

The Sword of the Spirit

(Ephesians 6:17b)

Pre-Session Warm Up

If you were going hiking in a new place would it be important to take a guidebook with you that had some good maps in it? (Yes!) What other sorts of guidebooks do you need in life? [Teacher, help the children discuss different types of guides, such as road maps, travel brochures, auto repair manual, cook books, etc.] Can a guidebook ever be wrong? (Yes!) What if the guidebook told you to take the wrong hiking trail or forgot to mention that you need to put eggs in the cake mix? Would you ever use that book again? Would you ever recommend it to others?

This morning we are going to find out about a guidebook that you can always trust. It gives you all the information you will ever need for living a truly good life. Can anyone guess what guidebook I'm talking about? (The Bible)

Opening Prayer

Lord, we want to thank You for giving us the Bible. We call it the Word of God, because You, by the power of the Holy Spirit, inspired men to write down Your thoughts about how we should live our lives, holy and set apart for You. Give us a desire in our hearts to read and study Your word and to memorize it so that we might be able to use it out on the battle field with Satan and his demons. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen

Memory Verse

*"And take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
(Ephesians 6:17b)*

Lesson

What sorts of weapons do soldiers use in war? [Teacher, let the children respond.] 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. What sort of weapons did the Roman soldier use? How do you think that relates to the spiritual weapons God has given us to fight against Satan and his demons?

Today we are going to discover that the Bible is sharper than any two-edged sword.

Let's begin by reading Ephesians 6:10-13

A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. (11) Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. (12) For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (13) Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm

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 provided every Christian with a suit of protection. Although you cannot see the armor God has given to protect you, we use the pieces of a Roman soldier's armor to remind us of the weapons God has given us in our fight against Satan.

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

| Verse | Piece of Armor | How You Put it On |
|-------|----------------|---|
| 14 | Belt of Truth | 1. By learning as much as we can of the Bible's truths 2. By always being truthful in everything we do |

| Verse | Piece of Armor | How You Put it On |
|-------|------------------------------|--|
| 14 | Breastplate of Righteousness | By choosing to do the right things... things God approves of |
| 15 | Gospel of Peace Shoes | 1. By making peace with God by receiving His gift of salvation 2. By making peace with others by forgiving them as God has forgiven you |
| 16 | Shield of Faith | By believing and trusting in God's promises |
| 17 | Helmet of Salvation | By guarding the thoughts that come into your mind |

Remember that our battle with Satan takes place in our minds — in our thought lives. A Christian's warfare is against more than natural temptations. There are powers in the unseen world against which we are powerless except through the help of Jesus. Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Faith, and Salvation are the weapons that ward off the darts of the unseen enemy.

Do you see how remembering God's promises helps in our fight against Satan?

Look at our soldier. So far, we've learned about all the pieces of his armor that he puts on. But what is he missing? A soldier, even when he has his protective armor on, is not ready for battle until he has his weapon. He must take his sword along. All the other pieces of the armor are what we call "defensive" weapons — used as protection from enemy attacks. The sword is an "offensive" weapon — used to attack the enemy.

Let's give him that today. We Christians call it the Sword of the Spirit.

Ephesians 6:17b

and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

With our armor on, we're ready to pick up our swords and go into battle. Our sword isn't made out of sharp steel because we're not fighting against flesh and blood. We're fighting a spiritual battle — one that can only be won in God's power.

Our sword is the Word of God. This sword is different from metal swords. The more you use a steel sword, the duller it gets. But the more you use God's word in the battle of life, the sharper and more effective it becomes.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

We should be learning verses from God's word so the Holy Spirit can bring them back to our memory when we are tempted to do wrong. Each verse that you put into practice is a powerful weapon that God can use to attack Satan and put him on the run.

The Bible is the only guide that never fails.

Just as a Roman soldier would not venture away without his sword, so we ought not go anywhere without our "swords" so we're prepared to talk to others about Jesus. But just having a Bible along isn't enough. You need to learn how to use it and where to find things you might want to know.

[Teacher, show the children how to use the Table of Contents in the Bible and explain the chapter/verse numbering system. Then have some "sword drills."]

The first one to find the following verses gets a piece of candy.
[Teacher, wait for all the children to find the verse, then read and discuss it.]

1. Ephesians 4:25 (Do not lie)
2. Hebrews 13:6 (Don't be afraid)
3. Ephesians 6:1 (Obey your parents)
4. Romans 12:17 (Don't repay evil for evil)
5. Ephesians 4:29 (Do not say dirty things)
6. Psalm 46:1 (Call on God in time of trouble)
7. 1 John 1:9 (Confess yours sins)
8. Ephesians 4:28 (Do not steal)
9. Hebrews 13:5 (Don't feel lonely)

See how helpful the word of God is? Make it a habit to take your "sword" along with you wherever you go. You're going to need it!

