



# A BRUTAL BATTLE

Disciples & Early Church • U6#4 1st-3rd Gr. • Dec.22, 2024

## Concept

God's armor strengthens God's children for spiritual battle.

## Goal

Students will learn that God has provided us with powerful protection to stand strong against Satan and his lies.

## Passage

Ephesians 6:10-20

Key Verse: "... be strong in the Lord, and... put on the full armor of God."

Ephesians 6:10, 11 (NASB)

## Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p><b>Lesson*:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Soldier outline &amp; armor pieces (from Activity Station)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Activity #2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>2 plastic balls</i></li> <li>• <i>1 plastic trash can lid</i></li> <li>• <i>1 plastic sword</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Stations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Soldier outline &amp; armor pieces</i></li> <li>• <i>The Children's Encyclopedia of Bible Times, Mark Water</i></li> <li>• <i>"Roman Armor/Armor of God" handout, 1/student</i></li> <li>• <i>Card stock shields, 1/child</i></li> <li>• <i>10" x 1 1/2" card stock strips, 1/child</i></li> <li>• <i>Masking tape</i></li> <li>• <i>Scissors</i></li> <li>• <i>Markers</i></li> </ul>

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

# Background Information (for the teacher)

Disciples & Early Church • U6#4 1st-3rd Grade • Dec.22, 2024

"The devil made me do it" is a cute little saying some people flippantly give as an excuse for their behavior. The truth is that Satan is constantly scheming to immobilize us in the spiritual battle. "The enmity of Satan has always been against the Person of God alone, and not against humanity. It is only when we have 'partaken of the divine nature' that we are possessed with a new and mighty foe. The thrusts of his 'fiery darts' are aimed at God who indwells us. However, the conflict is real and the foe is superhuman. 'Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles (strategies) of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places' (Ephesians 6:10-12). These world-rulers of the darkness of this age, the spiritual powers of wickedness, who are here said to wage a ceaseless conflict against us, cannot be overcome by human strategy or strength.

The Bible lends no sanction to foolish suppositions that the devil will flee at the mere resistance of a determined human will. We are to 'resist the devil,' but it must be done 'steadfast in the faith,' and while 'submitting' ourselves unto God (James 4:7; I Peter 5:9). Satan, being by creation superior to all other creatures cannot be conquered by one of them. Even Michael the archangel, we are told, 'when contending with the devil...durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.' Michael the archangel does not contend with Satan. He must depend on the power of Another; thus acting on a principle of faith, rather than on a principle of works. Certainly a Christian, with all his limitations, must appeal to the power of God in the conflict with this mighty foe, and he is directed to do this: 'Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (one).' (Ephesians 6:16)

"The believer's conflict with Satan is as fierce and unceasing as that mighty being can make it. Before him we of ourselves are as nothing; but God has anticipated our helplessness and provided a perfect victory through the indwelling Spirit: 'Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world' (I John 4:4)."[1]

The message for the children is the truth that Satan will oppose the work that we do for God's kingdom, but we have the powerful protection of the armor of God to stand strong. It is important for them to know what that armor is and how to put it on.

[1] Lewis Sperry Chafer, He That is Spiritual, ©1967, Zondervan Publishers, p.103.

## Set Up

- **Instructions:** Access & listen to Gary DeLashmutt's teaching, "Effective Spiritual Warfare," at <https://teachings.dwellcc.org/teaching/1366>. The teaching is transcribed at the bottom of the web page if you'd rather read it.
- **Teacher Note:** Pray specifically this week for God's protection and the binding of the evil one from confusion or distraction. As you open the class time with prayer ask for clear thinking and God's protection.

### Activity Stations:

- **Craft – Shield**
  - **Instructions:** Have children decorate their shields or draw pictures of things that protect them (e.g., parents, guardians, God, dog, helmets, seat belts, knee pads, etc.) in the four quadrants. Glue a card stock strip on the back to use as a handle.
- **Research – The Roman Soldier's Armor**
  - **Instructions:** Make sure there is a teacher at this station to help the students read the handout. Give students a copy of "Roman Armor/Armor of God" and have them share the copies with the pictures. Have them read **page 61 of *The Children's Encyclopedia of Bible Times*** for more information. Tell the students to read and study carefully so they will be ready to participate in the quiz show later to see how much they've learned. Hang the soldier outline on the whiteboard using the heavy magnets or masking tape. If you use masking tape, please carefully remove the tape when you take the soldier down. Once they have done the research see if the students can hang, in order, the different pieces of armor on the soldier.

Every day we hear on the news about wars around the world. As we go about our daily lives, we are naturally more concerned about what is going on around us and don't think about war that is going on in other parts of the world. But just because we aren't involved in the war doesn't mean that it doesn't exist. In Ephesians 6, Paul wrote about a war that we don't see but goes on every day right here where we live. It is a spiritual war.

Listen as I read **Ephesians 6:10-12**.

