

Family Service - Shoes - Readiness Given by the Gospel of Peace

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[0:00] This is a sermon from King's Church West Lovie. Well, it's wonderful to see you all. I'm Michael, if you don't know me, and I'm just going to speak for a few minutes about the armour of God.

Now, the armour of God, we've actually been, for those of you who usually come to kids' church or the kids' take over in this room, we've been learning about the armour of God for the last few weeks with the grown-ups.

And the armour of God is this idea that the guy who wrote the letter to the Ephesians, a man called Paul, it's this idea that he came up with because he actually wrote this letter to the church in Ephesus when he was in prison.

Okay, he was in prison and he wrote this letter. And the thing was, when he was in prison, it was that he was actually chained to a Roman soldier all the time.

So he had a lot of time to think about the armour that a Roman soldier might be wearing because he stayed at it 24 hours a day, right? And who can remember some of the things that Paul thought of as the armour of God?

[1:11] We had it just a bit earlier on when we were playing dress-up. Can anybody remember some of the aspects of the armour of God? Anybody? Anybody? So what have we got? Anybody? I think I heard somebody say it. Hands up. Come on. Somebody must remember one.

Oh, Ellen, sorry. What have we got? Helmet. Helmet. That's the helmet of? Salvation. The helmet of salvation. Well done, Ellen. Very good. Any others? Any others? What about this bit here? Anybody remember what goes there?

The? The breastplate. Close. The breastplate of righteousness. Very good. What about on your head? Do you want just a little cloth cap? What about you, Eli? Do you remember any? Well, you don't hit your head.

That's right. The helmet of salvation so you don't hit your head. And what about holding your trousers up? What's going to hold your trousers up? The belt of truth. Very good. So we've got lots of things. But do you know there's one thing that people often forget when they think about the armour of God?

And it's this. It's the shoes that a soldier would wear. Paul says, your feet must be fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

[2:25] Your feet must be fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. Now you'll think to yourself, shoes? Come on. A soldier, you think about a shield, you think about a helmet, you think about a sword. You think about all those things. You don't really think about the shoes.

But you know, shoes, they are so important, particularly for being ready. Now in my house, I don't know if some people here would recognise this.

In my house, we have a daily conversation. I say to my kids, I say to my kids, are you ready for school? Is your bag packed? Have you got your snack? Have you got your lunch? Have you got your water?

Have you got your books? Yes, yes, yes. So you're ready. You're 100% ready. Everything's completely 100% ready. Yep, ready to go. Why aren't you wearing any shoes? Oh yeah, yeah, sorry, I forgot my shoes. Now we're ready.

Now we're ready to go. So the shoes is the things that you really, really need to be ready. The thing about shoes is they're probably the most important thing about them is that they've got to be fitted right.

[3:27] You know, if your t-shirt's a bit big for you, it doesn't really matter that much. Or if your trousers are just a little bit small, it doesn't really matter that much, does it? But your shoes, they've got to be fitted just right.

And I'm going to prove it to you. But for this, I'm going to require two volunteers. Who wants to volunteer for me? Hands shut up there.

Evie, why don't you come? We need a little person. We've got a little person. We actually need a big person as well. Evie, perhaps you could choose a big person. Why don't you choose one? Why don't we choose your dad? Where's your dad gone? Where's your dad? Why don't we choose your dad? Yeah, your dad can come help, couldn't he? Why don't I have a round of applause for your dad? Right. Now, as you can see, wonderful.

Right, I want you guys just to stand here. And I actually need a couple of big strong likes. Perhaps Daniel and Davie, perhaps you could just see the back. You could just move the tables aside so we can get straight through to the back door.

[4:33] If you could just do that. Now, listen. Now, you might have noticed that Luke is quite tall. Evie, I dare say she's quite tall for her age, but overall she's quite a small person.

And this, I would imagine, will be reflected in the size of their feet. Now, Luke, what size feet are you? Nine and a half. Nine and a half. Well, there you go. Okay, very good. Evie, do you know what size you are?

What size are you? You're a 13. Now, I know that sounds like you're bigger than him, but that's kiddie size, I think. So, clearly, Luke has way bigger feet than Evie.

It's true. It's true. Do you know what I think we should do? I think we should make them swap shoes. Come on. Get them off. Swap shoes. Come on. Let's get them swapped.

That's it. Swap shoes as best you can. Yeah. Okay.

