

The Shoes of Peace

(Ephesians 6:15)

Pre-Session Warm Up

[Teacher, bring a collection of different kinds of shoes to class in a bag, such as a tennis shoe, a golf shoe, a ballet slipper, and so on. Let the children take turns pulling one from the bag. Talk about what you would do while wearing the shoe.]

You can tell a lot about what a person is getting ready to do by what he puts on his feet! For instance, it's not easy to stand on the tips of your toes. A ballet star could not do it without the proper shoes and the right training.

In battle, it was important for a Roman soldier to be properly dressed. He needed armor as a suit of protection. And, in the same way, God has given us spiritual armor to protect us from our enemy, Satan.

Opening Prayer

Lord, just as it is important for real soldiers to be ready for battle, it's important for us to be ready for the spiritual battle we are in with Satan. Please give us good listening ears this morning so that we might not miss any of the instructions that You want to give us this morning. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Stand therefore,...having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15)

Lesson

The past few weeks we've been studying the pieces of a Roman soldier's armor and how they relate to our spiritual walk with Jesus.

Who remembers what the first piece of the Roman soldier's armor is? (The Belt of Truth protected the soldier's vital organs and held the other pieces of the armor in place.) How do Christians put on the Belt of Truth? (There are two ways. First, by learning as much as we can of the Bible's truths, and second, by always being truthful in everything we do.)

What is the second piece of the armor? (The Breastplate of Righteousness) Who remembers how to put on the spiritual breastplate? (By choosing to do the right things... things that God approves of.)

Let's review by reading Ephesians 6:10-13

A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. (11) Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. (12) For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (13) Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.

This week we're going to talk about the third piece of the armor, the shoes.

It is very important for a soldier to have his feet in good condition if he is going into battle, isn't it? Roman soldiers did almost everything they had to do on their feet. Sore feet would not have been considered a reasonable excuse for a Roman soldier not to do his duty. What do you think might have happened to a Roman soldier who said, "Sir, I won't be able to march the 18 miles with my regiment today; my feet hurt?" [Teacher, let the children respond.]

If your feet hurt, it's hard to stand, much less walk or run into battle. Then, too, if you have slippery soles on your shoes, you'll easily fall down and be trampled. That's why it's very importance that each soldier have shoes that fit.

One of a Roman soldier's most important pieces of equipment was heavy protective footwear. They wore special shoes that helped them stand firm in battle. Like all Romans, the soldiers wore leather

sandals. The sandals had soles that were three-quarters of an inch thick. They had hobnails on the bottoms. When it was cold, the soldier could put pieces of fur around his feet inside his sandals to keep his toes warm. He could safely go anywhere because his feet were ready. Their shoes made them sure-footed and stable in the battle with the enemy. And, in the same way, we Christians need to be sure footed against our enemy, too.

Ephesians 6:15

For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared

Scripture calls the Christian soldier's shoes, "*the peace that comes from the Good News.*" What does this mean?

The Good News is that Jesus took our punishment for our sins. So, now we have peace with God. To *put on the peace that comes from the Good News*, is to ask Jesus to forgive you for your sins.

Once you have the peace that comes from knowing that you are forgiven of your sins, you are ready, or "*fully prepared*", to tell others about this Good News.

We'll add shoes to our soldier as a reminder that they are his Gospel of Peace Shoes. This will help us remember to put on our Shoes of Peace, too.

If anyone asked you what the gospel is, could you tell them? Well, the gospel is the good news that Jesus died for your sins — your sins are forgiven. The whole gospel story is that Jesus was born; He died for us; on the third day He arose; now He's in Heaven with God, but He is coming back again.

Our feet carry us many places in our lifetime. We need to be sure that wherever we walk we are always prepared to tell someone about Jesus. If we do not speak of Him as we go about our daily living, perhaps those we meet will never hear of Jesus or know of His love.

We strap on our Gospel of Peace Shoes first of all when we gain peace with God by accepting His gift of salvation (Romans 5:1) and begin to live in a way that is pleasing to Him. Then as we walk through each day, our lives show the good news of God's peace.

You do this by seeing yourselves as God sees you — loved by Him (Jeremiah 31:3), forgiven (Ephesians 4:32), and accepted forever as a member of His family (John 1:12). The Bible says that "*He [Jesus] has brought peace to us* (Ephesians 2:14). You have peace in your heart because you know that Jesus paid for your sins and you belong to God forever.

