

The Shield of Faith

(Ephesians 6:16)

Introduction

Some of us may have heard that we need to have faith in God to go to Heaven after we die. But sometimes we're not sure what it means to have faith in Him. Sometimes we wonder if we have enough faith to get to heaven.

It's one thing to say you have faith, but quite another to prove it. This morning, we will learn what it means to have faith in God.

Faith is Not Blind Object Lesson

Ask for a volunteer who says they trust you. Blindfold them, spin them around a few times, and then tell them to trust you by doing what you tell them to do. Give them simple instructions to walk around the room without running into anything.

Without them knowing, place a chair in the center of the room. Give them instructions to the chair so that they are standing in front of it in a position to sit, but don't tell them the chair is there. Ask them to sit down without reaching or feeling, but just by trusting it is okay to sit because you told them to.

Explain that even though we may not be able to see God or how things are going to work out, we can trust Him because He can see all and knows all and only wants what is best for us!

Go on to explain that even though they were blindfolded, their faith or trust was not blind. It was based on what they knew about you; they knew and believed you to be trustworthy.

This object lesson shows that in the same way, faith in God is not blind faith, it is based on knowing Him. That begins with knowing about Him as we learn His Word, but it becomes more than belief when we act on that belief by trusting in Jesus as our Savior and Lord.

Opening Prayer

Jesus thank You for being bigger and stronger than the enemy of our soul. I ask You to help us remember You have given us everything we need to have victory in our battle with Satan. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*God's way is perfect. All the LORD's promises prove true. He is a **shield** for all who look to Him for protection. (2 Samuel 22:31 NLT)*

In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. (Ephesians 6:16 NLT)

Lesson

The past few weeks we've been studying the pieces of a Roman soldier's armor and how they relate to our spiritual walk with Jesus.

For review, read Ephesians 6:10-15

In battle, it was important for a Roman soldier to be properly dressed. He needed armor as a suit of protection. And in the same way, God has given us spiritual armor to protect us from our enemy, Satan.

Let's review the pieces of the spiritual armor that we've learned about so far and how we put them on.

Belt of Truth

The **belt of truth** is the first piece of armor we must put on.

We put on the belt of truth by remembering the truth of God's word.

Satan is always trying to get you to sin. He takes great delight when he tricks you into being rebellious, defiant, angry, prideful, selfish, or jealous.

That's when you put on the belt of truth. You put the fiery arrows out by remembering how God wants us to think and talk and act.

Don't fall for Satan's tricks.

Breastplate of Righteousness

The **breastplate of righteousness** is the second piece of armor we must put on.

When you sin, Satan is quick to accuse you of being rotten. He wants you to think that God won't let you into heaven.

That's when you put on the breastplate of righteousness by remembering the moment you put your faith in what Jesus did on the cross for you, God declared you to be righteous because Jesus already took the punishment for your sin.

Shoes of the Gospel of Peace

The **shoes of peace** are the third piece of armor we put on.

We put "peace" on by making peace with God. The moment you put your faith in what Jesus did on the cross, you were accepted onto Team Jesus and you had immediately had peace with God.

We learned in last week's lesson when we have the peace that comes from knowing we are forgiven of our sins, we are ready, or "fully prepared," to tell others the Good News, the message of the cross.

Shield of Faith

Today we're going to give our soldier something no soldier of Rome would have wanted to venture into battle without.

Ephesians 6:16

In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil (NLT)

To understand how remarkable faith is when we use it as a shield, let's find out what a shield did for a Roman soldier.

What Was a Roman Soldier's Shield Like?

A shield was a soldier's best protection. It was about 2 feet across and 4 feet long. [Teacher, have a 4-foot marker on the wall.]

Ask: Are you taller than a Roman shield?

Most shields were made from wood covered with leather. The outside edge was reinforced with iron or bronze which made them very strong.

The soldier carried the shield in one hand and his sword in the other. He could move his shield around to protect almost every part of his body. The soldier could safely hide behind a good strong shield.

The shield was curved so that the enemy's arrows would just bounce off. That same curve also gave the soldier room to move about behind it. To get to him, the enemy's arrows had to get past the shield first and then pierce through the soldier's armor.

When you picture a soldier using his shield, you usually think of him just holding it out in front of him. But, the sides of the shield were made to hook together with the shields of other soldiers.

This made it possible for many soldiers to form a wall of protection. Often a whole regiment of Roman soldiers would lock their shields together over their heads or at their sides. They looked like a giant turtle in a shell. Together, a group of soldiers could move forward and use picks and crowbars to break down a city gate while they were protected on all sides from the enemies' arrows.

The enemy used everything they could think of to defeat the soldiers. Knowing the soldier's shields were made of wood, the enemy often set their arrows on fire before they shot them. Roman soldiers covered their wooden shields with cloth and tough leather, then soaked them in water so that when a flaming arrow landed on the wet shield, the fire would immediately go out.

Flaming Arrows

Satan, our enemy, shoots flaming arrows, or "*fiery darts*," at us, too. We don't know when Satan will shoot one of his arrows. He's like a sniper who shoots when we least expect it. And, we can't see the arrows coming. So, we must always have our shield of faith up and ready to use.

Ask: What are some of these flaming arrows our enemy shoots at us?

- Words that hurt our hearts. (Name calling, gossip, slander.)
- Temptations to think, say, or do wrong things.
- Thinking you don't belong.
- Hateful thoughts about people.
- Fear and doubt

The thoughts and ideas that Satan shoots at us are always lies. So, we must have faith that God will give us the victory. No battle or problem is too much for our God to handle.

Faith

Let's talk about what faith is.

