

LESSON 67

The Armor of God

EPHESIANS 6:1-20



BIBLE TRUTH

THE GOSPEL THAT SAVES US ALSO ARMS US FOR BATTLE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Ephesians 6:1–20 from the Scriptures or read story 145, “The Armor of God,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

Honor Parents

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ blank thank-you-note size cards (or half sheets of heavy paper)—one for each student
- ✓ pens and pencils

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

The Sword of the Spirit

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ sword—plastic or cut out of a piece of thick cardboard or thin plywood
- ✓ copies of the five lies (see below)—one copy for each child
- ✓ answer sheet (see below)—one copy

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Armor

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Armor of God Review

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ slips of paper on which is written the name of a piece of armor from Ephesians 6:14–17—one for each student
- ✓ bowl or bag to hold slips of paper

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Children, obey your parents—Assuming that children will hear his letter to the Ephesians, Paul takes time to address them directly (Ephesians 6:1–3). He does not say, “Parents, tell your children to obey you.” Paul reminds children of God’s commandment to honor their parents and tells them that if they do they will be blessed and it will go well with them. Paul also tells the children to obey their parents in the Lord. Apart from the saving work of Christ, children, just like adults, are hopelessly bound in their sins. The phrase “in the Lord” (Ephesians 6:1) tells children that they should obey not merely because their parents say so, but because God says so.

We need spiritual armor to defend ourselves in a spiritual war—In challenging the Ephesians to stand strong against temptation Paul compared life as a believer to a battle (Ephesians 6:11–12). We battle not against men but against a spiritual enemy that is evil and powerful. God has given us what we need to defend ourselves against the enemy’s attack. We have the armor of God, and if we use this armor God promises that we will be able to withstand any attack (Ephesians 6:13). The first two pieces of armor are truth and righteousness. Since the attacker is the “father of lies” (John 8:44), we must remember the truth of God. It alone can sustain us.

Our enemy also comes at us with partial truths. One of the enemy’s greatest schemes is to point out weakness and suggest we are unworthy. This, of course, is true! We are weak and unworthy. But we must remember that it is not our own righteousness we wear. Christ’s righteousness protects us like a breastplate. When the enemy tells us we are weak, we can say, “Yes, but my Lord is strong.” When the enemy tells us we are unworthy, we reply, “Right, but Jesus is worthy.” When the enemy tells us we have no righteousness, we reply that we have the perfect righteousness of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Paul continues by describing the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation. The gospel is able to fully protect us from any attack. We are well defended as we stand upon the truth of God’s salvation in Christ. For shoes, we put on the readiness of the gospel (Ephesians 6:15) so as always to be ready to help others with the truth of the gospel of Christ.

We go on the attack with the sword of the Spirit—The sword is an offensive weapon with which we attack and defeat those who come against us. Our attack is not with human strength or skill. Our attack is mounted by using the living, active two-edged sword of the Word of God, which is powerful beyond human strength (Hebrews 4:12). Jesus used this weapon against the temptations brought by Satan in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1). Three times the devil tempted Christ and three times he answered back, slicing through the devil's lies with the truth of God's eternal Word.

Paul concludes by encouraging the Ephesians to pray and by asking for their prayers for his own battle with sin. Sometimes we can think that the men who wrote Scripture were perfect and without sin. But Paul was tempted to give in to fear and not use his sword as he should. If Paul needed to pray, then we certainly need to pray also.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

People Pleaser

Hidden in the midst of Paul's message to the Ephesians is a warning not to live for "eye-service" and be a "people-pleaser" (Ephesians 6:6). Paul wants to be sure that God remains the reason we do what we do. A people-pleaser lives for the approval of man, not God. He is always concerned with what people think of him. Sometimes we call the pressure we feel to be a people-pleaser "peer pressure." If a person gives in to peer pressure, they are giving in to living for the opinion of people over the opinion of God.

