

## The Armor of God – Sword of the Spirit

### Ready (*Plant the seed*)

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God... Ephesians 6:14-17

### Set (*Get the conversation started*)

All the parts of armor God has given us so far: the belt, breastplate, shoes, shield and helmet, are all protective equipment meant to prepare us and defend us against the attacks of the enemy and the temptation to sin. Next, God gives us the Sword of the Spirit. The sword is an offensive weapon. It is meant for us to use against the enemy. Ancient Roman soldiers used a short sword in battle called a *gladius*. It was sharp, strong and made to pierce through tough armor should an enemy get too close. Scripture tells us exactly what this weapon in the Armor of God is: the Word of God! We are to use the Holy Spirit's guidance through the Word of God to defeat the enemy. To defeat the enemy, we must know how to use the Word of God. The enemy uses many things around us to tempt us into sin: money, television, movies, video games, social media, etc. To fight against these attacks, we must know the truth about God's love for us and his plans to prosper us and strengthen us. We must read these truths in the Bible. The enemy tells us that we need lots of money to buy things we want that will make us happy, but God's Word tells us to seek God first and he will give us everything we need (Matt 6:33). We need to compare the things we encounter in the world against God's Word to be able to tell what is true and what is a temptation from the enemy. You can use God's word against temptation just like Jesus did in the wilderness against Satan. When Satan tried to tempt him, Jesus quoted the Word of God to defeat the tempter! God's Word is powerful! To be able to use God's Word, you must know it. That means you must read and study the Bible.

As an athlete, you practice your sport often. You learn from your coaches and work with your teammates. You watch professionals to study how they play. Then you use all the skills you have learned against your opponents in your games. God wants you to approach the fight against sin in the same way. Just like the soldiers that practiced becoming expert swordsmen and you practiced becoming a better player, you must also work hard to learn the word of God in order that you may wield it properly in battle. When you can confront sin armed with the Word of God as a Sword that can cut through the lies that tempt you, you will emerge victorious!

### Grow (*Talk it over*)

- How often do you practice your sport?
- Can you see how you have gotten better over this season already?
- How does that compare to the time you are spending reading God's Word?

### Pray

Father God, we are so thankful for your Word that guides us and brings us the truth in a world that showers us with so many lies. God, help us to remain steadfast in our study of scripture that will arm us with a sword so strong that we will be able to defeat sin any time temptation arises. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### Overtime (*Optional reinforcement game if time allows*) **Red Light, Green Light**

Have kids line up along one side of the field with the goal of reaching the other side. Kids take a big hop forward if they think the statement is true, stay still if they think the statement is false. Coaches will call out random rules about their games that are either true or false. A soccer example would be: "Any player can touch the ball with their hands at any time!" (False, kids stay). Mix it up with Biblical truths such as "God won't forgive you for making a mistake." (False, kids stay). "God loves you and wants you to be part of his family forever" (True, kids hop).

After players reach the end say: *Great job everyone! You certainly have learned a lot about your sport this season! Does knowing the rules help you make decisions on the field during the games? Yes, exactly! In this same way, reading God's Word arms you with the truth you need in the battle against sin!*