

In the year since I last wrote a devotion for this site, I have come a long way in recovering from depression. Only on a rare day will it surface. The relief is wonderful, but I wonder how I let a year go by without writing a single page. I did write a book to have it rejected for lack of personal information concerning how I have experienced God's mercy and restoration. A source in publishing told me it is not enough to write that God's word is dependable. I must include how I know these truths are solid, how I experienced God's rescue. So, the book must be revised. I plan to get started... today.

Concerning this devotion, I pick up in Ephesians chapter 6, verse 15. This verse has always puzzled me. The common teaching I hear, and it's not wrong, is where we (spiritually) wear combat boots, ready to take the gospel into the world. Militant Christianity is necessary at times when we have to defend the faith, but soldiers march more than they fight. It is the nature of military duty. When I think of our walk as followers of Christ, of our stand as believers in a world hostile to Christianity, I see how being fitted with the ability to walk and stand could also be what Paul was writing of here.

When Jesus lived here among us, He lived by example. He went about doing good as the saying goes, and this drew people to Him. Much of our lives are lived out doing mundane things that do not seem to matter. Especially in light of eternity. The pros do the Great Kingdom things. I'm just trying to get by, pay the rent, buy groceries. Really, how is walking in the gospel of peace going to change anything?

Is it possible that how we live each day will ever make a difference in the life of another? I am speaking of being an encouragement, or relieving some distress, or **'giving a drink of cold water to a little one...'** (Matthew 10:42)

Have you been discouraged about your lack of service to God? Not feeling worthy enough to make a difference? Read carefully these words of Paul's in Colossians 3:12-
"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

Here is the same thought as putting on footwear to walk in Christ. We clothe ourselves and walk in compassion when we pause and take that breath before blowing up in frustration and speak/react kindly instead. It is hard, I know. Been there recently.

The payoff, however, is that walking in the gospel like this slowly changes us...

If we allow it.

D. Franklin Bradley – dfbradley@hopesharbor.net