Eye-service is doing what you do for other people to see rather than doing what you do for God to see. The hypocrites were guilty of doing things for eye-service. They looked sad when they fasted and announced their giving with loud trumpets so that everyone would notice them (Matthew 6:1–6).

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

All the armor, from the belt of truth to the sword of the Spirit, is connected to the gospel. Each piece takes us back to the cross. The belt of truth is our security because we know the truth of God's plan to send his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. As a result, we receive his righteousness as a breastplate, along with salvation in Christ as our helmet. Faith in Christ and his sacrificial death is our shield. The Spirit that God pours into us at conversion enables us to use the Word of God against the schemes of the enemy.

In the midst of the battle we have the gospel of peace. We are to love our enemies, and there is no greater demonstration of love than to share the gospel of peace. In the midst of our battle against Satan and against our own sinful nature, we always need to be ready to give a reason for our hope.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Ephesians 6:1–20 from the Scriptures or read story 145, "The Armor of God," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 15MIN

Honor Parents

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ blank thank-you-note size cards (or half sheets of heavy paper)—one for each student
- ✓ pens and pencils

After reading Ephesians 6:1–3 (before moving on to talk about the armor), tell the class you want to give them an opportunity to honor their father and/or mother. Explain that you are going to give each student a blank card to write a note of encouragement to their parents.

While you are passing out the cards, ask the kids to share what they love most about their parents. By having children honor their parents publicly, it will give others ideas about what to write.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

The Sword of the Spirit

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ sword—plastic or cut out of a piece of thick cardboard or thin plywood
- ✓ copies of the five lies (see below)—one copy for each child
- ✓ answer sheet (see below)—one copy

To prepare, print the following lies on as many sheets of 8.5-by-11-inch paper as there are students in your class—one lie per sheet of paper. (Make multiple copies so each child has a sheet of paper and all five lies are represented equally.)

1. You will never make it. You are too weak.
2. Go ahead and sin. God doesn't know.
3. It is OK to lie as long as it's just a little lie.
4. Stealing is only wrong if it hurts someone.
5. You only need to obey your parents when they are looking.

You'll also need one sheet with the answers from the Bible:

1. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)
2. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. (Hebrews 4:13)
3. Do not lie to each other. (Colossians 3:9)
4. Do not steal. (Romans 13:9)
5. Children obey your parents in everything. (Colossians 3:20)

Tell the class that we use the Word of God as a sword to defeat the lies of the enemy. Divide the class into two teams. Have one team play the enemy and the other team play the Christians. Line them up on opposite sides of the room. Place the lies in a pile all mixed up and facedown on the enemy side of the room. Place the sword and the Scripture answer key on the Christian side.

The object of the game is for the enemy to pick up a lie and read it aloud to the Christian who is first in line. As soon as the lie is read he should wad the paper into a ball to throw at the Christian. The Christian needs to find the appropriate Bible verse on the list and speak it back before the enemy can finish wadding their paper into a ball to throw. If the Christian gets the verse correct, hand him the sword to defend himself against the paper ball that the enemy will throw.

Give everyone a chance to be a Christian and an enemy. Pretty soon the class will have all the verses memorized and be able to speak the correct verse even before the enemy finishes the lie.

Discuss how this works in real life.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Armor

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Choose a piece of armor to draw and give it its biblical name (i.e., sword of truth, breastplate of righteousness, etc. See Ephesians 6:14–17.).

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Armor of God Review

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ slips of paper on which is written the name of a piece of armor from Ephesians 6:14–17—one for each student
- ✓ bowl or bag to hold slips of paper

Use this object lesson as a review after you have instructed the class and taught how each part of the armor connects to the gospel. Place all the slips of paper with the pieces of armor written on them in a bowl, and have each student pick one. Explain that you want them to write a paragraph about how their piece of armor protects a soldier and how it is connected to the gospel. Give the class ample time to write a response. Then ask for volunteers to share what they came up with. Draw out others to add to the discussion on each piece of armor.