

USE THE BELT AND BREASTPLATE

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

TEMPTATION TEMPT ARMOR

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Ruth 1, 2

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students understand that Jesus overcame temptation, and that for that reason, if they put their trust in the truth and righteousness of God, they too can stand firm against temptation

MEMORY VERSE

“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand” (Ephesians 6:13, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The world can be a dangerous place for preadolescents. They face many pressures when choosing friendships and things that are not of God. They're immersed in spiritual battles and need the tools to fight. These lessons about the armor of God will give them those tools and the necessary strength to trust him, his truth, and his righteousness. They'll grow confident when they learn to use them and apply them during the study of the Word of God and prayer.

By understanding how Jesus resisted temptation, they can trust that he will help them to do the same. Early preparation can be the difference between despair and victory.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

The Christian life is more than what may be seen in the physical realm. It is true that we face challenges based on pressures and problems that the world and other people present. But there is a major battle that we're called to fight, a spiritual struggle

against evil. We discover that we must confront the one who directly opposes God, and that one is Satan.

Before we came to know Christ, the enemy considered us surely lost. Lost of the joy of salvation and lost of the redeeming power of having a right relationship with Christ. Satan did not have much to fight to possess us. We were not a threat. But when we came to Christ, things changed. We were no longer lost. We were found and claimed by God. Satan was no longer happy.

So we discover that now we're constantly under spiritual attack. But that does not mean we must live in despair or defeat. Now we're called to depend on God's strength and every piece of armor that he provides us to resist evil. Whether we feel strong or weak, there is a lesson about God's armor that we must learn. It is not about what we can do, it is about what God can do through us. This is well demonstrated in the person of Jesus, his Son.

Before beginning his earthly ministry, Jesus went to the desert and spent 40 days and 40 nights alone, preparing, fasting and praying. Weakening from hunger and the elements, he was exhausted and seemed to be without resources. At that time, Satan saw a great opportunity to distort and twist God's plan for the redemption of mankind. The great deceiver Satan believed that he could sidetrack Jesus' mission.

He challenged the Lord by twisting and distorting the truth of the Scriptures. The arguments seemed reasonable, but they were not. Jesus faced lies with the truth. He knew the Scriptures, used the "belt of truth." We must also be prepared, so it is necessary that we know the truth.

But, Satan did not stop at lies. He attacked Jesus' relationship with his Father. He tried to introduce doubt about whether God had the best in mind for his Son and his creation. This was another great trap, and Jesus knew it. Satan cannot bring us peace, joy, righteousness, or eternal life. The Lord put on the "breastplate of righteousness" and chose to trust his relationship with the Father.

When preparing for this lesson, consider your battles and struggles with the physical and the spiritual. The armor of God is your guard against the attacks of any kind, which Satan undertakes. You are not alone. You can stand firm. You can resist.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Resist! Stay firm!

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #405-A (Resist! Stay Firm!). Divide into two smaller groups and assign each group one of the situations presented in the activity. Have both groups discuss their situations and then decide how they would act. Then have the groups report on their answers, and discuss them as a whole group.

Say: "You may not face these specific temptations, but you will face temptations of one kind or another."

Have the preadolescents write or draw about the temptations they face or will face in the blank box. Say: "We must all put on the armor of God, so that when the devil comes, he will find us firm (Ephesians 6:13)."

Mural: God's Armor

Ask some students to help you put up a background paper to line the mural. This may be a Saturday project. Prepare a small picnic for the whole group. Everyone can bring a bag with food and you provide the drink. Make this a pleasant event that everyone can enjoy. If a student or you made the soldier's armor, ask the students to color or paint it. Then place the parts on the mural with the important names and words. As a title use: "The armor of God." As they color, paste, and assemble the mural, explain that in this session and throughout this unit of four lessons, they'll learn in detail what each part of the armor means. Encourage them to come to each session.

