

TEXT Ephesians 6:10-18

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Isaiah 59:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:8; Hebrews 4:12

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain why it is necessary to prepare themselves fully for spiritual warfare, and will be able to describe how this can be done.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. — Ephesians 6:11

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. — Ephesians 6:13

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **Ready for Battle**

**SEARCH
TITLE:** **Prepared for Battle**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Ephesians: One of the four "Prison Epistles" written from Paul's Roman imprisonment. This letter was written approximately 61-63 A.D. and may have been a circular letter sent around to many churches in the province of Asia. It was transmitted to its destination by Tychicus, an Asian Christian and close friend of Paul's. He was with Paul during his first and second imprisonment in Rome.

Defensive Armor: Shield—varying in size and shape and made of skin or metal, worn on left arm. Helmet—sometimes of brass, surrounding the head. Breast-

plate—coat of mail, literally a breastplate of metal scales worn on chest area. Greaves—made of brass, metal, or leather. They were worn to protect the legs from ankle to knee. Another part (a solea) was often attached which covered the sole, and prevented the foot from being wounded by thorns, stones, etc. Girdle—belt from which the sword hung.

Loin: The part of the body on either side of the backbone, between the ribs and the hipbones. To have the loins girded with truth signified strength in attachment to truth.

YOUR OPENER

Prepared for Battle

TEXT: Ephesians 6:10-18

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 59:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:8; Hebrews 4:12

KEY VERSE: Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. — Ephesians 6:13

The Christian soldier's strength and power is in the Lord. God has provided spiritual armor for us. It is not enough for us to know that it is available. If we are to stand in the day of battle we must put the armor on. The battle is not against foes which we can see, but against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God" (2 Corinthians 10:4). The armor of God has several parts, and like any system of personal armor, works best when it is complete. As we put on each part and use it effectively we can be more than conquerors.

RESPONSES

1. God's Word is truth and the very essence of truth. By using Scripture, we can defeat the enemy as Jesus did in the Scriptures given. Everything can be determined to be either good or bad, true or false by comparing it with God's Word. Help the students to see that this truth avails when they face the enemy just as it did for Christ in the wilderness.

2. The students will realize that it is not sufficient to have knowledge of Christ or to receive the benefits of a church affiliation, but they must have the evidence of salvation in their own lives, or they are an easy target for the enemy. Discuss the difference between self-righteousness and true righteousness. Use examples of such characteristics as pride and humility; selfishness and altruism.

3. Ask for students' responses to this and emphasize the necessity of having a positive assurance of our relationship with God. Ask your students to explain what they think is meant by the phrase, "whose mind is stayed on thee." How can this be accomplished? What are some of the things that would hinder?

1. In our text, the first mention of the armor is that the loins be girt about with truth. In the context of this verse what does *truth* mean? Using Jesus' experience in the wilderness of temptation, explain the importance of this part of the armor. See Matthew 4:1-11.

2. The second piece of equipment is the breastplate of righteousness. Can you explain the difference between self-righteousness and the righteousness received from God? Use Matthew 3:7-10 and 2 Corinthians 5:17 as references.

3. Another part of the armor is the helmet of salvation. Read how it is described in 1 Thessalonians 5:8. Using Isaiah 26:3, explain the importance of having our minds covered with the helmet of salvation.

4. The Christian soldier's feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. This allows him to

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

be prepared at all times to declare God's peace and goodwill to the world. Using 2 Timothy 4:2 and 1 Peter 3:15, define *preparation* as it relates to our walk with Christ. List ways we can be better prepared for Christian service.

5. "Above all, taking the shield of faith." Why is faith so important in this spiritual warfare? And why, "above all"?

6. We have observed thus far that all of the pieces of armor mentioned have been of a protective nature. However, the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is designed to be used both offensively and defensively. It is to guard the Christian soldier, and by it he can vanquish all his foes. The Sword can be adapted to every state and circumstance in which we are placed. How can we effectively use the Sword of the Spirit? See Psalm 119:11 and 2 Timothy 2:15.

7. Prayer is essential to the Christian warfare. What did the Apostle Paul mean when he said, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit"?

8. Ephesians 6:11,13 refers to the "whole armour of God." What a relief to know that we do not have to lean upon our own understanding to provide proper protection. The Christian warfare is a battle of right against wrong. Some have said that the best defense is a good offense. A Christian is not merely holding his own, but is moving forward and defeating the enemy. Where, in your own life, might you use the offensive weapons illustrated by the following verses: Proverbs 15:1; Romans 12:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:15?

4. Be instant (or ready) in season and out of season, always ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within them. Allow time for the students to suggest various ways of being better prepared. They may include such things as Bible reading, prayer, being quick to give a personal testimony, being faithful in church attendance and in fulfilling service opportunities, practicing ministering to the needs of others. Discuss with them specifically how they might improve in these areas.

