

## Shoes and Sandals

“Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” Exodus 3:5

Shoes are for the ordinary person. Holy sandals are for the disciples of our Lord Jesus. There is a difference. We must ask God to make us people who walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We begin to do that with the basics. Shoes. Or better, sandals.

Live a good life, dear reader. This means to let people be able to count on you, all the time. It means to tell the truth, and be known as a person of character. Charles Spurgeon, one of the great revival preachers, wrote, “A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.” Good shoe guidance. Lace that one up if you can!

Think how the shoes of Christ can do miracles, change lives, and bring hope to all in need. Putting on the shoes of Christ makes things possible which before we would never dream of. Actress Marilyn Monroe once said, “Give a girl the right shoes, and she can conquer the world.” Of course her meaning was different, but the point is the same. The shoes of Jesus can conquer the universe!

Perhaps a good exercise to grow us in grace would be to think what it would be like to walk in someone else’s shoes. A famous person. A holy person. A person who is hungry every day. A person who has more needs than you.

“Empathy,” emotes Daniel Pink, “is about standing in someone else's shoes, feeling with his or her heart, seeing with his or her eyes. Not only is empathy hard to outsource and automate, but it makes the world a better place.”

Think about the shoes you have. How many? How old? What purpose are they for? Have you walked a mile for others in them, or do you walk mostly for yourself? Jesus’ sandals are for walking with him and those in need.

Shoe perspective helps balance our thinking. For instance, if we are always complaining about what we don’t have, or are sad because of our current situation, it helps to look toward others who might have more needs than us. “I had the blues because I had no shoes until upon the street; I met a man who had no feet.”~ Denis Waitley

Now that might adjust our thinking a little bit. We must be thankful for all we have, whether small or large. Joni Earnst wrote of some early times in her life when she had very little. Shoe doctrine gives us perspective.

“Growing up,” she says, “I had only one good pair of shoes. So on rainy school days, my mom would slip plastic bread bags over them to keep them dry. But I was never embarrassed. Because

the school bus would be filled with rows and rows of young Iowans with bread bags slipped over their feet.”

It is helpful to remember that Jesus wore sandals. The weather in Palestine was seldom cold, but there was dust and dirt and water and Roman paved roads. Sandal designers had to think of that when they made them.

It is not, however, the type of shoes we wear that determines who we are. It is the kind of person that we are that determines who is in our shoes. Think about the person who wears your shoes. Think about how your shoes have changed over the years. From the baby shoes that were placed on your feet before you could even talk, to the ones you wear right now. Does Jesus walk in those shoes? Or do you? There’s a big difference.

The Bible says that we are to be like Jesus. Going even further, as we grow, Christ lives in us. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet **not I, but Christ** liveth in me: ... by the faith of The Son of God, he who has loved **us** and has given himself for **us**.”

So, in simple terms, we must grow until people see Jesus in our shoes, not us.

It’s a little difficult to read, but this old English prose helps us to focus more on Christ, from our sandals to our hearts.

“The Holy Night we sate among the stalls at Bethlehem; The dumb kine from their fodder turning them, Softened their horned faces To almost human gazes Toward the newly Born: The simple shepherds from the star-lit brooks Brought visionary looks, As yet in their astonished hearing rung The strange sweet angel-tongue: The magi of the East, in sandals worn, Knelt reverent, sweeping round, With long pale beards, their gifts upon the ground, The incense, myrrh, and gold These baby hands were impotent to hold: So let all earthlies and celestials wait Upon thy royal state. Sleep, sleep, my kingly One!”~Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Look at your shoes. Do they belong to Jesus, or to you? The answer to that question will tell you whether you walk with the world, or with Jesus, and the rest of his disciples.