So the first way to put on your Gospel of Peace Shoes is to believe what Jesus did for you really paid the penalty for your sins.

Another way to put on your Gospel of Peace Shoes is by making peace with others.

We can have peace with others by being kind to them, forgiving them (Ephesians 4:32), and doing our best to build them up, not tear them down (Ephesians 4:29.) We show that we are walking through life with the Shoes of Peace when we share God's love with those who do not know the Lord Jesus (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

Watch your feet! Be sure you are wearing your Gospel of Peace Shoes. You will need them so you will be prepared to tell people the good news about Jesus. If you are prepared to tell people the gospel, you will be able to stand firm against Satan.

Closing Prayer

Lord, thank You so much for Your plan of salvation. You didn't need to leave the comforts and splendor of Heaven to be born on earth as a baby. But You did because You knew the only way we could ever come to Heaven was if you took the punishment for our sins. So, You came and lived among people, then You endured a horrible death on the cross because You loved us and want us to live with

You for all eternity in Heaven. Make this knowledge so exciting for us, Lord, that we want to tell all of our friends about the great things You have done for us. Help us to always be prepared to tell people the good news about the peace we have with You. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

Armor of God Concentration: Make two sets of cards with the various pieces of the armor named on each. For a correct answer to a review question, a child gets to turn over two cards. If the cards match, he gets to keep the set. The child or team with the most matched sets wins. Copy the cards onto colored card stock and laminate for future use. Or, get fancy and make your playing cards the shape of a sword!

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| BELT | BREASTPLATE |
| HELMET | SHIELD |
| | |

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| SHOES | WORD |
| FAITH | GOSPEL |
| RIGHTEOUSNESS | SALVATION |
| SPIRIT | TRUTH |

Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

Review questions:

1. What does God give us to stand against the tricks of the devil?
(A suit of armor)

2. Is one piece of armor enough to stand against the devil? (No, we must put on the whole armor of God.)
3. Why is it easy to sin and hard to do right? (The devil is like a roaring lion who tries to make us do wrong.)
4. What piece of the armor do we use when we do the right thing? (The Breastplate of Righteousness)
5. What piece of the armor do we use when we tell the truth? (The Belt of Truth)
6. What piece of the armor do we use when we remember that Jesus paid for our sins and we can stand firm against Satan? (The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace.)
7. What does the word "gospel" mean? ("Good news")
8. If anyone asked you what the gospel is, could you tell them? (Jesus was born; He died for us; on the third day He arose; now He's in Heaven with God, but He is coming back again.)
9. What does Ephesians 6:15 mean in your own words? (Be prepared to tell people the good news about the peace we have with God.)
10. What's the first way we can strap on the Shoes of Peace? (By making peace with God)
11. How do you make peace with God? (To believe what Jesus did for you really paid the penalty for your sins)
12. What's the second way we put on the Shoes of Peace? (By making peace with others)
13. How do you make peace with others? (By being kind to them, forgiving them, building them up and not tearing them down, and by sharing God's love with others)

Easier Questions:

14. Who can we always count on to tell us the truth? (God)
15. Who are we pleasing when we do not tell the truth? (Satan)
16. Who is the armor of God for? (For every Christian)
17. How do we know that our sins are forgiven? (Because the Lord Jesus paid for them and promised that we would belong to Him forever)
18. Can we use our armor all by ourselves? (No, the Lord Jesus gives us strength to stand against Satan.)

Armor of God Worksheet

Circle the right answers. (You can circle more than one.)

1. Jesus told us to put on (some, all, none) of the Armor of God.
2. Jesus commands us to (put on, set down, step on) the armor.
3. I put on the Belt of Truth when I...
 - A. Tell the truth
 - B. Remember the Jesus' promises to me
 - C. Listen to my friends
4. I put on the Breastplate of Righteousness when I...
 - A. Choose to be kind instead of mean
 - B. Don't do what I know is right
 - C. Remember that Jesus paid for my sins
5. I put on my Gospel Shoes when I...
 - A. After I pull on my socks
 - B. Go out to play golf
 - C. Tell someone about Jesus
6. The word "gospel" means...
 - A. To eat fast
 - B. Good news
 - C. What a turkey says

