

“THE SANDALS”

(This discourse is by J. A. Meggison and is found on page 136 of the 1916 Convention Report.)

Our feet represent our walk in life, our conduct. What do we wear shoes or sandals for? To protect our feet from injury. Sometimes the road is rough and rocky, where sharp points would enter the feet and cut them up so that we would not be able to walk very far nor very fast. So then the sandals help to protect our feet from injury, so that we can walk faster and cover more ground in a given time. Now applying this to our walk or conduct in life we are told that God has provided this part of the Armor (for it is called the “Armor of God”) so that we might be protected from many things in the pathway of life, which otherwise would injure our ability to make progress.

The apostle tells us that these sandals are the *Preparation of the Gospel of Peace*. The gospel of peace, the good news of the coming kingdom, the kingdom of peace, over which the Prince of Peace reigns. The kingdom which will bring peace to the broken hearts of all the poor sin-sick world, who have been waiting with longing, for the manifestation of the sons of God, with the hope that they also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

But what is meant by the *preparation* of the gospel of peace? This always puzzled me. I could have seen what was meant if it had been stated “the sandals of peace,” or “the sandals of the gospel of peace.” But what is meant by the *preparation*? We hear a great deal these days about preparation and preparedness, and the thought in the minds of all is that we must prepare for war in order that we may have peace. We also remember that the Lord told his people to prepare, in fact has warned the whole world to prepare for the coming judgment day, for all men would there have to give an account of what they had done in the present life, a reward for good deeds, and a measure of punishment for willful evil deeds, which had injured others. Some have prepared one way and others another way. But these sandals will furnish *a special kind of preparedness in conduct; the preparedness which the spirit of the gospel of peace gives to those who need it.*

The Lord tells us in Heb. 12:14: “...follow peace with all men.” Rom. 14:19: “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace.” Psalm 34:14: “Seek peace and pursue it.” In Luke 1:79 we are told: “The dayspring from on high hath visited us—to guide our feet in the way of peace.” These texts give us the thought that in our walk in life we are to seek for the things which make for peace, not to be strife breeders, but to be peacemakers. Our Lord said, Matt. 5:9: “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.” So then we can follow peaceful methods of telling the truth to people, not try to brow-beat them, nor try to hammer the truth into them, nor tell it in such a way as to make them think that we know it all and they know nothing. But rather

we are to agree with them in as far as we can, let them know that we are glad that they see certain things clearly, and then suggest gently to them parts of the truth which are related to the things which they can already see, a question form being the most effective. The Lord did not ask us to believe all the truth at once but fed us little by little as we were able to receive it. He spoke the truth in love to us and for us, and we are to do the same to others—to watch for some way we can tell it to them so they can see it, that they might have the happiness which we have.

Then let us not discuss the faults of others, or be busy-bodies in other people's business, for these things will gender strife. The apostle tells us: "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife." (2 Tim. 2:23) "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee." Psalm 122:6.

Let not our conduct be such as will irritate others, but rather seek to avoid things which annoy others, be careful and thoughtful. Practice the principles of the kingdom which we preach, seeking always the good of others. We are told to be "Urgent, in season, out of season." (2 Tim. 4:2) That is to speak the truth at opportune times. "A word in season, how good it is." Do not thrust the truth upon people when their minds are manifestly not ready for it, wait till a more opportune time.

By thus wearing the sandals of peace we will be able to tell much more truth to people and to do much more good. We will make faster progress ourselves, and help others more. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that publish peace; that bring good tidings of good, that publish salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." (Isa. 52:7) Let us prepare ourselves, then with the conduct of peace, and help others to prepare also, and wear these sandals always, for they will never wear out.