The Armor of God

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Stand firm in the Lord's strength, every day, with the whole armor He gives, His Word and prayer.
Bible passage: Ephesians 6:10–20. Students read it out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." *Ephesians 6:11 (KJV)* and "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." *Psalm 119:11 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read Ephesians 6:10–20 and Matthew 4:1–11. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a verse or two each.

1. Opening game: Missing Piece (5–10 minutes)

Write four jobs on the board: firefighter, football player, beekeeper, astronaut. For each one, students call out every piece of gear that person wears and what it protects. Then ask: *What happens if a firefighter leaves the helmet at home, or an astronaut forgets one glove?* Say: "One missing piece can be a big problem. That's why Paul says to put on the **whole** armor of God."

2. Bible teaching: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Ephesians 6:10–20. Students take turns, a verse or two each. Then give the setting: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote this letter to the saints at Ephesus (1:1) while he was a prisoner (3:1, 4:1). He sent Tychicus to tell them how he was doing (6:21–22). Old words in this passage:

- **finally, my brethren** (6:10): last of all, my brothers and sisters in the Lord
- **wiles** (6:11): tricks, sneaky plans to fool us
- **wrestle not against flesh and blood** (6:12): our fight is not against people
- **principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places** (6:12): evil spiritual powers we can't see
- **withstand in the evil day** (6:13): stand against the attack on a hard day
- **loins girt about with truth** (6:14): truth wrapped around your waist like a belt
- **feet shod with the preparation** (6:15): shoes on, ready to go
- **quench** (6:16): put out a fire; **fiery darts**: burning arrows
- **supplication** (6:18): asking God with all your heart; **perseverance**: not giving up
- **utterance** (6:19): the words to say; **ambassador in bonds** (6:20): a messenger for the King, in chains

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Talk through the armor: Notice that the order starts with "be strong in the Lord" (6:10). The strength is His, not ours. Paul says "stand" three times, plus "withstand" (6:11, 6:13, 6:14): the goal is not to run or to win a fight with people, but to stand our ground. The belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness (6:14), the shoes of the gospel of peace (6:15), the shield of faith that quenches all the fiery darts (6:16) and the helmet of salvation (6:17) all protect. Only one piece fights back: "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (6:17).

See the sword used: Read out loud: Matthew 4:1–11. When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He answered every temptation with Scripture: "It is written" (Matthew 4:4, 4:7, 4:10). He showed us how the sword works. Then Paul adds prayer, "praying always," for ourselves and "for all saints" (6:18), and he asks them to pray that he would speak boldly even in chains (6:19–20).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Ephesians 6:10 says "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." When do you try to be strong on your own? What would leaning on the Lord look like there?
2. Paul says our fight is "not against flesh and blood" (6:12). How does that change the way you see someone who is unkind to you, or a group chat that turns ugly?
3. The devil uses wiles, tricks that look good (6:11). What lies do people your age hear most often? What truth from God answers each one?
4. Which piece of the armor do you most often "leave at home"? Why?
5. Jesus answered temptation with "It is written" (Matthew 4:4). What verses could you hide in your heart (Psalm 119:11) for the temptations you face?
6. Paul was in chains, and the prayer he asked for was to speak the gospel boldly (6:19–20). What does that tell you about what mattered to him?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: in Ephesians 6:11, **armour** means armor, **ye** means you and **wiles** means tricks. In Psalm 119:11, **thy word** means your Word, **hid in mine heart** means memorized and kept close, and **thee** means you (God).
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Ephesians 6:11 this week; keep working on Psalm 119:11 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Paul calls it the helmet of salvation and the gospel of peace. Here is that gospel. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Where is it hardest for me to stand right now: at school, online, with friends or at home?
2. Which piece of the armor do I need most there, and what would "putting it on" look like this week?
3. Write one verse I want to hide in my heart, and a short prayer asking God to help me stand.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: memorize one verse that answers a lie or temptation you face. Pray for one friend by name every day ("for all saints," 6:18).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that our strength comes from You. Help us put on the whole armor every day, answer lies with Your Word, and pray always for each other. Give us courage to stand and to speak boldly about You. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks about the devil or spiritual battles: answer honestly and calmly. The Bible is clear that the devil is real and uses wiles (Ephesians 6:11), but it never tells us to be afraid. It tells us to be strong in the Lord (6:10), to stand (6:13) and to pray (6:18). God is stronger.

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