

the pilgrim's foot is that which is here mentioned, namely, the peace which comes from the gospel, the preparation of heart and life, which springs of a full knowledge, reception, and experience of the gospel in our souls! What does it mean? It means, first, that a *sense of perfect peace with God* is the grandest thing in all the world to travel through life with. Let a man know that his sins are forgiven him for Christ's name's sake, that he is reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and that between him and God there is no ground of difference—what a joyful pilgrim he becomes! When we know that as the Lord looks on us his glance is full of infinite, undivided affection, that he sees us in Jesus Christ as cleansed from every speck of sin, and as "accepted in the beloved," that by virtue of a complete atonement we are for ever reconciled to God, then do we march through life without fear, booted and basked for all the exigencies of the way; yea, ready to plunge through fire and water, thorn and thistle, brake and briar, without fear. A man at peace with God dreads neither the ills of life nor the terrors of death; poverty, sickness, persecution, pain have lost their sting when sin is pardoned. What is there a man needs to fear when he knows that in no affliction will there be any trace of the judicial anger of God, but all will come from a Father's hand, and work his lasting good? Goliath had greaves of brass upon his legs, but he is better armed who wears a full assurance of peace with God through the gospel; he shall tread down his enemies, and crush them as grapes in the wine-press. His stores shall be iron and brass, and shod with them he shall stand upon the high places of the earth, and his feet shall not slip. Achilles received a deadly wound in the heel, but no arrow can pierce the heel of the man whose foot is sandalled with reconciliation by atoning blood. Many

a warrior has fainted on the march and dropped from the ranks exhausted, but no weariness of the way can happen to the man who is upheld by the eternal God, for his strength shall daily be renewed.

The preparation of the gospel of peace here mentioned must be understood to comprehend more than the legal peace of justification by faith: if we would enjoy the fullest comfort of the well-shod pilgrim we must have the exceeding peace which springs from intimate, undisturbed communion with God. We should pray not only to feel that we have been brought out of our natural enmity into peace with God, so as to be no more culprits but children, but also to dwell in the full joy of our new relationship. It is a sweet thing for a child of God to feel that he is so acting that his heavenly Father has no reason for walking contrary to him. You know right well that as a child of God you will not be condemned and cast away as an alien, but you also know that as a child you may greatly displease your Father, and render it needful for him to frown upon you and visit you with stripes; now this you should with the utmost diligence and prayerfulness labour to prevent. There are times when the Lord of pilgrims hides his face from them in sore displeasure, and then it is very hard travelling. Life is "a great and terrible wilderness" when the Lord's presence is withdrawn. The more a man loves the Lord the more does he suffer when there is a temporary suspension of happy communion between his soul and heaven, and he cannot be happy again till he knows that he is fully restored to the paternal favor. Oh, child of God, you will very soon have your feet torn with the briars of the way if you do not abide in fellowship with God. When Adam had lost his oneness with God he found out that he was naked, and so will you if you lose your communion with Jesus.