



COMMUNITY **DISCUSSION**
gr:ups **GUIDE**



SERMON PASSAGE: Ephesians 2:13-17



REVIEW THE SERMON

1. Read the prep verses (John 14:25-27) and the sermon's Bible passage to recall the content

 2. Briefly review the sermon outline
 - a. Introduction
 - i. Spiritual war → Soldier → Armor of God → Gospel shoes of peace
 - ii. 2 Timothy 2:3-4, Ephesians 6:10-15
 - b. Reality Check 1: We all need peace with God
 - i. Sin, war, conflict, hostility, enemies → peace
 - ii. Alienation = no hope of peace
 - c. Reality Check 2: We all receive peace with God the same way
 - i. Ephesians 2:8-9; not a result of our own hand
 - ii. It is a result of Jesus' atonement; Grace gift of God
 - iii. Ephesians 2:13-14
 - d. Personnel Responsibility: to be stewards of peace
 - i. We are peacemakers with those in Christ (Romans 12:18)
 1. Guard your mind (Romans 12:3)
 2. Guard your mouth (James 1:19)
 3. Graciously and swiftly deal with conflict
 - ii. We are peacemakers with those without Christ (Hebrews 12:14, Isaiah 52:7)
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DIGGING DEEPER

1. Reconciliation

At the heart of “peace” is reconciliation. In fact, one cannot have peace without reconciliation. The word “reconciliation” is one of those weighty church words that is critical to fully understand as it impacts all aspects of our faith and is a central element of salvation.

What do you think the word “reconciliation” means? _____

We see the concept of reconciliation weaved throughout Ephesians 2:13-17 and explicitly mentioned in verse 16 – “and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.” The word “reconcile” stems from the Greek words that have at their root in the transliterated word “*allasso*,” which means to change or exchange. That is, reconciliation involves a change in the relationship between God and man or between man and man. To be reconciled is to be restored to friendship, to harmony, or to favor.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 and answer these questions from the passage:

- a. The relationship between what two individuals is discussed? _____

- b. What has come between the two individuals? _____
- c. How is the relationship restored or reconciled? _____

Christ reconciled us to God (see Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18, Colossians 1:20-21) because our relationship with Him was broken. God is holy and we are sinful; a chasm between us and God existed that we could not bridge – we were once “far off” (Ephesians 2:13,17). Christ had to die on the cross to satisfy God’s judgment (i.e., “killing the hostility” in Ephesians 2:16) and make it possible for us to be reconciled to Him – for us to “be brought near” (Ephesians 2:13). The result of Jesus’ sacrifice is that our relationship has changed from enmity to friendship (see John 15:15). We were at war with God, but now we have the peace that transcends all human understanding (Philippians 4:7, Colossians 1:20). Reconciliation is, therefore, the results of Christ’s atonement of our sins.

Do you see what peace is now? Jesus is King of righteousness and King of peace (Hebrews 7:2). Reconciliation and peace go hand in hand. Peace is the outpouring result of reconciliation with God, the result of restoration of fellowship between us and God. CH Spurgeon stated, "There can be no peace between you and Christ while there is peace between you and sin." We have to be reconciled with God in order to have peace. We have to be in relationship with God in order to have peace. Thus, peace is being in or abiding in God's presence.

You cannot have peace unless you are reconciled with the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), Jesus. Have you asked Jesus to be Lord and Savior of your life?

You cannot have peace unless you are abiding with God. Are you intentionally in God's presence daily? Have you let something stand between you and your relationship with God?

2. Roman Battle Shoes

In Ephesians 6:10-20, Paul outlines the armor a Christian soldier is to be equipped with. He bases the spiritual armor on the armor of Roman soldiers, which he was all too familiar with. In particular, Pastor Eric referred to the "Gospel shoes of peace" in verse 15 – "as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace."

The Roman battle shoe was the caligae, a sandal-like shoe intended for both marching and battle. The shoe was made with intentional defensive and offensive purposes:

- The uppers were made of a separate piece of leather thongs which left the toes free but permitted the ankle to be bound in a web of leather. This made the shoe comfortable and breathable, permitting soldiers to march without pain or formation of blisters.
- A shoeless soldier was not very effective. The leather soles protected the Romans' bare feet from debris and rough areas of ground he encountered. The leather soles allowed him to march for miles without foot pain.
- The soles were heavily studded with nails and sometimes spikes (think of ancient cleats). The textured soles would permit soldiers to stand their ground during battle, permit them to traverse both rough and slippery terrain, and permit them to stomp on fallen enemies (think of all those micro-punctures as 100 Roman soldiers walked over you)..



Paul creates a wonderful word picture for us.

- Like Roman caligae, the Gospel shoes of peace protect us on the spiritual battlefield. They protect us from debris Satan places in our way (e.g., circumstances, insecurity, arguments, financial pressures, etc.). We have the Gospel of peace that points us to our sovereign Father. We can walk through painful tribulation and trails without fear.
- Just as the Roman soldiers were able to march great distances without aching or blistering feet, we can march through our Christian journey with assurance and comfort. Like soldiers, we are ready to nimbly advance, ready to share the Gospel message with the world (Romans 10:15).
- Just as the caligae help Roman soldiers remain sure footed and stand their ground, the Gospel shoes of peace help us stand our ground when we are confronted by evil, false doctrine, whispers of Satan, etc. We have the good news of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Nothing can shake the truth of our atonement and salvation (John 14:27). We can stand firm (2 Thessalonians 2:15). We have confidence of our position in Christ.

When you get out of bed in the morning and put on your spiritual armor, don't forget to put on your Gospel shoes of peace!



PRAYER

1. Pray that you will thirst after God's presence and in His presence receive peace.
 2. Praise God that He give us peace.
 3. Pray that you do not quench the Spirit's gift of peace.
 4. Pray the Living Hope Bryan spreads the peace of the Gospel with others.
 5. Begin to pray for the neighborhood assigned to your community group. Pray that God even now begins to soften hearts for the Gospel.
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