

# 'Jesus' Armour'



This material is suitable for ages 8+.

### Aim:

To help the children understand that when we become part of Jesus' family, we have 'armour' to protect us from the Evil One..

### Bible focus:

Ephesians 6:13 -18.

### You will need:

A soccer uniform – shoes, socks, shin pads, shorts, shirt and soccer ball.

### Introduction:

(Have a volunteer dressed in the uniform and carrying the soccer ball. It may be the child who brought it for you.) Ask them the following questions and allow time for responses:

- ◆ What game would you be playing if you were wearing and using all this equipment?
- ◆ What do the shin pads have to do with soccer? The shoes? (The shin pads protect your shins, the shoes protect your feet.)

So these pieces of clothing are there to protect you from getting hurt by other players, from the ball and from objects on the ground.

Well did you know that Jesus has also given us protection? There is a book in the Bible that talks about the 'armour' which He has given to everyone who is part of His family to protect us from the Evil One. Do you know who I mean when I say the Evil One? (Satan, the devil).

Let's have a look at what kind of armour Jesus is talking about and why we need it. (Let the child in the soccer uniform join the group without changing. Let him/her know you will need them again soon.)

## Bible time:

### You will need:

You could use either a children's armour outfit if you have access or use dress up clothes to represent the various pieces or you could make the pieces of armour from cardboard. You will need a belt (truth), a breastplate (righteousness), shoes (Good News of peace), a shield (faith), a helmet (salvation), a sword (the Word of God), and a Bible.

So why do we need this armour? Paul, a man who became a friend of Jesus, wrote a letter to help people understand the reason why we need to wear this armour. That letter is in the Bible and it's called Ephesians.

(You can either read these verses yourself or have another leader or a child who is a good reader to read them for you.) Read Ephesians 6:13. So we need this armour so we can resist the devil. He will try all sorts of tricks to get us to do the wrong thing but this armour will protect us.

Read Ephesians 6:14a. So we need to speak the truth – this is one of the pieces of armour that Paul was talking about. The truth can be very powerful and Jesus helps us to speak the truth, even when it's hard. (Put the belt on the volunteer.)

Read Ephesians 6:14b. (Put the breastplate on the child.) Now righteousness is a big word. But look at where this piece of armour goes. What does it cover? (Body, heart, etc.) That's right it covers our body but in particular it covers our heart. The heart is one of the most important parts of our body. If it stops then we're in real trouble. Now righteousness means that we are right with Jesus. That means we have a good relationship with Him. Just like a relationship with our friends and family. We keep that relationship good by talking to them, doing nice things for them and listening to them. It's the same with our relationship with Jesus. Paul is telling us that having a relationship with Him or to be righteous, is another part of the armour which we can use to protect ourselves when we are fighting for Him. So that's the next part of our armour – the breastplate of righteousness.

Read Ephesians 6:15. (Put the shoes on the child.) Does anyone know what the Good News is this verse is talking about? That's right. That Jesus died on the cross to pay the price for our sins and that He rose again three days later.

So when you put on your shoes normally, what are you usually planning to do? (Go out, go walking, play sport, etc.) OK. So when we put on our shoes it's usually to go somewhere. What Paul was saying here was that when we go places - to school, to sport or to our friends' house, we can tell people about Jesus so they have a chance to be His friend as well.



Read Ephesians 6:16. (Give the child the shield to hold.) What does a shield do? (Protects us, keeps us safe, stops arrows hitting us etc.) Right. It also protects us. So when we have faith – that is when we believe with all our hearts that we are friends of Jesus, we are protecting ourselves from the Evil One. People will tell you that Jesus doesn't exist or that He doesn't care about you. But that's not true. Jesus tells us over and over again in the Bible that He loves us. He's also given us people who care for us and look after us, like our Sunday school teachers, our parents, our school teachers, our friends, our brothers and sisters.

Our faith is such a strong piece of armour that the Evil One can't get through and hurt us.

Read Ephesians 6:17a. (Give the child the sword to hold in the other hand.) The Bible is like a sword. What does a sword do? (Kills people, helps you fight an enemy.) A sword helps you to fight an enemy. The Bible is the last piece of armour that helps us to fight the devil or The Evil One. The Bible has lots of advice and information to help us fight. We need to read the Bible and remember what Jesus tells us. In that way when people try to attack us about what we believe we can tell them the truth, from the Bible.

So that's the armour that Jesus has given us to protect us. (Now ask the child in the soccer uniform to stand beside the child in the armour.)

So which would be better to play soccer in?

Which outfit would be better to protect and defend yourself?

That's right. The soccer uniform is perfect for what it is designed for – to play soccer and the armour that Jesus has given us is perfect to defend us and help us fight the devil.

Now there is one last thing that Paul tells us we have to do. His final instructions about using this armour. Read Ephesians 6:18.

## Response time:

The very final part of our verse says:

'Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help.'

Not only does Jesus give us armour, He also wants us to pray and ask Him to help us. This final part of the verse is really important. Once we have our armour on we need to pray and ask Jesus to be with us and to help us to fight for Him.

We have this armour when we become a friend of Jesus. If anyone would like to become a friend of Jesus we're going to have a special time to do that now. I'm going to say a prayer and if you would like to pray it with me, I will leave some time after each sentence so you can pray it to yourselves.



## Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving me. (pause) Thank you for taking my place and dying on the cross. (pause) I'm sorry for the wrong things I have said and done. (pause) Please help me to use your armour to protect me (pause) and help me to live my life to please you every day. (pause) Amen.

## Follow up:

It will be helpful to have copies of Starting Out: how to be a follower of Jesus for 8 - 11's to help you follow up the children. Part 2 of the Starting Out booklet introduces the child to the Bible and helps them understand what it's like to live as a friend of Jesus. Some age-appropriate Bible Reading notes may also be an appropriate method of following up the children who made decisions. These resources are available from your local Scripture Union Resources For Ministry bookshop. Make time to go through the Bible Reading notes to ensure the children have a good understanding of how to use these notes.

A further counselling resource that may be helpful if a child has more questions is Team Talk, again produced by Scripture Union. It is available through their Resources For Ministry department ph. 02 4321 0200 or Koorong Books. This resource includes pages for children who are recommitting their lives or for children who have asked questions about a particular issue. E.g. Why did dad leave home?

Linking children in to other sections in the corps e.g. Sunday School, SAGALA, Kids Club or Junior Soldiers will also help with their ongoing spiritual development.

