

Unit 24: The Rejection of Jesus

Unit Description: Even though Jesus performed amazing miracles, including raising someone from the dead, the religious leaders rejected Jesus and managed to turn the people against Him too. Their sinful hearts were hard. Even this rejection, however, was part of God's plan to bring salvation to the world.

Big Picture Question: Why do people reject Jesus? People reject Jesus because all people are born with a sin nature and want to please themselves rather than obey God.



SESSION 1: Jesus Knew He Would Be Rejected

Luke 13



SESSION 2: Jesus Raised Lazarus

John 11–12



SESSION 3: The World Is Against God

Ephesians 6



UNIT 24 | SESSION 3

THE WORLD IS AGAINST GOD

EPHESIANS 6

KEY PASSAGE: He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Isaiah 53:3 NIV

Isaiah 53:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why do people reject Jesus? People reject Jesus because all people are born with a sin nature and want to please themselves rather than obey God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Paul told believers to be ready to fight a spiritual battle every day. People and powers who are against God will be against us too. But Jesus died and rose from the dead. He had victory over evil. We can fight the battle against evil, knowing Jesus already won the war.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



THE WEEK PRIOR

PREPARE

PREPARE YOUR HEART TO TEACH; PLAN THE SESSION



10-15 MINUTES

WELCOME

GREET KIDS AND OPEN THE SESSION



25-30 MINUTES

LEARN

TEACH KIDS THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL



15-20 MINUTES

LOVE

LEAD KIDS TO LOVE THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL



15-20 MINUTES

LIVE

LEAD KIDS TO LIVE OUT THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LEADER Bible Study

Each year, numerous local churches fill backpacks for children in their communities who have limited access to school supplies. They may schedule a Saturday morning to pack hundreds of backpacks full of pencils, paper, notebooks, scissors, erasers, and more to ensure that children are well-equipped for school.

Imagine if they filled the backpacks with candy, toys, tools, and dirt. Imagine that instead of paper and pencils, kids received empty soda cans and grass seed. Sure, those children may be ready to swing by the recycling center and start a landscaping project, but they would not be ready for what was in front of them.

In Ephesians 6, at the conclusion of Paul's letter to his friends in Ephesus, Paul reminded the Ephesians of the tools they needed to remain faithful in the combative culture they were living in.

The tools Paul described are not a hammer and nails. In fact, the tools that Paul exhorts them to use are metaphors for the spiritual characteristics and disciplines that are essential to guarding against the spiritual attacks of the devil and actively combating the lies of the evil one.

Paul reminded the Christians at Ephesus to put on truth, righteousness, readiness

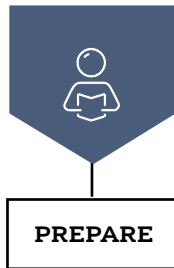
to take the gospel, faith, salvation, and the Word of God. We can pursue and hold tightly to these distinctive characteristics of those whose hope is in the gospel of Jesus Christ; and in so doing, we'll be equipped to stand firm in the faith.

Why are these things so essential? As Paul says in Ephesians 6:12, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens." Paul says you're not fighting a physical battle, but a spiritual one. Be sure you are equipped with the right tools for the task at hand.

In the same way, the kids in our communities need pencils and paper to be equipped for school, we need these spiritual characteristics and disciplines to grow and be equipped for the spiritual battle that we are facing each day. Be sure you gather the right supplies; it will make all the difference.

DOCTRINE TO KNOW

The World Opposed to God: An active and evil spiritual force operates under Satan's control. Christians are called to overcome this world of spiritual evil by faith in Jesus.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Prepare for Battle Crossword” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- various items such as empty water bottles, large brown paper bags, strips of cardstock, cardboard, yarn, and paper bowls, 3 per group



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “The World Is Against God” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- dry erase board and marker (optional)

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 24, Session 3” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Bagby Photo” printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “He Was Despised (Isaiah 53:3)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- white paper plates, 1 per kid
- various colors of tissue paper, 3–4 per kid

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- oranges, 1 per group
- bowls, 1 per group
- water

Journal and Prayer

- Journal Page
- “Dress for Battle!” activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “What does it mean to stand firm? Is there anything you stand firm in? Maybe a belief or a rule or a relationship?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Prepare for Battle Crossword” on the activity page.

SAY “The Bible teaches that every Christian is engaged in a spiritual battle. We don’t fight against flesh and blood but against evil powers. Let’s learn how we can be prepared for battle and how Jesus is the Victor!”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: ARE YOU PREPARED?



Form kids into groups of three or four and provide them with a piece of paper and a pencil. Lead each group to think about what it means to be prepared for a battle mentally, physically, and spiritually. Tell kids that they will need to form a list of ways their group would prepare for a specific battle against another team.

Assign each group one of the following team competition battles: bake-off for the largest cake, spelling bee, constructing a ship out of plastic blocks, football playoff, and a race across the country. Allow groups a few minutes to write down the different ways they would need to prepare for these events. Then invite groups to share their ideas with everyone.

