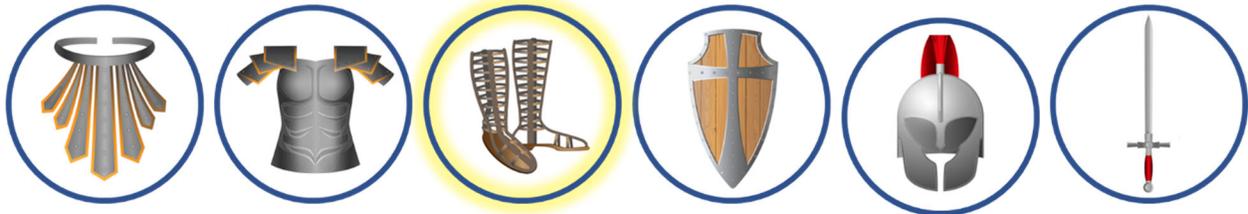




Being Prepared for Battle

Lesson #3 – Feet Fitted with Readiness

Thursday, January 26, 2023 | MBC Men's Group



Series Overview

As in the battlefields of yesterday, there are winners and there are losers; those who survive and those who die. Often, those who won did so because they were better prepared than their enemy because they had the skills, know-how, passion, and tools to be victorious. In the battle for Christianity, we are offered a similar choice – to be prepared for battle or not.

In this series we'll explore Ephesians 6 where Paul does a masterful job laying out the elements of what we call **The Full Armor of God**. Nowhere in the New Testament does a writer so clearly outline the battle gear required for every Christian warrior, including the (1) belt of truth, (2) breastplate of righteousness, (3) feet fitted with readiness, (4) shield of faith, (5) helmet of salvation, and the (6) sword of the Spirit that is the Word of God. Ironically, of the six provided elements, only one was offensive (i.e., sword of the Spirit).

Tonight's Overview

Tonight, we're going to discuss the **third element** of The Full Armor of God – **feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace**. Last week we discussed the Breastplate of Righteousness and that in battle one of the most venerable part of a soldier's body is his heart. If you can get to the soldier's heart, you can literally kill him. Ironically, the same is true in our spiritual lives. **We also talked about the fact that the mind tells the body what to do, but the heart tells the mind what to think**. Two weeks ago, we discussed the Belt of Truth and the importance of having a firm foundation rooted in truth.

It's interesting to talk about feet, because our feet probably get some of the least attention of our bodies, but without feet there is no action. If you've ever sprang an ankle or had a broken foot, you know exactly what I mean. Tonight, I'm going to ask for a little grace as I'm going to stretch the context of what Paul might have meant when he wrote this passage. Everything we'll discuss tonight is straight from the Bible, but I hate to waste an opportunity for us to discuss running towards challenges and running away from temptation and sin. When I hear the phrase **feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace** four concepts come to mind.

1. **Feet fitted:** You need shoes, and you need to wear your shoes and not someone else's shoes! What I mean by this is God designed you with special talents, gifts, passions, and opportunities. Part of your job is to figure out how God has wired you. I like taking some of the tests available today including the DISC test, the Spiritual Gift inventory, and the Five Voices test (see 5voices.com). As Mark Twain once said, "The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why." **Let's find out why!**
2. **Direction:** Our feet can move us towards the battle, but there is also a time to retreat. Retreating can involve "unplugging" from the world and spending time with God (Psalm 46:1 – *Be still and know that I am God...*). There is also a time to retreat and move away from temptation and sin. One of the best

