

Rescue Us from the Evil One

(Matthew 6:9-13)

Introduction

[Teacher, have the kids stand shoulder to shoulder in a tight circle, facing outward, with their arms crossed in front of them.]

If we were in a battle against a terrible enemy, we'd do everything possible to shield ourselves from the attack. We could stand close together like this and let our arms shield us.

Jesus knows that we face an enemy who tries to destroy our faith. In the Lord's prayer, He taught us to pray, "*Rescue us from the evil one.*" As we pray, let's continue to stand as if we're shielding ourselves from danger.

Opening Prayer

Father, when You taught Your disciples to pray, You encouraged them to ask for protection from the evil one. Give us wisdom to recognize the evil influences the devil uses to hurt us. Help us avoid evil and trust You to protect us. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Rescue us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:13b)

Lesson

We've been learning the Lord's Prayer. Can anyone recite it? Let's say what we've learned so far together:

Matthew 6:9-10a

Our Father in heaven

May Your name be kept holy.

May Your Kingdom come soon.

May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need.

Forgive us our sins.

...as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

And don't let us yield to temptation.

First, we learned that God wants us to have a close relationship with Him. He wants us to call Him, "*Father.*" He is a loving Father who cares about us, understands what we're going through, and can comfort us. When Jesus gave His disciples this recipe for prayer, He told them to begin prayer by calling out to, "*Our Father in Heaven.*"

Next, Jesus taught us that it is important for us to keep God's name holy. That means that we are to keep His name special. When you pray, it's important to remember Who you're talking to. Then begin your prayer by honoring God's name. Pray, "*Father, we admire You and adore You. We honor Your holy name.*"

Next, we learned that someday Jesus is coming back to Earth. When He gets here, He will set up His wonderful kingdom and live among us as our King. That will be an exciting day, indeed! That is a time we should all be longing for — and praying for. It thrills God's heart when we let Him know in prayer that we are eagerly looking forward to that day. Pray, "*May Your Kingdom come soon.*"

And while we wait for God to come back and set up His kingdom on Earth, we learned that we should be praying that people would do things God's way here on Earth! Pray, "*Father, while we wait for Your return, help us to do Your will here on earth just as the angels do in heaven.*"

After we've asked that God's will be done, we can come to Him and ask Him to provide our basic needs. He is our great Provider! He may not provide all our *wants*, but He knows our everyday *needs* and promises to care for us.

Next, we learned how important it is for us to ask God to forgive us when we sin. Because God is perfect, He has to punish all sin. The reason God can forgive us is because Jesus already paid the price, the debt, for our sins when He died on the cross.

Next, we learned that it isn't enough to ask God to forgive us; He expects us to forgive others completely in the same way we want Him to forgive us. If you're having a hard time forgiving someone, remember all the wrongs that God has forgiven you and ask Him to help you.

Next, we learned that it is important for us to resist the temptation to sin. Everyone is tempted to sin every day. But you always have a choice. God wants you to choose to do the right thing—the godly thing to please Him.

The next phrase in the prayer is...

Matthew 6:13b

Rescue us from the evil one.

Today we're going to learn that we have a very real enemy who is trying to destroy our faith. But we can look to God for strength and protection against Satan and his evil ways.

Protect Me!

[Preparation: Help kids brainstorm a list of things Satan might use to hurt us. Some examples are worry, doubt, anger, jealousy, greed. Have the kids write these things on pieces of scrap paper and then wad them up like a ball. Using a masking tape strip down the middle of the room, divide the children into two teams and give one team the pile of "grenades" (paper balls).]

Play: In our game, you're going to try to keep from being hit by these evil tricks of Satan.

[Teacher, make sure that each child on the offensive team has at least two "grenades".]

At my signal, the team will throw the "grenades" at the other team. The other team is to try to avoid being hit.

[Teacher, allow the teams to reverse the roles so each team has an opportunity to throw the "grenades". Then ask the following discussion questions:]

- What made it hard to dodge the "grenades"?
- What would help your team avoid being hit by all these evil influences?

[Teacher, play the game again, but this time, provide the defending team with one "shield." You can use a plastic trash can lid, an umbrella, or your sample of the craft idea. As before let both teams have a chance to throw the "grenades". Then, gather the playing items and have the children return to their seats.]

- How did you feel when the "grenades" came flying toward you this time?
- What difference did it make to have a shield?
- How did having only one shield affect the way your team worked together? (We got close together behind the shield.)
- How can God be like a shield to protect us from evil?

Satan uses all sorts of evil tricks to try to discourage, mislead, or harm people. Sometimes it seems as if evil influences are flying all around us. But God can protect us. He does not leave us defenseless, but provides us with protective armor and a spiritual shield to keep us safe.

Do you know what armor is? Armor is a special kind of suit worn for protection. Today deep-sea divers wear a kind of armor. People who go into outer space wear space suits. Even football players wear a type of armor.

During the time of Jesus, Roman soldiers wore armor to protect them in battle. In Ephesians 6, the pieces of a Roman soldier's armor are used as an object lesson to help us understand the protection God offers us in our battle against Satan.

