

# Beautiful Feet

By Deb Burma

*This Bible study is an excerpt from a four-session CPH Bible study series, available for purchase beginning July 1 as a downloadable resource, complete with PowerPoint® presentation, leader's materials, and participant handouts.*

## The Warm-up

Open with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your beautiful feet as you walk in God's Word.

Look down at your feet right now. Go ahead. Take a good look and smile. They are beautiful. Are they picture-perfect model's feet with delicately polished nails, soft heels, and attractive arches? Are they beautiful because of the classy shoes you are sporting? Perhaps your weary feet reveal crooked toes, calluses, blisters, and bunions. No matter their outward condition, let's discover their beauty.

Our feet take us many places in our walk through this life. Along the way, we slip in and out of lots of styles of shoes, each style representing a portion of our walk with the Lord. As we continue our walk of faith, we come to learn our "shoe size" gifts and abilities, allowing us to know just which boxes to pull off the shelf for the various parts of our walk. Some days we don high heels; other days we lounge in slippers.

Today we pull out a box labeled "Athletic Shoes." Nothing beats a well-laced, arch-supporting, great-fitting pair of athletic shoes for a good workout. These shoes equip our *beautiful* feet for the task at hand, signifying we are ready for the long run!

Now open your Bibles to **Romans 10:13–15**. In verse 15, the apostle Paul quotes the words of Isaiah, who spoke of the good news sent by messengers, running to declare Israel's release from captivity in Babylon. (See **Isaiah 52:7**.) Now Paul uses the same words to describe the messengers sent to declare the ultimate Good News: our release from captivity to sin!

Read about this Good News! **John 3:16; Acts 4:10–12; Romans 3:22–24; Romans 6:23; and 1 Corinthians 15:3–4**. How do these verses give us just a small taste of the beautiful Gospel message woven throughout God's Word?

## The Long Run

The message of Good News brought by the messenger in Romans was so beautiful that its beauty was transferred TO the messenger, declaring the messenger's feet *beautiful*! (No matter how they really looked!) With the Gospel message in your hands and athletic shoes on your beautiful feet, YOU are the messenger! As a Christian, you have been SENT to run with the Good News to a world in need of a Savior.



Regardless of their physical appearance, your feet are beautiful! According to **Romans 10:15**, what gives them their beauty?

You may be thinking, "I don't know if I have what it takes to be a messenger." However, you do not have a choice. All believers in Christ are messengers. What does **1 Peter 3:15** tell you in this regard?

Walking in the Word with your beautiful feet, you will receive strength and courage from the Lord to boldly declare the Gospel of hope to people without hope.

Clad in your athletic shoes, you can share the Good News in your walk (or run!):

1. Think of three people in your life who do not appear to have faith. Write down their names. Pray that God would give you an open door of opportunity to talk about Jesus with them. Ask the Holy Spirit to work faith in their hearts. You are just the faithful messenger.
2. Look for ways to develop relationships with non-believers. Get involved in a local club or community organization. Make friends with people in your neighborhood. Developing trust and mutual respect can be the key to an open door and a listening ear. List some ways you will try to develop these relationships. Over time, you will find many opportunities to share your faith.
3. Look for opportunities to plant seeds. Share something you heard at church. Play Christian music in your car and at home. Pray before your meal at a restaurant. Send baked goods to your neighbors or to your child's teachers with words attached, such as "Jesus loves you," or "Praying for you." Speak positively and excitedly about your faith; you never know who is listening! What other ideas for seeds do you have?
4. Invite people to worship. You may be pleasantly surprised to find that all they need is a friend who cares enough to ask — a friend who will meet them there, so they can meet Jesus.

5. Join a mission team. Is the Lord leading your beautiful feet to be active in local missions or travel with others on a mission trip? Short-term and long-term mission opportunities abound in your local area, across the United States, and overseas. Maybe your “shoe size” gifts and abilities are the perfect addition to a team on a mission to share the Light of Christ in a dark and dying world.
6. Support missions. Your beautiful feet have the amazing ability to bring Good News to people all over the world without even going out the door! While your athletic shoes may never feel the sand of the African desert, the sidewalks of the inner city, or the floor of a soup kitchen, they are partners in the Gospel when they support other beautiful feet! You can pray for missionaries supported by your church or district, as well as those supported by the LWML and LCMS World Mission. You can learn about their specific goals and needs, and you can walk beside them in prayer and through financial support or other gifts, as needed.

Read **Philippians 1:4–6**. List several ways you can have a “partnership in the Gospel.” Where is the Lord leading you to carry the Good News?

Whether you join a mission team or support those who have, you also partner with fellow believers to carry the Good News to a world in need of a Savior. He will continue to equip your beautiful feet to carry the Good News!

It doesn't matter whether you are sporting expensive, name-brand athletic shoes or your everyday flat-footed sneakers. The people's lives touched with the Gospel of Jesus won't care or remember the shoes you wore. They WILL remember that you walked beside them and into their lives.

They won't see your *beautiful feet*; they'll see Jesus.

### The Cool Down

Read **Ephesians 6:19–20**. How can you use Paul's prayer request to pray for those in the mission field today? In what other ways can you provide support?

**Closing Prayer:** Dear Lord, You have given us beautiful feet to carry Your Good News to the world! Grow us and guide us in Your Word, that we may be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give the reason for the hope that we have. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit, and show us how and where You would have us run with the Gospel, so that others may receive the free gift of salvation in Christ. In His name we pray. Amen.

*Deb Burma is a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Janesville, Wisconsin, where her husband, Rev. Cory, serves as associate pastor. A mother of three, Deb co-leads a special-events women's ministry, WWW: Women Walking in the Word.*

This material is an adaptation of the CPH downloadable Bible study, *Beautiful Feet*, by Deb Burma to be released in July 2009, copyright © 2009 Concordia Publishing House. Adapted and used with permission. For pre-ordering and purchasing information, please contact CPH at 800-325-3040 or visit CPH on the web at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) [keyword: Beautiful Feet].

bible study

## The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail

By Rev. Michael Mattil

[For Bible study leader notes and Bible passages, click on the Quarterly icon at [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) or contact the LWML Office.]

Open with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide your study of the Word.

Just recently I was paying bills and came across a credit card receipt from a dress shop in the mall. It showed a purchase of a dress for \$300. I tried to remain calm, but I'm sure my voice gave away my angry mood when I confronted Cheryl with the bill. “How could you do this?” I demanded. Cheryl replied, “I don't know. I was walking past the store and saw it in the window and before I knew it, I was trying it on. It was like the Devil was whispering to me, ‘Gee, you look great in that dress. You should buy it.’” I told her, “Honey, you know how to deal with the Devil!” Just tell him, “Get behind me,

**\$300!**

Satan!” Cheryl said, “I did! I told him to get behind me. And he said, ‘It looks great from back here, too.’”

We can laugh, but the truth is that we all do battle with Satan every day. The church is under constant attack. Satan and his forces are always attacking, always on the offensive, always looking to take us down. We're in a fight. We're in a battle. Paul reminds us of this in the context of putting on the armor of God: **“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 (Ephesians 6:12).”**

Read **Matthew 16:18**. This passage is a promise of victory for God's people. It tells us that Satan is not the victor — Jesus is. He has won the victory. Luther wrote: “All Christians are Peters on account of the confession which Peter here makes, which is the rock on which Peter and all Peters are built.” So the promise is not just for Peter but also for the people who profess and possess the faith that Peter expressed here. We are all a part of the