5. The words, "Above all," let us know the supreme importance of faith. Hebrews 11:1 states that, "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It enables the Christian to call upon God and to know that He will be with him at all times. A faith like that can quench any dart of the enemy. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6).

6. After your students discuss their thoughts concerning the question, they should see the importance of studying and retaining the Word so it can be effectively used in their daily lives. Ask your students to give some Biblical examples or situations from their own knowledge or experience in which the Word was used as a defensive or offensive weapon. Some Scriptures which show the Word used in taking the offense: Acts 5:29-33; Acts 7:54; Hebrews 4:12. Scriptures showing the defensive value of the Word: Psalm 119:5; Romans 15:4; 1 Peter 2:2.

7. Allow time for your students to give their thoughts regarding this verse. Guide the discussion to conclude that a true spirit of prayer is praying according to the will of God. Discuss the importance of keeping a prayerful attitude and spirit of communion with God, and of praying within the framework of God's Word.

8. Have students share some of their responses. These Scriptures will show them that the use of the armor is both practical and something they can use in their daily lives.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What are some of the spiritual battles we may face?

How can the armor God has provided help us to win these battles?

In our ANSWER story, what helped Scott understand the importance of the armor of God?

Do you think there are any pieces of the armor that aren't necessary?

What did you learn from this lesson?

What are the "wiles of the devil"?

In what way can you apply this lesson to your life?

What is the armor of God?

How can we receive it?

Does Satan want us to have on all of God's armor? Why not?

Does a non-Christian have any armor with which to fight his battles? Explain.

What is the purpose of armor? What is the purpose of our Christian armor?

Are there certain pieces of armor which are more important than the others? Why?

Why is it necessary for us to put on the full armor of God?

What are the pieces of armor, and what are they for?

THINGS TO DO

It is important that the students realize this armor is to be daily at-the-ready! Set up a chart for them. Go over it in class first, and then have them take it home and refer to it each day. It can be any size you choose. Draw a gingerbread-type man. On one hand draw a shield and on the other a fat sword. Also draw a wide belt across the middle. No other accessories need to be drawn. Now for the words. On each section, write the following words:

Head: Free from sin

Chest: Do right

Shield: Have faith

Sword: Read the Bible

Belt: Be honest

Feet: Tell the Good News

Across the bottom of the chart write, PRAY ALWAYS!

Listed below are the parts of the armor of God, what they stand for, and an up-to-date definition of each. Write each of these on a separate 3 x 5 card. On two other cards, write the words Praying and Always. (That makes 20 cards in all.) Mix up the cards, then turn them face down on a table in front of your students. Have them choose cards, one at a time, until all the cards are gone from the table. Give the students a designated amount of time and have them work together matching up the sets. There will be six sets of 3 cards, and one set of 2 cards. With the last set, Praying/Always, you might want to explain that this is close contact with their "Commander in Chief"—God.

Loins girt about/with truth/*Be honest, sincere, genuine*
Breastplate/of righteousness/*Being justified, do what is right*

Feet shod/with the preparation of the Gospel of peace/*Be ready with the Good News of God's peace*

Shield/of faith/*Having unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence*

Helmet/of salvation/*Be rescued from sin*

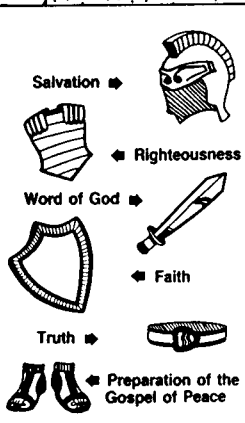
Sword/of the Spirit, which is the Word of God/*Read the Bible*

Praying/Always!

Answers for ANSWER

A Christian Soldier

We read in Ephesians 6:10-18 about the armor that a Christian must have for protection. Twenty words from the text are in our Word-Find. All the words are on the word list. Circle each word as you find it.

	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: x-small;"> <tr><td>GOD</td><td>ARMOUR</td></tr> <tr><td>FEET</td><td>GOSPEL</td></tr> <tr><td>GIRT</td><td>HELMET</td></tr> <tr><td>SHOD</td><td>SHIELD</td></tr> <tr><td>FAITH</td><td>SPIRIT</td></tr> <tr><td>LOINS</td><td>PRAYING</td></tr> <tr><td>PEACE</td><td>SALVATION</td></tr> <tr><td>SWORD</td><td>BREASTPLATE</td></tr> <tr><td>TRUTH</td><td>PREPARATION</td></tr> <tr><td>WHOLE</td><td>RIGHTEOUSNESS</td></tr> </table>	GOD	ARMOUR	FEET	GOSPEL	GIRT	HELMET	SHOD	SHIELD	FAITH	SPIRIT	LOINS	PRAYING	PEACE	SALVATION	SWORD	BREASTPLATE	TRUTH	PREPARATION	WHOLE	RIGHTEOUSNESS
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