- Who are the 2 sides in the spiritual war? (Christians & spiritual powers of evil)
- Why do you think the 2 sides in the spiritual war are fighting? (Allow students to answer.)
- Holding your place in Ephesians 6, turn to 2 Corinthians 4:3-6. Listen as I read it. Who is the leader of the side opposing God? (Satan, vs.4.)
- What are Satan and his forces trying to do in this war? (Blind the minds of non- Christians to the truth to keep it hidden from them; vs.3, 4.)
- Who are the people in God's army? (They are Christians, servants for Jesus; v.5.)
- What are they trying to do? (They are trying to tell people about Christ, let the light shine through them; vs.5, 6.)

## Incorporation Lg. Group

## Introduction Lg. Group

## Introduction Continued

Paul goes on in Ephesians 6:13-19 to tell the Ephesians how to prepare to enter this spiritual war. He tells them in verse 13 to put on the full armor. Roman soldiers wore armor when they went into battle. Paul was chained to a Roman soldier while he was writing this letter. As he looked at this soldier, he saw the importance of each piece of his armor and realized how much it was like the spiritual armor God gives us.

## Transition

We're going to play "Spiritual Feud" to see how much you learned about the armor of the Roman soldiers from the activity station.

## Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

### Game - "Spiritual Feud"

**Goal:** Students will recall the pieces of armor and the purpose of each.

**Instructions:** This game is similar to the game show, Family Feud. Divide the class into 2 to 4 teams, depending on the # of students. Have each team stand at a table as if they are in an actual game show. The game show "host" (a teacher) will ask the questions below. As the teams consider the answers to the questions, they can huddle together to discuss them. As soon as they have their answers, all the team members will raise their hands. The "host" will recognize the first team ready and they will give their answers. If they are correct, they receive a point and the game moves on to the next question. If the answer is incorrect, the team with their hands up 2nd gets a chance and a point if they are correct. The team with the most points wins the game.

### Questions:

- The Roman soldier's armor had how many pieces? (Six.)
- What were the names of the pieces of armor? (Belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, sword.)
- In which order did the soldier put on his armor? (Belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, sword.)
- Name a piece of armor and its purpose. (See worksheet.)
- Why was the wooden shield covered in leather and soaked in water? (So it would extinguish the burning arrows that were shot.)
- What is the only weapon of attack? (Sword.)

## Transition

Now let's see how Paul compared this Roman armor to the spiritual armor he tells us about in Ephesians 6. Let's look at each piece again from a biblical perspective.

## Lesson Lg. Group

Our key verse today is "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes" (Ephesians 6:11). Let's take a look at the full armor of God so we can know what it is and how to put it on. Follow along as I read verses 13-17. It might help to look at this picture of the Roman soldier as we talk about God's armor.

### **BELT OF TRUTH (v. 14)**

Let's begin with the BELT OF TRUTH. Imagine the battlefield in the days of Paul. Hundreds of men all are running at you! Flaming arrows are coming at you as you and your army move toward them. That belt better hold your entire armor in place or you will be unprotected. In spiritual warfare, we have an enemy who is very powerful and committed to destroying us. But rather than destroy us by killing us physically, he tries to kill us by trying to convince us of his lies. What do you think the belt of truth is in the spiritual battle? What are some of the lies the enemy tells us? (God doesn't really love us, the Bible isn't true or it isn't worth it to fight the battle.)

So... what is important for those who aren't Christians to do? Those who aren't Christians need to learn that the Bible tells them God loves them and they can never be good enough to get to heaven. They have to decide if they believe Christ died for their sin and that He is the only way to God (Acts 4:12).

Then what do Christians need in order to counter Satan's lies and not believe them? We need the Bible. As we study and know the Bible, we are able to critique what the culture believes is true as well as the lies that Satan puts in our heads about ourselves and other people. God's truth is the skeleton that holds all of our spiritual life together. Without knowledge of the Bible, we will be unable to tell the difference between truth and lies.

### **BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (v.14)**

The next piece of armor is the breastplate OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Some people believe this means that we are protected by living right. For the Christian fighting spiritual battles, the breastplate is the approval that we already have from God, not approval earned by trying to live right. We are not acceptable to God by ourselves because we sin against God and each other. But, in order to have a relationship with God, we have to be approved by Him. So God sent Jesus to earth to die on the cross to pay for our sins. When we accept the gift of forgiveness that God offers us, we have the breastplate of God's approval. How do you think we put on the breastplate? (First, we each must accept Jesus Christ's payment to count for us. Then we put on the breastplate by believing that God approves of us whether we mess up or think we are acceptable on our own.) So...those who aren't Christians must first realize that they are not and can never be acceptable to God on their own. They must accept God's forgiveness to be acceptable to Him.

Christians must realize that they are acceptable to God ONLY because of Christ's death on the cross. Do you think you're pretty good because you get good grades in school or not so good because you get bad grades? Do you think you're okay because you read the Bible every day or not okay because you don't read the Bible every day?