[5:32] Can you put dad's shoes on? Yeah. Very good. Very good. Okay. Okay. Right. Come on, Luke. Well done.

Okay. So, stand up here next to me, please. There we go. Right, Luke. Well done. Excellent. Now, what you're going to do, now what you're going to do is, in fact, would you be able to just move that?

Just a wee, is that a shock? It just helps. What we're going to do is we're going to have a race.

Okay? So, Luke and Evie are going to have a race. It's the first one to touch the back wall and run back to me and give me a high five.

Okay. On your marks, get set, go. Go. Oh, Luke's got to know. Come on, Evie.

That's it. Yes. Well done. Very good. Well done. Okay. Let's have a round of applause for Luke and Evie.

[6:33] Wonderful. Well done. Well done. You can swap back now. That's fine. So, clearly, as you can see, shoes that don't fit well, you can't run in them, can you?

You can't run in them. But you can imagine, if you were going to actually do a proper race like the Olympic 100 meters, you would have the shoes that fit in right really tight, really close to your feet, wouldn't you?

Well done. Now, it says that the shoes that we should have fitted on our feet is the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

And the gospel isn't just something that you believe in your head. It means the good news. It's just something that you believe in your head, a little, you know, a bit of news that you sign up to.

Yes, I believe in one God, the Father, the Creator of heaven on earth, Jesus Christ, His Son. You can say with your head, yes, I believe those things. But the gospel, it goes way, way deeper until it's not just closely surrounding your feet, but it closely surrounds your heart.

[7:44] And you believe the gospel, the good news that Jesus Christ has come and that He has established His kingdom on earth, that He has given the opportunity for sinners like you and me to come and believe and be friends with the Father who created us.

That truth, that gospel truth encloses tightly around your heart, just like a shoe encloses tightly around your foot.

Now, the gospel is a funny thing. You know, lots of people think that in the New Testament we are commanded to share the gospel.

We're commanded to share the gospel with our friends who don't yet know Jesus. Do you know that's not actually true? Nowhere in the New Testament does it say you should share the gospel as

a command.

Here's what it says that you must do with the gospel. It says that you must believe the gospel. You must believe it. But not just believe it with your head, believe it with your whole heart, right down to your very being.

[8:48] But this is what Jesus says. He says if you believe the gospel with your whole heart, then you will share it. It will come out of your mouth. Here's what He says. He says out of the fullness of the heart, the mouth speaks.

When you think about something, when you care about something, when you love something so deeply, you can't help talking about it. Can you? Just think of something that you really, really love, something you care about.

Maybe it's a hobby or an activity. Maybe it's some person. You can't help speaking about them. The same is true for the gospel of peace. If you love it, if you know it so deep in your heart, you can't help but talk about it to your friends, your neighbors, even your enemies.

You can't help but talk about the good things that God has done for us. You know, lots of people, they take their shoes off when they walk into a home.

Now let's not be a church that takes our gospel shoes off when we leave this building. God has given us the opportunity and the responsibility to share the good news that God has put into us with everybody that we know.

[10:12] In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah says this. He says, how beautiful are the feet on the mountains of those who bring good news.

How beautiful are the feet on the mountains. Someone who's taken a long journey through the mountains, their feet are smelly, they're sweaty, they're swollen.

They've probably been stepping through who knows what. How beautiful are those feet because they bring good news.

Friends, we as followers of Jesus have good news. It's beautiful news. It's that Jesus Christ loves us, cares about us, shows who he is by dying for us.

So that we might come to believe in him and have eternal life. Amen. Amen. I'm going to finish just there. But I'd love to finish just by praying.

[11:19] Perhaps you could pray with me. I said before that the command the New Testament gives us isn't to share the gospel, it's to believe the gospel. So I'm just going to give us a chance now.

Just maybe if you've never really put your faith in that gospel truth that Jesus died for you, that he loves you and cares about you and wants you to follow him. I'm going to give you the opportunity to do just now. So if that's you, if you think, yeah, I'd love to do that, I'm just going to pray.

So perhaps we can all just close our eyes briefly. And I'll just pray. And if that's you, you can just pray along with me. Lord Jesus, I thank you that your kingdom is come. Lord Jesus, I thank you that your kingdom is come.

You are alive is as true today as it was 2,000 years ago. Lord, I know that I've done some bad things. But I know that because you died for us and rose again, that we can be forgiven.

I ask forgiveness today. And I pray for strength to follow you today and for the rest of my life. Amen.

[12:23] Amen. Amen.