**Topic: Armor of God**

**Bible Passage: Ephesians 6:10-17**

**Activity: Make Your Own Armor**

*Supplies: poster board, aluminum foil, duct tape, scissors, markers*

Divide preteens into groups of 4-6. Instruct each group to choose one team member to be their armor model. Give the groups 5-10 minutes to construct their own armor using the available supplies. For help, they can look at Ephesians 6:10-17 to learn about the pieces of armor.

After teams have completed their armor, call all armor models to the stage or front of the room. Pass out awards for the armor like “Best Shield/Sword/Helmet/Etc.”, “Most Creative Armor”, and/or “Best Overall Armor.”

**After the activity, say:** You all did a great job creating armor for your teammate. What was the hardest piece of armor for you to create? *(Pause for responses)* What piece of armor were you proudest of? *(Pause for responses)*

The Bible says that we are in the midst of a battle. It’s a battle against spiritual forces of darkness. The book of Ephesians reminds us that we can be bold in the fight because God has given us armor for the fight! This is not armor that we just put on to intimidate the enemy. As followers of Jesus, it is a part of our new identity in Him. Listen to what Paul says in Ephesians 6:10-17

***Read Ephesians 6:10-17***

As Paul mentions each piece of armor, he is reminding the people of their identity in Jesus Christ. The Armor of God is a part of our identity in Christ. **We can be bold and confident in battle because of who we are in Christ.**

Let’s go through the armor piece by piece, just like Paul did, to see how it helps us to face the forces of darkness with confidence.

*Describe the historical use of each armor piece, and how the piece reminds us of who we are in Christ.*

***Belt of Truth***

The belt was important because it protected the soldier’s lower abdomen, and it carried the Sword, which we’ll see represents God’s Word. Paul uses the belt to remind believer that we can trust in the Bible. God will do exactly what He says He will do.

***Breastplate of Righteousness***

The breastplate is an interesting piece of armor. It was often molded into the image of what looks like a superhero! The breastplate would have built in muscles and make the soldier appear bigger and stronger than he probably really is. This represents us being changed into the image of Christ. We are being made into His image, and this means that we have much more strength and power than we would ever have on our own.

***Shoes of Peace***

The shoes or sandals were a standard piece of the Roman soldier’s armor. The shoes signified that the soldier was prepared to go into battle. Here, Paul mentions putting on our shoes with the Gospel of peace. As we prepare to fight, we can be confident because Jesus Christ has already won the victory. The forces of darkness may still be able to harm us, but they have already been defeated! It’s a lot easier to walk into battle when you know you’re going to win!

***Shield of Faith***

The shield was very large. It would literally cover the entire body of the soldier. It was also often covered in animal hide and dipped in water. When the enemy would fling fiery arrows, the wet shield would extinguish the flames. It is our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior that becomes our strongest defense against Satan. It is by faith that we have been saved, and it must be by faith that we fight against the forces of darkness.

***Helmet of Salvation***

The helmet was made to protect the head, even more so the brain. Paul reminds us to protect our minds from the forces of darkness by remembering the hope we have in Jesus Christ. When someone believes in Christ, there are immediate rewards given to him or her here on earth. But even more than that, we know that there will be great rewards in Heaven. Philippians 1:6 says, “***being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”*** Paul reminds us that we must always keep our minds focused on the joy and greatness we will get to experience in Heaven as a part of our salvation.

***Sword of Spirit (Word of God)***

The sword is the only weapon for the soldier. Every other piece of armor is about defense, but the sword is all about offense. The Word of God is our tool for fighting back against Satan. When Satan tempted Jesus, what did Jesus use to fight back? He quoted Scripture. Satan and the forces of darkness have no defense for the power and truth of God’s Word. It is our weapon in this battle.

The Armor of God is all about what Jesus has done for us and who we are in Him. As children of God, we get to share in the victory that Jesus has won. We don’t have to face the temptations of Satan without a defense because God has given us each piece of armor. **We can be bold and confident in battle because of who we are in Christ.**

The book of Ephesians is all about the new creation that we are in Christ. Being a part of God’s family means that even though the battle is still going on, we have already won the war. We must be like soldier who are alert and prepared to fight. Satan can still trip us up and tempt us in a lot of ways, so we need to put on the full armor of God to defend ourselves. Remember, **we can be bold and confident in battle because of who we are in Christ.**

Let’s close with a prayer to ask God to make us bold and confident in this battle!

**Break into small groups and discuss the following questions:**

* Why do you think Paul uses the image of armor in this passage?
* How are we like soldiers preparing for war?
* What does each piece of armor (belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, sword) mean or represent for us?
* How are we being “molded into the image of Jesus Christ?”
* What roles does the Bible play in this battle?
* In modern times, we see football players take hard hits and NASCAR drivers race at 200 mph. How does their confidence in their “armor” help them in their sport? How can our confidence in Jesus Christ help us in this battle?
* What are some reasons that we have to be confident against Satan and forces of darkness?