

CHAPTER 9

VICTORY: EQUIPPED TO WIN

Refer to **pg 103** in the workbook

Summary

This chapter looks at the armor of God and how this works out in the everyday life of the Christian. Each piece is detailed with applications. Prayer is included.

The practical part guides the learner to see how he or she can grow as a disciple of Jesus.

To get ready

1. Extra Bibles, pens and pencils
2. Optional - photocopy of flash cards on pages 17 and 18
3. Memory verse Galatians 5:16

Teacher's Guide

The pictures are the traffic police, the firemen and a team of doctors. Their equipment will be the motorcycle for the policeman, water hose for the firemen and lights and surgical instruments for the doctors. Allow the learners to come up with their own examples of other equipment that might be needed.

Refer to **pg 104** in the workbook

1. Let the learners look up the passage of Ephesians 6:14-17 for themselves. You may want them to underline or highlight the different pieces of armor as they are mentioned. In the spaces provided, write down the pieces of the armor as they are read out.

From top to bottom, it will be as follows.

Helmet of salvation
Breastplate of righteousness
Sword of the Spirit
Belt of truth
Shield of faith
Feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace

Refer to **pg 105** in the workbook

2. Let one of the learners read out the description of the Roman belt in the scroll. Point out that for the Christian, there is the belt of truth.

The speech bubble tells of a possible response to the situation described. Take note that you also do not want to give the name of the person straight away. What do the learners think? Encourage discussion and allow diverse answers.

If time permits, encourage the learners to share other difficult situations where the truth revealed will affect another person adversely. What would they do? The point to stress is that we do not lie though it will be so much easier to do just that.

Refer to **pg 106** in the workbook

The second situation is one from home. Ask the learners if there are any other ways they would answer their own mothers.

As the pieces are discussed, there is, in each case, these thought bubbles with the 'sound' effects. From the sounds, you will be able to get the general ideas. For example, the result of a loose belt is often embarrassment when your trousers fall down or when you trip over your loose clothes. Have fun over these sound effects.

Point out that not telling the truth often puts us in an embarrassing situation.

3. The breastplate of righteousness is considered next.

Again have one of the learners read out loud the description of the Roman breastplate.

Emphasize here that right behavior must be consistent. This means we act rightly everywhere, at home, at school, or with friends at the mall.

Refer to **pg 107** in the workbook

Ask the learners to think when they let their guard down. That is the time when they are most themselves.

However, peer pressure sometimes forces them to behave differently. Let them discuss what are the situations when such pressure to conform, as against being obedient to Jesus, is strong.

The point here is consistency. The breastplate is the most obvious piece of the armor that you wear. The learners must be encouraged to show a consistent lifestyle irrespective of who they are with. Let them think as to when they act differently because of peer pressure. Ask them why they do so and discuss their answers.

Refer to **pg 114** in the workbook

What happens when the breastplate is off? You get injured in the body.

4. Have someone read out loud the description of good footwear in the scroll.

Expect some problem with the awkward construction of this particular piece of armor. The interpretation here is to have the feet covered with shoes signifying the ever-readiness of Christians to share the good news about peace and fellowship with God our Father. This is the Christian's motivation, the thing that keeps him or her on the go, so to speak. Christians should be constantly seeking opportunities to share the gospel, in every situation.

Refer to **pg 109** in the workbook

The two situations show two people who might be ready to listen to the gospel. How can you be the person to bring it to them? Can the learners think of other such opportunities, which they may have missed because they were not prepared? The people you talk to may not respond positively but at least the seed is sown at the proper time. Let God now work within by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the next lesson, the learners will discover a method to tell others about the good news of what Jesus has done for us.

Think of the difficulty of moving when the shoes are broken or loose. We are in pain and the race is lost. Good, smooth and fast movement is possible only if the shoes are fitting and tight.

Refer to **pg 110** in the workbook

5. Have someone read aloud the scroll portion about the Roman shield. You might want to say something about the ability of the shields to extinguish fiery arrows because of the treated surface.

Encourage the learners to step out in faith when faced with such questions from the devil. How would they answer back? Write it down. Let them think out clear and confident answers to those comments. If there is a Bible verse they can think of, even better.