When you know what faith is, you can understand how it can be your shield, your protection from whatever Satan flings at you.

Ask: What is Faith?

Hebrews 11:1

***Faith** is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see. (NLT)*

Say that I tell you that I will take the whole Sunday school class to the zoo next week, if you get your parents to sign this slip of paper. I tell you to come back next week with a sack lunch, play clothes on and your signed "permission" slip. Next week, when you come to Sunday school dressed for the zoo, carrying your brown-bag lunch and with

your signed slip of paper in your hand, you come knowing that we are going to the zoo. That's faith. You trusted me.

Faith is when you count on someone to keep a promise because you know the person can be trusted to tell you the truth. When you say you have faith in Jesus, you're saying that you trust and believe that what He did on the cross really paid the price for your sins. You are counting on God's promise to take you into Heaven when you die.

Ask: How does the shield of faith protect you?

Satan wants you and me to doubt God. He wants us to doubt God's promises, His faithfulness, His goodness, and His power. But you know that God can be counted on to do what He has promised. Putting your trust in God will stop Satan's arrows from hurting you.

Proverbs 30:5

*Every word of God proves true. He is a **shield** to all who come to Him for protection. (NLT)*

When you are scared, there is nothing more comforting than to run into the arms of someone you love and trust! You feel safe and secure because you know they will shield you from danger. In the same way, God's arms are always extended to us to shield and protect us. He gives us peace and hope which turns our fear into faith.

When you have the shield of faith, all the love, care, concern, and salvation that God has promised in His Word to those who love Him are yours. There is nothing Satan can do to keep God's promises from being true in your life.

Your shield is your faith and trust in God and His Word. Satan can't penetrate your shield as long as you have faith in God.

When you put your trust in something or someone else, it's like laying your shield aside in battle. That's when you become open to Satan's power and you are led away from God.

We need to surround ourselves with Christian friends so that when we are tempted to give up our faith, we can "hook on" to their shields and let them encourage us.

Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep His promise. (NLT)

Hold your shield of faith high by trusting the truths you know about God. Even when things seem to be going wrong, believe that God is your always-present, all powerful, loving Father, working in your life for your good — even when your feelings tell you something different. Faith is acting on what you believe even when you have doubts.

Ask: How do you take up the shield of faith?

You take up your shield of faith by believing and trusting God's promises. He will never leave you; He will always protect you; He will give you the victory in your battles—you can trust His promises.

Even though you cannot see Jesus, you can trust Him to keep you safe from the enemy.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, thank You for being a strong shield we can stand behind. When we're scared, help us to remember You are protecting us and that You have given us everything we need to put out the fiery arrows of the enemy with the faith we have in You.

It's so good to remember how faithful You are to us! Thank You for always keeping Your promises to us! Even when the hard things in life start to distract us, help us always to remember that You are always by our side and that nothing is impossible for us to do with Your help. Thank You that You are the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, the Almighty One that we can always trust in. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Game Center

Faith Rebus

Let the children work on the *Faith Rebus* word search, or send it home as a "take home" paper.

Doubt Extinguishers:

Let the students work in teams to lookup the scriptures on the ***Extinguishing the Doubts***, worksheet available on my website, and match them to the correct Doubt. Or, pin them to a board and let them choose the correct match. Review & discuss.

Shield Your Pyramid

Materials: 12 large sturdy plastic cups, 2 beanbags, and 2 shields.

Game: Divide the class into teams: perhaps boys and against girls. Set up a 6-cup pyramid for each team. For a correctly answered question, the first boy on the on the Boys team, earns the right to shoot a fiery dart (a beanbag) at the Girl's pyramid. The Girl's use their Shield of Faith to protect their pyramid from the fiery dart. For every cup knocked down, the Girl's are penalized 1 point. The object of the game is to get the lowest score, like golf.

After each question the pyramid is rebuilt and the play goes to the other team. Now the Girls try to knock the Boy's pyramid down.

Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

Review questions:

1. Why are we in a battle with Satan and his army of demons? (Satan hates God; God's enemy is our enemy.)

2. Where is this invisible battle taking place? (In our thought life.)
3. How do we battle the thoughts and ideas the enemy shoots into our minds like fiery darts? (Remembering how God wants us to think, and talk, and act.)
4. Why does the Good News give us peace? (When you become a true believer, you make peace with God; He is no longer your enemy.)
5. What piece of the armor do you use when you trust God's promises? (The shield of faith)
6. What is faith? (When you count on someone to keep a promise because you know that person can be trusted to tell the truth)
7. What are the arrows Satan shoots at us? (Lies, hateful thoughts about people, desire to sin, doubts that God really means what He says)
8. How can we stop Satan's arrows of doubt? (By believing God's Word.)
9. How do you put on the belt of truth? (By remembering the truth of God's word: Jesus loves me, forgives me, and will never leave me.)
10. How do you put on the breastplate of righteousness? (By remembering that because of what Jesus did on the cross, God sees us as righteous.)
11. How do you put on the shoes of peace? (By receiving God's gift of salvation and making peace with God.)
12. How do you take up the shield of faith? (By believing and trusting in God's promises.)

Easier Questions:

13. What does God give us to stand against the tricks of the devil? (A suit of armor.)
14. Who can we always count on to tell us the truth? (God)
15. Who are we pleasing when we are naughty? (Satan)
16. Who is the armor of God for? (For every Christian)
17. How do we know that our sins are forgiven? (Because the Lord Jesus paid for them and promised that we would belong to Him forever)
18. Can we use our armor all by ourselves? (No, the Lord Jesus gives us strength to stand against Satan.)

[For more lessons for children, visit
<https://www.freechildrensministrylessons.com>]