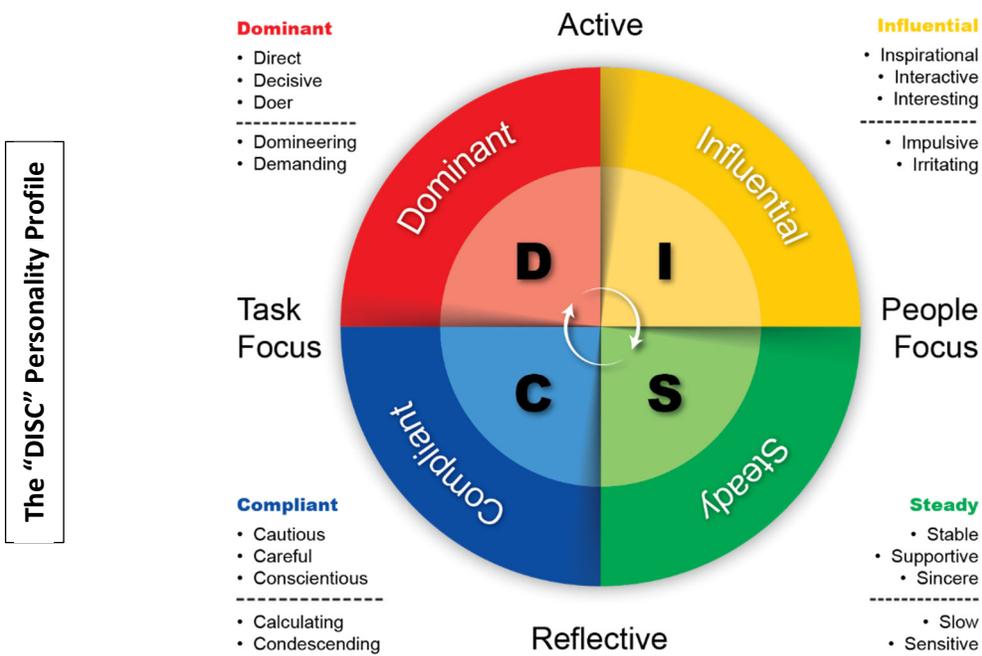


THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

examples of this in the Bible is Joseph and his running away from the wife of Potiphar (Genesis 39). We need to make sure our feet are pointing us in the right direction!

3. **Preparation:** We need to be ready for battle. Just like in a football game, you don't tie your shoes after you go on the field. You get dressed in the locker room so by the time you run into the field you're ready to play. Let's not let **lack of preparation** keep us out of the game God has prepared for us.
4. **Peace:** Remember the aim of every war is ultimately peace. The greatest peace in the world comes from know the Gospel of Jesus Christ. First, we find peace and comfort in knowing Jesus as Lord and Savior, then our feet carry us to share the Gospel with others. Stress is probably the greatest joy-killer that exists for us. Look at the list below and identify factors that might contribute to your stress level.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial debt | <input type="checkbox"/> Boss | <input type="checkbox"/> Aging parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Money |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work / career | <input type="checkbox"/> Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage / wife | <input type="checkbox"/> Customers | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children / family | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement | <input type="checkbox"/> Possessions | <input type="checkbox"/> The future |





Ephesians 6:10-18: ¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

John 14:27 (NIV): Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16:33 (NIV): I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV): ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Questions

1. Do you know your "shoe size"? By this we mean the following.

Your personality type (circle the primary): Dominant | Influential | Steady | Compliant

You Voice (circle the primary): Nurturer | Creative | Guardian | Connector | Pioneer

Your Spiritual Gift(s) (list the primary): 6 _____

What is your passion? Said another way, what motivates you?

2. In Genesis 39 we read the story about Joseph and Potiphar. How do you think Joseph's story would have been different if he had not exhibited the level of integrity we observe in his fleeing from her advances?
3. What brings stress in your life? Go back to the checklist on page 2. How do Jesus' words in John 14:27 and John 16:33 bring perspective to this discussion?
4. Do you feel comfortable sharing the Gospel? If not, share with your group what makes you uncomfortable. For those who do feel comfortable, feel free to share how you have shared the Gospel in the past.
5. How important is peace in the life of the Believer? Read Galatians 5:22 and discuss where it falls in the list of the Fruit of the Spirit.

