

***Overcome the Enemy's Lullabies with***

**THE SHOES OF READINESS**

**Ephesians 6:10-18**

Have you ever noticed that many of the good things God has given us have a dangerous side? Fire. Physical love. Technology. Even God's amazing grace.

Our enemy, the devil, may not be able to take away the benefits we have through Christ, but he does everything in his power to keep us from living in the light of those benefit, and he has a well-worn-strategy to make it happen. Thankfully, God has given us everything we need to overcome. Ephesians 6:10-18 describes the equipment God has given us in terms of a soldier's armour.

Last week we saw that one of Satan's main weapons against us consists of accusations. By accusing us of wrongdoing he wants to fill us with guilt and drain our authority. The way we overcome Satan's accusations is by holding up the breastplate of Jesus' righteousness. When the devil throws our guilt in our face and tells us that we deserve death and hell, we can stand up and say, "Yes, I deserve death and hell. What of it! I know someone who tasted death and hell on my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ. Where he is there I shall be also." That's amazing grace! How sweet the sound!

When the devil sees that he can't defeat us with accusations, he doesn't leave us alone. No, he quickly turns the breastplate of Jesus' righteousness into a weapon against us. He does that by turning our songs of amazing grace into lullabies designed to put us to sleep. Here's how his lullaby goes ...

- On the one hand ... If nothing you do makes God love you any more, then there's nothing you really need to do to win his favour and receive eternal life. You don't need to get baptized. You don't need to read your Bible. You don't need to fellowship with Christians, etc.

- On the other hand ... If nothing you do makes God love you any less, then nothing is forbidden. No one can judge you for the quality and quantity of food you eat. No one has the right to criticize you for the words you use and how you talk. No one can say anything about the quality and the quantity of the entertainment you consume, etc.

By convincing us of these things, Satan keeps us from experiencing the benefits we have through Christ. In order to overcome the devil's lullaby, we need to put on "the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."

- The gospel of peace assures us that we are in good standing with God. Therefore our souls are safe and our future is secure no matter what happens to us.
- That standing with God equips and prepares us to live and die for God and his kingdom without fear or reservation. Because of our standing, we can go through the fire and the flood for God without fear.
- It's as we act on that readiness that the benefits we have through Christ become more than nice ideas. It's as we live and die for God that the love of God, the hope of heaven and our God-given purpose all become realities that we experience in real time.

What is the Spirit of God prompting you to do these days? Is he asking you to cross the street to share Christ's love with your neighbour? Is he calling you to cross the ocean to share the Gospel in another part of the world? Is he asking you to cross the room and make things right with a fellow Christian? Or is he asking you to stay right where you are in a difficult situation?

The thought of doing any one of those things might feel like death, and, who knows, it might mean that. Because of your standing with God, you are equipped. You don't need to fear the consequences of doing the right thing. Are you ready?