

## SHOE-LEATHER

by Pastor Bert

Trying to walk on roads covered with black-ice, I was reminded how important it is to have the proper footwear. Every step made me vulnerable to falling; every passing car called into question my ability to get out of the way. No wonder the Lord spoke His truth to us in terms of what's on our feet: He told Moses, and later Joshua, to take off their shoes as they stood in His presence, making them humble and vulnerable before Him. But later, He told us to have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel as we walk out into the world - sure-footed, ready to advance and to evade the attacks of the evil one.

The Lord's instruction reflects how we live every day: In the warmth and safety of our homes, we kick off our shoes and shuffle about sock-footed. But before we go out the door, we put on dress shoes, running shoes, barn boots, athletic cleats, or steel-toes work boots – we go prepared for whatever hostile world our tender feet will encounter. So today, we gather before the Lord, as tender and vulnerable as a barefoot child. (Which, by the way, is why we need to be so careful in our dealing with one another: we are also vulnerable to one another, as we stand barefoot before the Lord.) But when we leave this place, God calls us to walk out into the world prepared for temptations' slippery slopes and for the world's jaded words and ideas which will cut our faith to ribbons – prepared by making his truth of the gospel, the shoe leather of our lives.