SAY “It would be foolish to enter a battle or a competition without being prepared! In a similar way, Christians should be wise and prepare for spiritual battles. We have a real enemy that wants to keep us from trusting Jesus. Today, we will learn how God has given us all we need to prepare for battle.”

OPTION 2: FORGE YOUR ARMOR

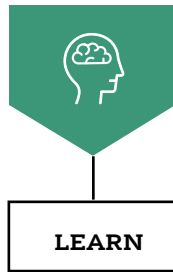
Before the session, gather various items that kids can use to create armor such as empty water bottles, large brown paper bags, strips of cardstock, cardboard, yarn, and paper bowls. Gather enough materials for groups to have three items each. Form kids into six groups and assign each group a piece of armor (shield, belt, sword, helmet, sandals, breastplate).

Place the items in a basket. Tell kids that when you say “Go,” one kid from each group must race to the basket and grab three items to use to make their piece of armor. Allow three or four minutes for groups to create their armor. Then invite each group to present their creations to everyone.

SAY “Do you think your armor would stand up in battle? Probably not. Thankfully, we don’t have to create our own armor. Instead, God gives us the armor we need and empowers us to put it on by faithfully obeying Him. Today, we will learn more about the armor God gives us through Jesus.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name]. Today, our Bible story comes from the book of Ephesians. Hold up your Bible if you have one! [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Let’s turn to the book of Ephesians together. [Guide kids to Ephesians.]

The book of Ephesians was written by the apostle Paul. Paul was a follower of Jesus who went on to write many of the letters in the New Testament. We’ll learn more about Paul as we continue to study the New Testament. In Ephesians 6, Paul wanted Christians to remember that there is a very real battle—a battle against evil. Today, we will learn how God has given us all we need to fight this battle and how Jesus has victory over evil. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

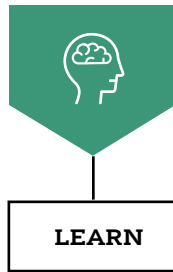
SAY “ We have been learning that people reject Jesus. What is our big picture question? [Allow responses.] **Why do people reject Jesus?** Does anyone remember the answer? [Allow responses.] **People reject Jesus because all people are born with a sin nature and want to please themselves rather than God.**

When people reject Jesus they are falling right into the evil desires of the devil. Satan and evil do not want people to trust God and believe in Jesus. They want to distract people from truth and tempt them to believe this world has all we need. But God gave us His Word so that we can learn how to fight evil’s plans. Most of all, God gave us Jesus who defeated Satan on the cross and who gives us victory over evil. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Over the past two weeks, we have learned how people rejected Jesus. Many of the religious leaders planned to kill Jesus and refused to believe He is the Son of God. Even when Jesus performed miracles, like raising Lazarus from the dead, the religious leaders formed evil plans to destroy Him. But evil did not win. Jesus willingly laid down His life and rose again. He is victorious over evil. Today, our Bible story teaches us that we can trust in Jesus’ work on the cross to help us fight against sin and the evil of this world. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Ephesians 6. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The World Is Against God.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE WORLD IS AGAINST GOD

“Be strong! God is strong, and He will give you strength.” Paul wrote these words in a letter to the church at Ephesus. Paul was in prison in Rome, and he knew from experience that the Christian life was not an easy life. In fact, the Christian life is like a battle. The battle is difficult, and it is not a battle against other people. **The battle is against evil.**

Paul told believers how to fight. **“Put on the full armor of God,” he said. “It will help you stand up against the devil, who is trying to trick you.”**

Paul wrote about the importance of being ready for battle. He said that God gives us what we need to stand strong against evil. **Evil is strong, but God is stronger. These are the pieces of God’s armor:**

First, **truth is like a belt around our waist.** We know what is true because God has told us about Himself in His Word. **Truth can stand up against lies.**

Second, **righteousness is like armor on our chest.** God gives us righteousness when we trust in Jesus. Righteousness is doing the right things for the right reasons.

Third, **Paul said, “Be ready with the gospel—like sandals on your feet.”** What God has done for us in Jesus is good news! **We must always be ready to tell others the gospel.**

Fourth, **faith is like a shield.** We should take it with us wherever we go to help protect ourselves from the evil one’s attacks. **This evil one—the Devil—wants us to doubt God and believe lies. God gives us faith to help us trust in Him and obey Him.**

Finally, **Paul said, “Salvation is like your helmet, and God’s Word is like your sword.”** A helmet protects your head. We should remember that God has saved us.

A sword helps us fight off enemies. **God’s Word, the Bible, is a strong sword! The Bible tells us what is true, and the Holy Spirit helps us do what it says.**

When we use this armor, **we must remember to pray. God will show us how to be ready and how to live for Him.** Paul said, “Don’t give up praying for God’s people.” Paul wanted the Ephesians to pray for him too, that God would help him be bold when he shared the good news about Jesus.

Christ Connection: Paul told believers to be ready to fight a spiritual battle every day. People and powers who are against God will be against us too. But Jesus died

STORYTELLING TIPS

Pretend to dress up: Encourage kids to pretend to put on each piece of armor as you tell the story. Remind kids that every piece of armor is needed in the fight against evil.