Ask the question - do you believe God or do you believe the devil? The situations boil down to that fundamental question. Christians will always be tempted, just as Jesus was. But we need not fall into sin by succumbing to temptations. Faith in what God has done for us in making us new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) means that we are no longer under the bondage and control of our sinful nature. Emphasize that we are free to be the persons God wants us to be. The devil will always try to deceive us into thinking that we are still very much in his control. He will be quick to point out lapses in character and insist that we are still very much in our sin. So we need to focus on what God has done for us in Christ.

Again write down clear and confident replies in the scrolls to the lies of the evil one.

Refer to **pg 111** in the workbook

Emphasize that faith basically is believing God. If you do not believe what God says, you will believe what the devil says or implies.

The rectangular box is for the learners to describe their own reactions if in battle, they should drop their shields, and the fiery arrows are coming thick and fast? Well?

6. The next piece of equipment is the helmet of salvation. Have one of the learners read out the information in the scroll out loud.

Refer to **pg 112** in the workbook

The fact of our salvation must be clearly kept in mind. When we falter here, then like an unprotected head we will succumb to the blows of the enemy. Tell the learners about salvation from God in Christ as a past event (we believe that Jesus has died for our sins), a present reality (we are being saved meaning that we are being transformed as we cooperated with the Holy Spirit in the process of cleansing and changing), and a future hope (when Christ returns in glory we will all experience total salvation as our bodies are transformed and a new heaven and a new earth come into being).

Let the learners read through the Ephesians passage together. Then let them underline (or highlight) those works that tell us who they are in Jesus Christ. Do this in the workbooks.

Let the learners savor the great salvation that God has given to us in Christ, as guaranteed by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:3-14 (NLT)

³How we praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms** because **we belong to Christ**. ⁴Long ago, even before he made the world, **God loved us** and **chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes**. ⁵His unchanging plan has always been to **adopt us into his own family** by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure.

⁶So we praise God for **the wonderful kindness he has poured out on us** because **we belong to his dearly loved Son**. ⁷He is so rich in kindness that he **purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son**, and **our sins are forgiven**. ⁸He has **showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding**.

⁹**God's secret plan has now been revealed to us**; it is a plan centered on Christ, designed long ago according to his good pleasure. ¹⁰And this is his plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ--everything in heaven and on earth. ¹¹Furthermore, because of Christ, **we have received an inheritance from God**, for **he chose us from the beginning**, and all things happen just as he decided long ago. ¹²God's purpose was **that we who were the first to trust in Christ should praise our glorious God**. ¹³And now **you also have heard the truth, the Good News** that **God saves you**. And when you believed in Christ, **he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit**, whom he promised long ago. ¹⁴**The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us everything he promised** and that **he has purchased us to be his own people**. This is just one more reason for us to praise our glorious God.

Spend some time just to explain some of the phrases that are written in the Scripture passage.

Refer to **pg 113** in the workbook

Again fill up the thought bubble with their own thoughts as to what would happen if the helmet drops off? Make it funny and yet serious enough to see the spiritual reality of leaving ourselves exposed to sin and temptation. Here the person without the helmet gets bumped on the head and hear birds tweeting (or sees stars?).

7. Read aloud the scrolled information regarding the Roman sword.

The Roman sword is two-pronged in its usage. It is for both defence and attack. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. The Christian uses it to fend himself or herself against the lies of the devil. The Christian also speaks the Word powerfully to bind and to loose spiritual powers. Let the learners know that they must learn to use this weapon really well.

Refer to **pg 114** in the workbook

Let the learners do the quiz answering either 'yes' or 'no'.

The answers should be 'yes' for every question.

Discuss each question with them. Try to avoid being condemning in this section. Do not ask questions like 'Why are you not reading your Bible?'. Rather for each statement, ask questions for further discussion like 'What problems do you face when reading the Bible?'.

The second question about a guide for reading the Bible is to note if the learners are reading the Bible systematically. Some may prefer not to use a guide but the point should be that they are going through the whole of Scriptures systematically.

At the end, let them write their score below. What is the score out of a total of 6?

Again the thought bubble here is for the learners to fill up creatively.

Refer to **pg 115** in the workbook

8. This last 'piece' is not physical but do emphasize its vital importance. Why? Because the battle we are involved in is not physical but spiritual. And without that powerful spiritual task of praying there will be the tendency to think we can do everything on our own strength.

Read the Ephesians 6:8 passage out loud together. The task is, of course, praying.