Closing Prayer

Lord, it's great that You've given us all the pieces of the armor to protect our heads, our hearts, and our whole body. But, we want to especially thank You for also giving us Your word. You knew that we needed it so that we would know how to live a truly good life. Give us a desire in our hearts to read and study Your word and to memorize it so that we might be able to use it out on the battlefield with Satan and his demons. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

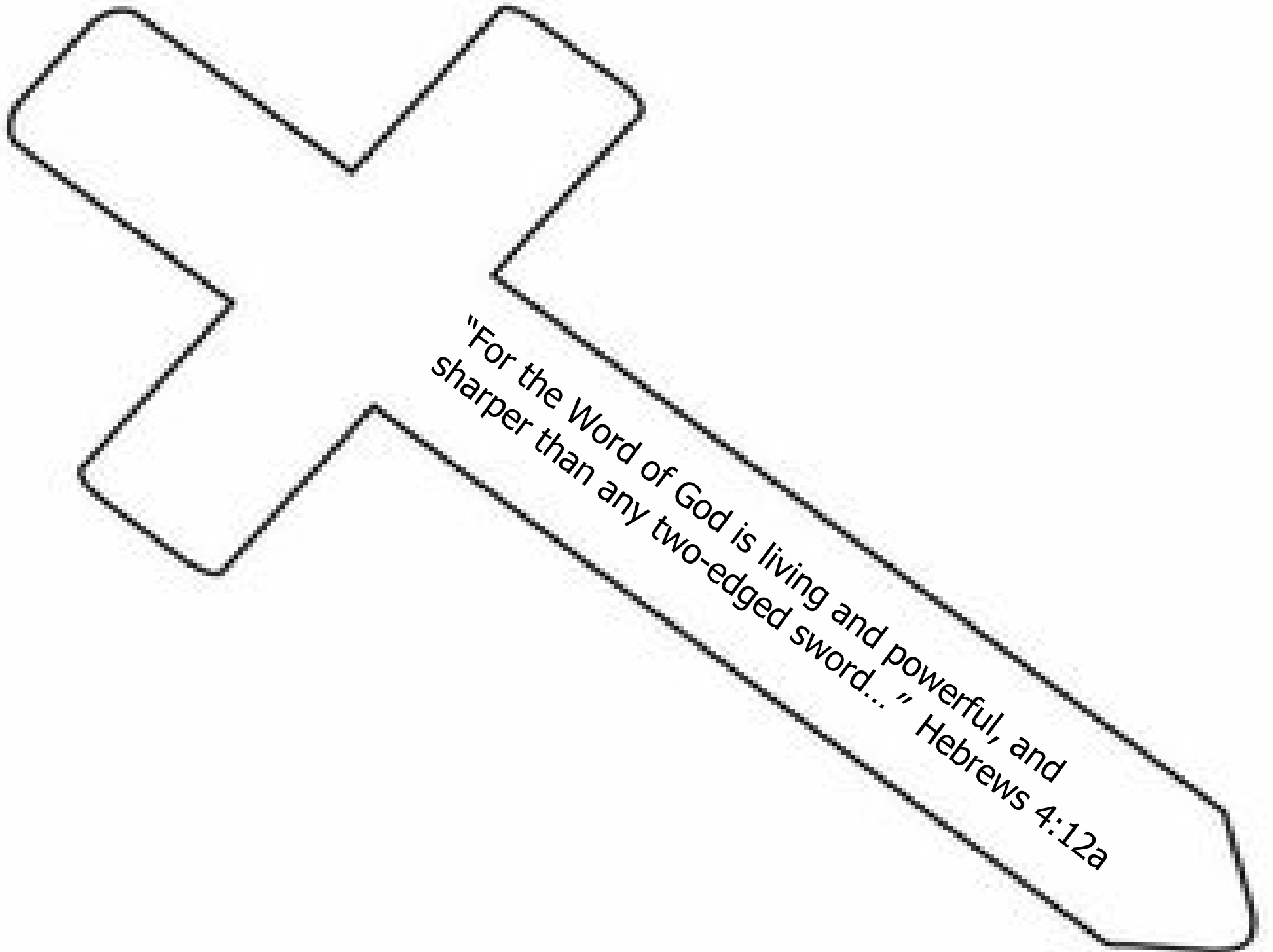
Let the children make swords using the pattern that follows or send it home as a "take home" paper.

Game Center

Let the children work on the *Sword of the Spirit* word search, or send it home as a "take home" paper.