Do you think you're good because you are generous and share with your friends or not so good because you are selfish? None of these things make us good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable to God. Jesus is the one who makes us approved or acceptable. Why? So, when you begin to think, "I'm approved/acceptable because..." remember you are approved/acceptable ONLY because Christ made you so through His death on the cross.

### **SHOES OF READINESS OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE (v. 15)**

The Roman soldiers wore SHOES that gave them good traction to move ahead and also helped them to stand firm so they wouldn't fall down. The spiritual shoes are the Gospel. Who can tell me what is the Gospel of Peace? (The good news is that we can have peace with God through Jesus' death on the cross.) So, the readiness to tell others the Gospel should be the force that moves us forward. As we tell others about Jesus, God teaches us more about His love and we get to see God work in other people.

So... those who aren't Christians must know the only way to have true peace is to ask God to accept them because Jesus died to pay the penalty they owe for their sin. Christians step out to tell others the Good News about Jesus' love.

### **SHIELD OF FAITH (v. 16)**

The SHIELD was able to stop and extinguish flaming arrows. When we fight the spiritual battle, the Bible tells us our shield is our faith. Who can tell me what faith is? (It is belief in God's promises, taking action on what we know to be true because God said it.) Faith must first begin by believing God's truth about Christ's death on the cross and accepting it personally. Faith in the Christian life is acting on God's truth with dependence on Him. Faith begins with prayer – telling God you believe Him and want Him to be your strength as you do what He would have you do.

So...what would those who aren't Christians do to take up the shield of faith? (Let kids answer.) What do Christians do to take up the shield of faith? (Decide to trust God rather than themselves or anyone else.) Faith is the realization that we can do NOTHING apart from God. Learn to depend on God for everything, not only in the things you know you can't do, but also in the things in which you are very capable. Learn to ask God to show you how to depend on Him.

### **HELMET OF SALVATION (v. 17)**

The HELMET protects the head. In our head is our mind. In the spiritual battle, much of the war is in our mind. How does Satan attacks our minds? (tries to get us to think about and be consumed by things and cares that matter only now. But God wants us to think about what He thinks and cares about--things that will last forever.

What are things that will last forever? (They are people, God's Word, God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit.) Those of us who are Christians know that we will spend forever with God in heaven. The helmet of salvation reminds us that our life is not just about us and just to day, but others and heaven. We have a very exciting and amazing life ahead of us that will last for eternity. It is a life so good we can't imagine it. The life we live now will end, but our next life will never end. God wants us to be involved in things that will last forever: Him, His Word, His people and the people who don't know Him. He wants what we do in this life to have an effect on eternity.

So... those who aren't Christians need to think about eternity and where they will be forever after this life.

Christians take time to think about what is really important in life. Read what the Bible says is really important and compare it with our own view. We need to decide how we will live our lives so we can influence others to spend forever in heaven with us.

### **SWORD OF THE SPIRIT (V. 17)**

The SWORD is the only offensive weapon. It pierces the enemy. What is the sword of the Spirit? (It is God's word.) Why should we read the Bible? (Read it to know God's truth and learn more about Him.) God's Word is the only weapon we have that will send Satan fleeing. Satan runs away because the Word of God is the truth; he has to give in to the truth because God is greater and stronger than he is.

So... those who aren't Christians must know Jesus and God's Word to have this weapon. Christians need to learn the Word and memorize it. If we have the Word in our hearts, the Holy Spirit can bring to mind the truths we can tell the devil so he will flee. Satan only laughs at our opinions or what we think is true. It is essential that we tell him what God says.

Let's move into our small groups to talk more about God's armor and to pray.

- Have you ever thought that God has provided us with powerful protection to stand strong against Satan and his lies? Do you ever think to ask God to help you remember it is always available?
- What can you ask God for help with (e.g., when confronted by a mean kid, when a teacher asks a question and you don't know the answer, when you have the opportunity to tell someone about Jesus)? How would using God's armor help you every day?
- Can you think of times when you have asked God to help and used His armor?

### **Transition**

### **Learning Activity# 2 Sm. Groups**



**Learning  
Activity#2  
Continued**

**Transition**

**Learning  
Activity#3  
Lg. Group**

**Missions Prayer:** Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

Let's pray and thank God that He has given us everything we need to fight the lies and attacks of Satan. Let's ask Him to help us learn how to use His armor.

Let's get up and have some fun playing a game.

**Game – War Games**

**Goal:** FUN

**Instructions:** Have the students form a circle with one student in the center. The students need to stay in their place in the circle to avoid injury. The student in the center holds a shield (trash can lid) and a plastic sword. A teacher begins by throwing a ball at the student in the center who tries to deflect it with the shield or sword. If the ball hits him, the thrower takes his place in the center. The student closest to where the ball lands picks up the ball and tries to do the same or tries to fake him out by passing on to someone else. After a couple of minutes, throw another ball into the game. Remind the students to stay in their circle!