part of what a shoe enabled a soldier to do in the first century is to be able to move.
If they get a command to retreat, they have to be able to move. If they get a command to advance, they have to be able to move. It begs the question for us, how do we move as Christians today? [38:23] Well, it's really simple. You read the Word and you do what it says. That's how we move. That's how we get our marching orders, is by reading the Bible and obeying what it says.

We must be ready to live out the gospel of peace. Incidentally, 1 Peter 3.15 says, in your hearts, honor Christ as Lord.
Always be prepared to give the answer for the hope that is within you. Now, don't forget the end of the verse.
do so with gentleness and with respect. But we are called in 1 Peter 3, when we explain the faith, defend the faith, do the work of an evangelist, we are called to always be prepared.
Always be prepared. to be prepared to preach, prepared to pray, and prepared to die. [39:36] In a moment's notice, be able to preach, be ready to pray, and be prepared to die. Now, I want to end with this last question.

why does he call it the gospel of peace? As far as the shoes of your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.
Why specifically do we think of the gospel as a gospel of peace? Let me just close by giving you these thoughts here. Number one, he calls it the gospel of peace because it's through the gospel that we have peace with God.
It's through the gospel we have peace with God. Romans 5, 1, therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
It's the gospel of peace because it's through the gospel we have peace with God. Colossians 1, 20, and through him to reconcile to himself all things whether on earth or in heaven making peace by the blood of his cross.
[40:55] It's the gospel of peace because it's the gospel that gives us peace with God. Number two, it's the gospel of peace because it's through the gospel that we have peace with those who love God.

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You're in Ephesians 6, just turn the page to Ephesians 2. Let me just show you how he uses this. Ephesians 2, verse 14.
For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility.
Go to chapter 4, verse 3. Be eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.
Go to verse 13. Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.
It's through the gospel that we have peace with those who love God.
[42:13] I had somebody today, an older couple, they've been members here for a few years, they're getting ready to move out of state. This was their last Sunday with us. And what she told me this morning was she said I'll never forget the first time we came to church here.

She said it was the most deafening sound I've ever heard in a church the first Sunday we were here when you asked the congregation to open their Bibles to what you were preaching and I heard the sound of hundreds of people opening their Bibles at the same time.
She said it was deafening. Well that's what unites us. It's our common love for the gospel, our belief in the authority of God's word.
That's what unites us. That's what makes us the same. It's not that we have the same opinions on everything and it's not that we have the same ideas of what music is good or what fashion is good or what sports team we should follow.
None of those things are what unites us. Even in matters of the church there's differences of opinion on programming and what ministries we should do.
[43:28] There's differences of opinion on how decisions are made, differences of opinion on what we should do. Should we have one service in the summer? Should we have two? Can we fit?

How do we do that? We're working through all those things. Difference of opinion on the budget. How should we handle finances? How should we handle decisions the church makes?
There's no fighting in our church among any of those things but it doesn't mean that everybody has the exact same opinion. You can't chapter and verse those things. So how in the world do you keep such unity in the church when you're dealing with decisions that you can't chapter and verse?
Here's how. The gospel. We stay focused on what matters most. And it's the gospel that brings us peace with God and it's the gospel that brings us peace with those who love God.
I love to be at church on Sundays. I love to be with our church because there's such unity here.
[44:46] There's such joy in this place because people bring their Bible and say show me from the word what you have to say. because when we sing songs and John puts up scripture on the screen it's not a hard shift to go from the songs we're singing to the scripture we're reading.

It flows right out of the scripture. It doesn't mean everyone has the same opinion on what song we should sing or what your favorite song is. It doesn't mean everybody's got the same opinion of how long a service should be.
It doesn't mean everybody's got the same opinion on how this decision gets made or how this decision gets enacted. What it does mean is we experience a unique unity here because as Ephesians 4 says our unity is based on our faith.
That's what unites us. That's what bonds our hearts together. The gospel brings us peace with God and it brings us peace with those who love God and then finally it brings even peace with ourselves.
Philippians 4 verse 6 Do not be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
[46:18] if you want to experience peace in your heart and peace in your mind put on the shoes of the gospel of peace by putting on the readiness to stand in the gospel no matter what.

No matter what. And when you have made the decision I will be ready to stand in the gospel, to believe the gospel, to live the gospel, if need be to die for the gospel, then you're ready to go and spread the gospel.
So when Paul tells us that we put on the preparation, the readiness of the shoes of the gospel of peace, what he's telling us is you better be ready to stand your ground.
And when you are, now you're ready to go and spread the gospel to help the world know how they can have peace with God, the gospel, how they can have peace with those who love God, the gospel, and how they can have peace in their own heart and mind, the gospel.
gospel. That's what Paul means when he says to put on these things.

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[47:50] As for shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

The gospel makes you ready. Ready for what? God, ready to stand, and ready to share.
The gospel makes you ready. Thank you, Lord, for your word tonight. Thank you for the songs we've been able to sing. Thank you for the testimony that we've heard.
Thank you for the sweet fellowship and unity that we enjoy. May you continue to protect that for us as we remain focused on what matters most.
May we stand firm in the gospel, and then may we go and spread it far and wide to the neighborhoods and to the nations.
[48:48] In Jesus' name, amen. Thanks for being here. You're dismissed. Be well. Thank you.
Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.
Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.
Yes. Yes. I would be hopeless without your goodness.
I would be desperate.

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