

Power Shoes

I'll admit to having a weakness for shoes. Not on the scale of Imelda Marcos, mind you. If you remember, she was the wife of a former Filipino leader who was reported to have a lot of shoes (although she denied the excesses of which she was accused). "I did not have three thousand pairs of shoes," she said. "I had one thousand and sixty." Oh really?! Well, at least my fondness for shoes isn't about quantity; it's about style. I like power shoes--high and bright!

You might not think of the Apostle Paul as the Jimmy Choo of his day but he had some important advice about what to wear and something essential to say about shoe design. "Put on the full armor of God," he says in Ephesians 6:11. And he further states that a critical part of that armor had to do with the appropriate shoes.

On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong.
(*Ephesians 6:15, New Century Version*)

Paul wrote these words from prison. Everyday he observed the Roman soldiers who guarded him. He was reminded of their battle gear and drew a spiritual analogy. So don't be misled into thinking that the shoes of peace Paul recommends are a passive, docile fashion accessory. They're the ultimate in power shoes, "killer shoes" in fact. The shoes of the Roman soldier were called *caligal* and were considered to be one of the most important parts of the soldier's equipment. In fact, some credit the attention given to the soldier's boots to be the secret of the Roman conquest.

Rick Renner in his excellent devotional book, *Sparkling Gems from the Greek*, gives valuable insight into these shoes.

The shoes of a Roman soldier were vicious weapons. They began at the top of the legs near the knees and extended down to the feet...The shoe itself was made of heavy pieces of metal, tied together with leather straps that were intermingled with bits of metal...The bottom of the shoes were affixed with sharp, dangerous, protruding spikes. (Pgs 157-158)

Renner also says the metal which wrapped around the calves protected the soldier when he marched through thorny and rocky terrain. He could keep on walking regardless of the obstacles. The spikes on the bottom of the shoes were designed to insure a firm foothold when in battle, thus making the soldier practically immovable. The shoes of peace guarantee a firm foothold. The Amplified Bible gives further clarification.

...And having shod your feet in preparation [to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness, and readiness produced by the good news] of the Gospel of peace. *Ephesians 6:15*

The prescribed foot wear of a soldier doesn't sound like the most comfortable shoes made; but when we are called on to take enemy territory and trod on his schemes, we will probably have to sacrifice a degree of comfort. Battle isn't easy. And we are in a battle for our own souls and the souls of others.

With the proper footwear we can stand our ground against the enemy's attempts to derail our purpose and sabotage us spiritually. The spikes held the Roman soldier firmly

in place when the enemy tried to push him over. The peace of God insures that we stand our ground despite rough spiritual terrain. The peace of God doesn't remove difficulties; it helps us to stand victoriously in the face of trouble. Note these encouraging words from Isaiah 26:3 AMP:

You will guard him and keep him in perfect and constant peace whose mind [both its inclination and its character] is stayed on You, because he commits himself to You, leans on You, and hopes confidently in You.

But not only do the shoes of peace help our personal spiritual battles, they also give us an advantage in taking over enemy territory for the Kingdom. We are obligated to carry the Gospel anywhere at any time. Proper battle dress gives us an offensive advantage in conquering new terrain. We can stomp all over the enemy. We can kick him with our "killer shoes." We can publish the good news to people who are desperate need to hear it (*Isaiah 52:7*). And we can rejoice in the words of Proverbs.

When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous stand firm forever. (*10:25*)

Luke also adds pertinent words to remember as you step out in your shoes of peace.

See what I've given you? Safe passage as you walk on snakes and scorpions, and protection from every assault of the Enemy. No one can put a hand on you. All the same, the great triumph is not in your authority over evil, but in God's authority over you and presence with you. Not what you do for God but what God does for you—that's the agenda for rejoicing." (*The Message, Luke 10:19-20*)

Okay ladies, put on your power shoes. They might not be red patent leather, but they are high, 'cause spikes are in!