

6:14 *Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 6:15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace...*

A Second Call to Readiness

Ready for Battle

- The phrase "*having girded your loins*" (6:14a) speaks of immediate readiness; the phrase "*having shod your feet*" describes for us the same idea.
- Paul is urging us not just to be aware of the spiritual battle in which we find ourselves, but to be in a posture of continual engagement with that battle.

Irony: Not Your Normal Weapons of War

- We've been told our "*struggle is not against flesh and blood*" (6:12). Paul tells the Corinthians, "*though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful*" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).
- Here's where our faith in God's Word and power are put to the test: this week we are told that God's weapon for our battle is peace. Do we believe Him?

The Gospel of Peace

Peace with God

- The Gospel has brought peace with God (Romans 5:1).
- "*All have sinned*" (Romans 3:23). Since is rebellion against God. Despite this, "*when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son*" (Romans 5:10). Jesus paid the penalty for the sins of the enemies who believe in Him.



Peace with Each Other

- In 2:11-22, the apostle describes the great work of the Gospel in bringing Jews and non-Jews together into one body, Christ.¹

¹ See also Romans 10:12-15; 1 Corinthians 12:13.

- God's purpose is, through Christ, to save from out of "*every tribe and tongue and people and nation*" (Revelation 5:9).²
- What are the implications of this Gospel-peacemaking?
 - Worldly divisions have no place in the Church (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11).
 - We will encounter no one unworthy to hear the Gospel.
- The spiritual forces of darkness are continually working in active opposition to this peace, and it is only the Gospel that can maintain that peace in the warrior-believer.
- The letter begins and ends with prayers of peace by the author for the readers (1:2; 6:23), as do his letters to the Romans (1:7; 15:33), the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 1:3; 13:11), and the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 1:2; 3:16).³ **What a principle: at the beginning and ending of my dealings with you, I wish you peace.**
- READ 4:1-3.

Peace That Defies Our Circumstances

- READ John 16:33; Philippians 4:4-7.

The Temptation: Growing Past the Gospel

- Sometimes we think that the Gospel is beginning-level material for the Christian life, and we need to grow past it into deeper things. That is not true. You never outgrow the Gospel.

² This is in fulfillment to God's covenantal promise to Abram, in which He decreed that in Abram (ultimately in Abram's descendant Christ) "*all the families of the earth will be blessed*" (Genesis 12:3).

³ Not to mention the letters that begin with a blessing of peace (1 Corinthians 1:3; Galatians 1:3; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:3; Philemon 3).

- An honest look at ourselves will reveal that at this moment we need to be reminded of the Gospel of peace.
 - When we think too much of ourselves spiritually (especially in comparison to others), we need the Gospel to remind us we have no reason to boast in ourselves, and must only boast in Christ.
 - When we are overwhelmed with our own failures, we need the Gospel of peace to remind us that – by faith in Christ – we do not stand on our own worthiness or goodness, but in Christ’s all-sufficient worthiness and goodness.

Announcing the King of Peace

Isaiah 52

- Paul is quoting Isaiah:
*“How lovely on the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good news,
Who announces peace
And brings good news of happiness,
Who announces salvation,
And says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”* (52:7; see also Nahum 1:15).⁴
- The concept of “gospel,” or “good news,” has its foundations in the Old Testament. Here it has four parts:
 1. It is “*peace*,” the Hebrew word *שָׁלוֹם*. It’s more than just a lack of war; it describes a wholeness, a completion. All things are in proper relation to each other. It comes from God.

⁴ It’s well-worth noting that the theme of “good news,” or Gospel, is developed throughout Isaiah (40:1-11; 41:25-29; 60:1-10; 61:1-11). This would make a good follow-up personal study for you.

2. It is “good tidings of good” (KJV). Again, the idea is restoration to the original “good” of creation before the Fall.
3. It is an announcement of “*salvation*.”⁵
4. The “*good news*” is that “*your God reigns!*” (52:7). It isn’t that God didn’t reign before: **the proclamation declares that God is about to make His reign manifest.**⁶ In the New Testament, the phrase “*Gospel of the Kingdom*” echoes this passage (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; Acts 8:12).

Gospel and the Reigning King

- **Peace increases as we submit all of our lives to the reign of the King.** All discord and lack of peace is ultimately traceable to rebellion against the King.
- Jesus came “*to guide our feet into the way of peace*” (Luke 1:77-79).
- Peace is the command of the King to His Church (Romans 12:18; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 4:1-3; Colossians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:13; 1 Timothy 3:3; 2 Timothy 2:22; Titus 3:2; Hebrews 12:14; James 3:17; 1 Peter 3:11; 2 Peter 3:14).
- Peace is a sign of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life (Romans 8:6; 14:17; 2 Corinthians 13:11).
- “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God*” (Matthew 5:9).

⁵ “*Salvation*” is the Hebrew word *יְשׁוּעָה*, from which the name “Jesus” comes (Matthew 1:21). It doesn’t look like it in English, but Isaiah’s name itself is very similar to this word, too.

⁶ The N.T. proclamations of the nearness of the Kingdom of God echo this phrase (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9,11).