Ephesians 6:10-17 [Teacher, read these verses leaving out key words for your class to “fill in the blanks”:]

¹⁰A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

¹¹Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.

¹²For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in the dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

¹³Therefore, 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.

¹⁴Stand your ground, putting on the **belt** of truth and the **body armor** [breastplate] of God’s righteousness.

¹⁵For **shoes**, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared.

¹⁶In addition to all of these, hold up the **shield** of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil.

¹⁷Put on salvation as your **helmet**, and take the **sword** of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Discussion of the pieces of armor

Belt – The Roman soldier wore a strong, wide piece of armor around the middle of his body like a belt. It not only protected his vital organs, but it held all the others pieces of the armor together. With his belt on, the soldier could move around with confidence, knowing his other pieces would not slip out of place.

Breastplate – The Roman soldier also wore a breastplate that covered his body from his neck to his waist — in the front and back. It was made of metal plates or chains so that no sword or arrow could go through it.



Shoes – Roman soldiers wore heavy protective foot gear. Their shoes made them sure-footed and stable in the battle with the enemy.

Shield – The Roman soldier's armor also included a large shield made of wood. It was about 21/2 feet across and 4 feet long, so it offered double protection for almost every part of the soldier's body. To get to him, the enemy's arrows had to get past the shield first and then pierce through the armor that was worn on the soldier's body. The sides of the shield were made to hook together with the shields of other soldiers so that an army could use them to form a wall of protection.

Helmet – No matter how much armor you have for your body, it will do you no good unless you protect your head. A soldier's helmet protected his head and gave him confidence that he was safe from the enemy's attack.

Sword – With our armor on, we now need something with which to fight back. We're ready to pick up our swords and go into battle

We are soldiers in God's army

The Devil is God's enemy. He hates God and that's why he also hates anyone that loves God! Satan has a whole army of demons that are always trying to get God's followers to doubt God and to turn against Him.

It's important to remember that Satan is not as powerful as God, but he *is* a strong enemy. He is more powerful than you and I. God is stronger than our enemy and He can protect us. That's why He's given us Spiritual armor to protect us spiritually.

- How do you think each of these pieces of spiritual armor can protect us in our battle with Satan? [Let the children give their ideas.]

When Satan attacks us with temptations, if we put on our spiritual armor, we will be able to stand and not give in to sin.

There are many ways God can protect us from the evil one. One way is the shield of faith.

The Roman soldier's enemies 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.

Satan, our enemy, shoots flaming arrows, or 'fiery darts,' at us, too. Satan wants you and me to doubt God. He wants us to doubt God's promises, His faithfulness, His goodness, and His power.

Some of the darts Satan shoots are lies, hateful thoughts about people or the desire to sin. We don't know when Satan will shoot one of his darts. He's like a sniper who shoots when we least expect it. We must always have our shields of faith in hand and be ready to use it. We need to have our spiritual shields of faith soaked in the living water of the Word of God. We do that by reading our Bibles and praying; and by listening and obeying God.

We also 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 10:23-25). 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.

If you have faith in God that means that you trust Him to protect you. Your faith will stop all the bad thoughts that come into your mind, like fear and worry and anger. Satan doesn't want us to trust God to protect us. He's always trying to make us afraid. But we can stand strong in our faith in God.

When we wear God's armor, we can be confident that God will "*rescue us from the evil one.*"

1 Peter 5:8

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are.

This verse compares Satan to a lion hunting for prey to eat. Lions are dangerous, and we don't want to be near them! Remember that Jesus is stronger than Satan and He stands between us and evil.

Satan is a very real enemy. But remember that when Jesus was crucified on the cross, He defeated Satan. As we trust in Jesus, God rescues us from the evil one.

Closing Prayer

As we pray today, let's remember the armor God gives us. As I mention each piece of armor, pretend that you're putting it on, piece by piece. For example, when I mention the belt of truth, pretend you are putting a belt around your waist.

Father, thank You for sending Jesus to conquer evil for us. Thank You for giving us the armor of God.

- Thank You for the **belt of truth**.
- Thank You for the **breastplate of righteousness**.
- Thank You for the **shoes** of being ready to share the gospel of peace with others.
- Thank You for the **shield of faith**.
- Thank You for the **helmet of salvation**.
- Thank You for the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the Word of God.

Help us to remember to wear this armor every day so You can protect us from evil. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Stand Firm!

Let's make a shield to remind us that God gives us spiritual armor to protect us and make us stronger.

1. Cut a big poster-board shield.
 2. Cover the front of the shield with aluminum foil.
 3. Using a permanent marker, write one of the following verses on your shield.
 - The Lord your God is with you, He is a mighty savior. (Zephaniah 3:17a)
 - God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. (Psalm 46:1)
 - Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. (Ephesians 6:10)
 - Rescue us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:13b)
 - The Lord is my strength and shield, I trust Him with all my heart. (Psalm 28:7)
 4. Cut a chenille wire in half, and tape it as a "handle" to the back.
- Keep your shield in your room to remind you that with God's armor, we can stand firm against the devil

