

## The Armor of God – Shield of Faith

### 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.

Ephesians 6:14-16

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

The last few weeks we have learned about the different parts of armor that God has given us in the fight against sin. After putting on that armor, God next gives us a defensive weapon: the shield of faith. Scripture tells us that “it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is a gift from God” (Ephesians 2:8). Your faith is a gift from God. As you grow stronger in that faith, you will be better equipped to defend yourself against the temptation to sin. Ancient Roman Soldiers carried large shields made from wood, leather and steel. Before entering battle, the soldiers would soak their shields in water so that the enemy’s fire would not engulf them. In this way, the shield of faith protects you from the enemy’s efforts to tempt you. Like the shield soaked in water, your shield of faith is soaked in the promises of God who provides all we need. When we trust in His provision for us, we can repel the lies from the evil one that tell us sin will make our lives better. Our faith is a shield from temptation!

When we play sports, we put on equipment that helps to protect our bodies: shin guards, pads, helmets, knee pads, etc. There are also rules that protect us like no tackling in flag football, no obstructing the base in baseball and no holding in soccer. Knowing that the coaches and referees are watching over these rules to keep everyone safe gives you confidence as a player to go out there and give it your all. You can approach the game feeling protected. The shield of faith allows you to approach life knowing that you are fully protected by God. This doesn’t mean that nothing bad will ever happen to you, but it does mean that God will provide all that you need in every circumstance.

### Grow (*Talk it over*)

- What can you do to help strengthen your faith? (*pray, read the Bible, go to church, etc.*)
- How does strengthening your faith help to defend you from the enemy’s efforts to tempt you?
- On the field, what makes you feel protected and why is that important?

### Pray

Father God, thank you for covering us in armor and providing us weapons in the battle against sin. May we strengthen our faith to better defend ourselves from attempts by the evil one. God, we will go out this week with the confidence that you are with us, protecting us and providing all we need. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

### Overtime (*Optional game for reinforcement*) Shield Defense Tag

Split team into three groups: soldiers, shields and taggers. Taggers’ goal is to tag the soldiers with a ball in their hand before they reach the other side of the field (they do not throw the ball). The shields will stand in front of the soldiers to protect them from the taggers. The soldiers will hold onto the shoulders of the shields as they run. If they let go, they are out. If the tagger touches the shield with the ball, they must move on to a different soldier. If the soldier is tagged, both he and his shield are out. Play ends if all the soldiers reach the other (soldiers win) side or all of the soldiers are out (taggers win).

Say: *Great job everyone! Soldiers, how did the shields make you feel? Protected? Was it still difficult to avoid the enemy? If you let go of that shield, you were vulnerable to attack. There wasn’t anything to protect you. Remember that as you grow in your relationship with God your faith/shield becomes stronger. It is your trust in Him that will help you to avoid the enemy’s attacks.*