TEACH THE LESSON

Read Matthew 4:1-11 and Hebrews 2:18. Divide into three groups. Assign a section of the Bible story to each of them. You can use the script from Student Activity Sheet #405-B and #405-C or straight from the Bible. You as a teacher can present the first section of the story. Allow the three groups to present to tell their parts of the story in an orderly manner.

Teacher (Section 1): Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. He did not eat at all during that time. He was hungry.

Group 1 (Section 2): While the Lord was in the desert, the devil came to tempt him. Satan wanted to separate the Son from the Father. The devil looked at Jesus. He was probably watching him with contempt and said: "If you're the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus knew what the devil was trying to do; he knew it was bad. Then he used the scriptures to answer him. "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" The Lord knew

these important verses. Everyone can read them in the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 8:3. He used the scriptures to resist temptation. The Word is a very powerful weapon.

Group 2 (Section 3): The devil was not willing to give up. He wanted Jesus to betray God. Then the devil “took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.” When the Lord looked at Jerusalem, Satan tried to use Scripture against him. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” The devil thought shrewdly, “I already tricked you, ha-ha, I already have it. You cannot contradict me if I use the Scriptures.” But he was wrong. Jesus knew the true meaning of the passage and replied: “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” This verse is Deuteronomy 6:16. The Lord knew what the enemy was talking about.

Group 3 (Section 4): Do you think that with this the devil ceased his efforts? No. He continued to tempt Jesus to betray God. He decided to try again. “Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.” What a beautiful sight. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” This was an even bigger lie. The devil is not the owner of the world; therefore, he cannot give it or take it. The world is God’s creation. Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” This time he used this passage from Deuteronomy 6:13 to tell the devil: “Leave me alone. Leave now. Nothing you can say or do will turn me away from God.” What an extraordinary and great triumph! Satan got the message. He left Jesus and God sent his angels to take care of his Son. The Lord used the Scriptures to defeat temptation. We too can use the Bible to resist it.

After the story, use the questions in Student Activity Sheet #405-B and #405-C to help the students review the lesson.

Ask the students: “How did Jesus wear the Armor of God to overcome temptation?” (He chose to trust God and responded to the devil with God’s Word.)

Note The Belt of Truth and ask: “What lies did the devil use to try to deceive Jesus?” (The devil told Jesus that he would have power if he rejected God’s authority and trusted him instead.) Then ask: “How did Jesus respond?” (Jesus chose to trust and obey God.)

Note The Breastplate of Righteousness: righteousness means being accountable to God; to do what God commands. Ask: “How did Jesus respond with righteousness when he was tempted?” (He chose to trust God instead of getting immediate relief for himself.) Righteousness includes trusting God and obeying him.

Read Hebrews 2:18 with the students. It says that we can trust him to recognize temptation, and with his help, overcome it.

CONNECT THE LESSON

My commitment activity

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #405-D (My Commitment). Ask them to complete the commitment. Explain: “You can trust God when you put on his armor. Stand firm in his truth. Study his Word. Trust in his love and spend time talking to him through prayer.”

Then ask them to turn in their Bibles to Matthew 4:4, 4:7 and 4:10. Ask the students how they would say these verses in their own words.

Say: “These verses tell us how Jesus resisted temptation. We can do it too.” Point out what Matthew 4:10 means to you. Then read Hebrews 2:18. Ask: “Who can we turn to when we face temptation?” (To Jesus) Say: “The Lord was tempted; he knows and understands us very well when we’re tempted. We can trust that Jesus will help us stand firm against temptation.”

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Before the session, write the memory verse on cards, each word separately, and hide them throughout the room. Then write the verse on the board and ask the students to repeat it several times. Then, have the students look for the cards and assemble the Bible verse on the table in the correct order. You can use this activity in the other sessions of this unit.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Pray together, asking the Lord to help you stand firm in the face of any temptation that Satan presents to you. If there is time, talk to students who have difficult struggles.

Encourage

Assure everyone that Jesus understands and can give them the strength to overcome their temptations. Finish singing an appropriate chorus.

Invite

Be sure to encourage the students to attend the next session. Remind them to welcome visitors.