Encourage the learners to learn to support each other in prayer. Point them back to the portions on prayer. Remind them of the accountability factor in Small Groups in Chapter 5. Here in the passage from Ephesians, Paul urges the Christians to pray for each other and also for him in his missionary efforts. He realizes the importance of this spiritual activity to support his ministry and to keep each other standing in the faith.

Encourage the learners to search the Ephesians passage to find the answers to the following aspects of the praying Paul urges. The answers are as follows.

When?.....

On all occasions, always keep on praying

What?

With all kinds of prayers and requests

Refer to **pg 116** in the workbook

How?

In the Spirit

For whom?

For all the saints

A possible problem that may arise is the point about praying in the Spirit. You may explain it as praying in accordance to the will of the Holy Spirit, i.e. praying as moved and directed and in submission to the Spirit. Remind the learners that we end prayers with the words "In Jesus' name" meaning that we align ourselves to the will and desire of Jesus. The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. He urges us to pray along the will of the Triune God. And Jesus always keeps in line with the Father's will.

Here are a few questions based on this chapter to stimulate some self-examination. Lead the learners to make clear decisions to improve their walk with the Lord.

Are we truthful in all we say? Do we have difficulty telling the truth in all situations? Do we have the tendency to exaggerate? Do we notice the half-truths we tell to get out of trouble?

Is our behavior exemplary? Do we act according to the people we are with? Are we consciously seeking the Lord to make positive changes to our character and subsequently, our behavior?

Are we interested to telling others the good news of Jesus Christ? Do we ask the Lord to show us opportunities to tell others about Jesus? Are we praying for our friends and relatives who have yet to come to know Jesus as their Savior and Lord?

Do we believe too easily the lies the devil whispers to us? Can we say 'No!' firmly to the devil when we realize that something is against God's wishes?

Are we very clear and confident as to who we really are in Jesus? Are we assured that Jesus has died for our, yes, our very own, sins? Are we confident of God's love and protection?

Are we interested in reading and learning from God's Word, the Bible? Do we have a regular time for reading Scripture? Are we interested in keeping Bible verses in our minds by memorizing them?

Do we have a desire to pray for others? Do we realize how important prayer is to the community of believers? Are we consistent in praying for someone who asks us to do so for him or her? Are we involved in a prayer group, meeting regularly for the sole task of praying?

Refer to **pg 117** in the workbook

Help the learners to write out their desire for improvement concretely in the 'improvement list'. Think specific e.g. I will spend 30 minutes each day to read the Bible or I will start praying daily that my parents will come to know Jesus.

Let there be a time of sharing and praying for one another. A suggestion is to sit in a circle and pray for the person on the left. If there are already accountability partners for the group, let them keep up with each other.

The memory verse is Galatians 5:16. Let them write it down. Revise the other verses.

Galatians 5:16

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

Let the learners fill up the summary themselves, helping only when necessary.

TODAY I LEARNED ...

- 1 that God **equips** Christians so that we can live **victorious** Christian lives
- 2 that the belt of **truth** means that we have to be honest in all situations
- 3 that the breastplate of **righteousness** means that we have to behave in a consistent right manner

Refer to **pg 118** in the workbook

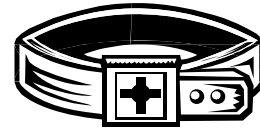
- 4 that the feet must be covered by the **readiness** that comes from the gospel of **peace** in that we should always be eager to share the gospel
- 5 that the shield of **faith** means that we are to rely on what God says rather than the devil's lies
- 6 that the helmet of **salvation** means that we must be clear as to who we are as saved people in Christ
- 7 that the sword of the Spirit is God's **Word** and we must train ourselves to use it properly
- 8 that we are to **pray** for each other always

AND I LEARNED HOW

to equip myself with the **armor** of God

See pages 3 to 14 above

**BELT
OF TRUTH**



**BREASTPLATE
OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS**



**FEET FITTED WITH THE
READINESS THAT
COMES FROM THE
GOSPEL OF PEACE**



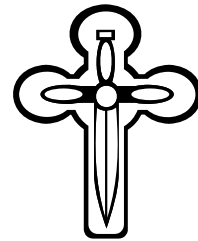
**SHIELD OF
FAITH**



**HELMET OF
SALVATION**



**SWORD OF
THE SPIRIT**



PRAYER