Armor of God Bingo. Make Bingo cards using the following words:

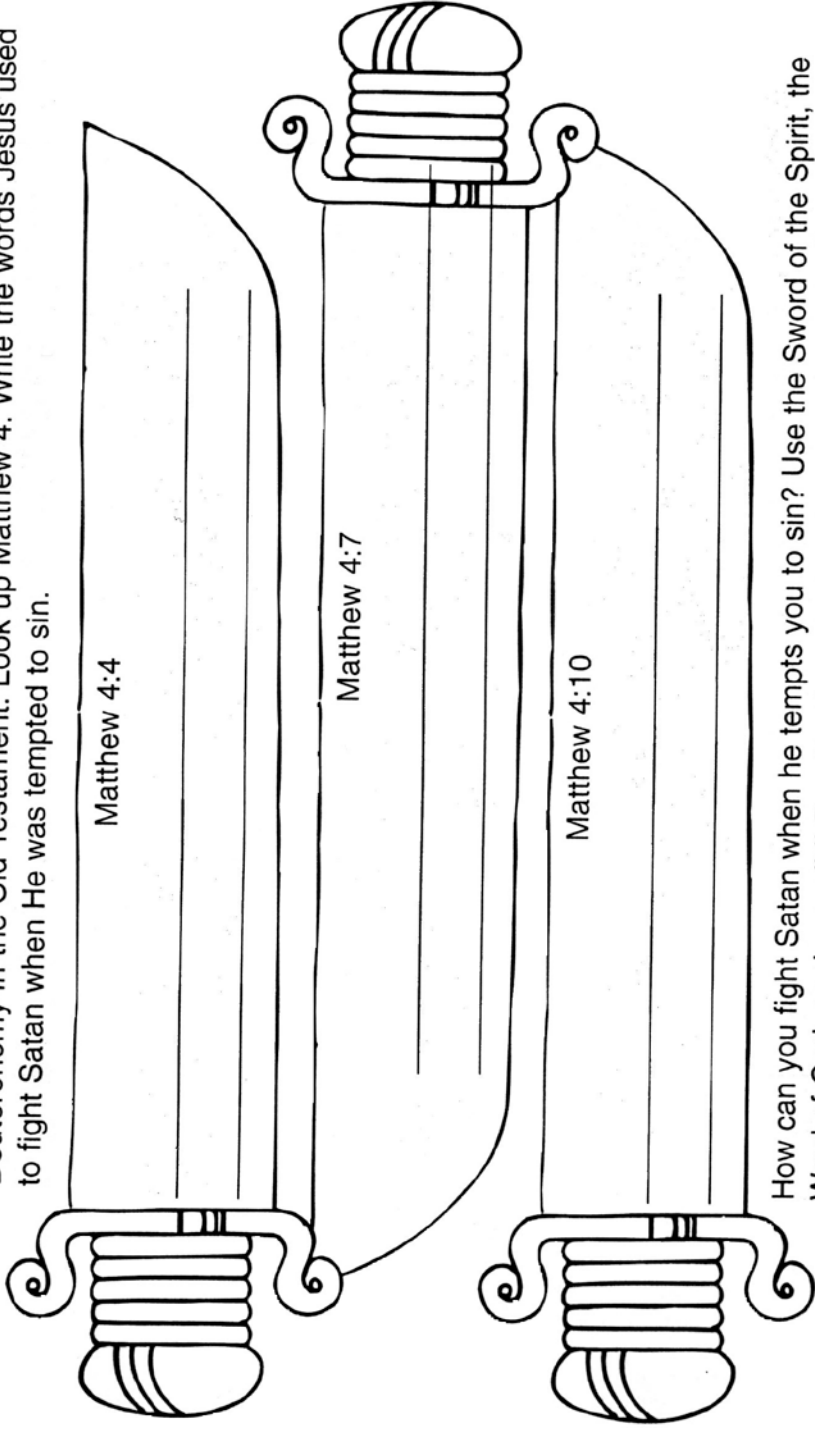
| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Armor | Be Ready | Belt |
| Breastplate | Devil | Doubt |
| Evil | Faith | Fiery Dart |
| Gospel | Helmet | Jesus |
| Prayer | Protection | Righteousness |
| Salvation | Satan | Shield |
| Shoes | Spirit | Spiritual Warfare |
| Stand | Sword | Temptation |
| Truth | Victory | Watch Out |
| Wickedness | Word of God | |



"For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword..." Hebrews 4:12a

Sword of the Spirit

How did Jesus fight His enemy, Satan? He used what Paul described in Ephesians 6:17 as the "Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." He quoted from Deuteronomy in the Old Testament. Look up Matthew 4. Write the words Jesus used to fight Satan when He was tempted to sin.



How can you fight Satan when he tempts you to sin? Use the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, as Jesus did! Read and memorize the Bible so you'll be ready for battle. Look up these verses and write them down. Select one (or choose one of your own). Memorize the verse so you can take it with you everywhere.

Proverbs 3:5 _____

James 4:7 _____

Colossians 3:17 _____

Philippians 4:13 _____

Romans 12:2 _____

1 John 4:4 _____

ARMOR OF GOD BINGO

Enter words at random into the spaces to create unique Bingo cards for each player. Copy each card onto a different colored card stock and laminate them for future use. Call out the words, one-by-one. If a child has that word he places a marker over it. The first child to get a row of markers in any direction is the winner.

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