Draw it: Draw the pieces of armor on a dry erase board as you teach about them in the story.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

and rose from the dead. He had victory over evil. We can fight the battle against evil, knowing Jesus already won the war. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The apostle Paul was in prison in Rome when he wrote the book of Ephesians. He knew from experience that the Christian life was not an easy life and said it was like a battle. Who did Paul say Christians battle against? [Allow responses.] Paul said we battle against evil powers at work in the world.

Do you remember the different pieces of armor? What are they? [Allow responses and review each piece of armor.] The armor of God is not something we have to build on our own. God gives us each piece but we must put it on and ask God to help us use the armor He has given us. Every piece of armor is important and is needed to fight against sin. We can pray that God will show us how to use the armor.

Finally, Paul taught believers to continually pray. Why does Paul tell Christians to remember to keep praying? Look at Ephesians 6:18. [Choose a volunteer to read Ephesians 6:18 aloud.] Paul says we should pray because it helps us stay alert of evil’s plans. He tells us to pray at all times because we constantly need to depend on God for all things. God alone knows how and when the enemy will attack. And he also tells us to pray for other Christians. We can even use prayer as a way to fight for our brothers and sisters in Christ so they do not believe Satan’s lies.

By faith in Jesus, we receive the armor, find the strength to fight, and have victory over evil. One day, evil will no longer have any power and Jesus will destroy evil once and for all. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Paul told believers to be ready to fight a spiritual battle every day. People and powers who are against God will be against us too. But Jesus died and rose from the dead. He had victory over evil. We can fight the battle against evil, knowing Jesus already won the war. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 24, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Didn’t Jesus defeat Satan at the cross? Why is there still a battle between him and God?
2. Why is important that you put on the full of armor of God?



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Bagby Photo” as you tell the story.

SAY “William and Anne Bagby were the first permanent Baptist missionaries in Brazil. Their work in Brazil is one of the longest terms of service of a couple serving as full-time missionaries in Southern Baptist missions. The Bagbys served as missionaries for 56 years and continued to live and work in Brazil until their deaths.”

Tell kids that in the late 1930s, L.R. Scarborough, former president of Southwestern Seminary, went on a tour of South America. Explain that he later wrote about the Bagbys and said, “Everywhere in Brazil, we saw deep Bagby tracks, some churches they had founded, schools they had built, great leaders they had won to Christ and trained for His service, or some other triumphs of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Pray for the mission work that continues in Brazil and around the world.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 53:3 together.

SAY “Jesus faced rejection, suffering, and death so that we could be free from the rule of evil. Through faith in Jesus, we are given victory over sin, death, and the rule of evil.”

Remind kids that the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Encourage kids to memorize the key passage as part of a way to dress for battle. Lead kids in a sword drill by having them stand up with their Bible in hand and turning to Isaiah 53:3 in their Bibles. Tell kids that when you say “Go,” they should turn to the passage as quickly as they can and say the verse aloud. Repeat a few more times. Consider timing kids to see if they can beat their previous times.

Lead kids to sing “He Was Despised (Isaiah 53:3).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

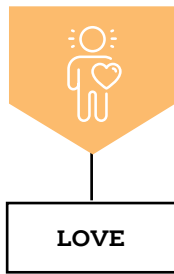
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “God, thank You for always being with us and fighting for us in battle. Help us always be prepared to fight against evil by putting on the armor You have given us. Amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Ephesians 6. Explain that Paul wrote many letters to churches to encourage them in their faith and help them follow Jesus. Tell kids that Ephesians was written specifically to the Church at Ephesus (D7), a city in ancient Greece.

Consider comparing the New Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Selcuk.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Ephesians 6:10-11.

SAY “ We can be strong in the Lord because we know God fights for His people. Paul reminds us that God gives us His strength to fight the enemy. The armor He gives us is not made by human hands but spiritual elements that can only come from God. We put them on by trusting Him and obeying His word. We ask Him to help us remember and believe in truth, the gospel, our salvation, the righteousness we have through Jesus, and so on. Through His strength, we will be strong. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Is the Christian life easy? Why not? ”

Remind kids that because the world is against God, and Christians belong to God, it is against us too. Help kids understand that while God rules over all creation, Satan and evil forces are still able to do wicked schemes. Remind kids that one day, God will destroy Satan once and for all.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 16:33.)

SAY “ Do we need to put on our spiritual armor every day? Why? ”

Tell kids that we will face temptations every day from the world and from evil forces at work. Remind kids that putting on the armor of God is a choice we make. Tell kids that we can choose to remind ourselves of all that we have in Jesus and how through Him we have all that we need to fight evil.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Peter 5:8.)

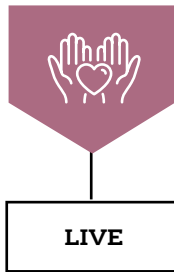
SAY “ Why do we not need to fear evil? ”

Remind kids that while Satan and evil are real, we do not need to fear them. Tell kids that God is stronger and more powerful than Satan and evil. Encourage kids to remember that when we trust in Jesus, we are His forever and that nothing can take us away from Him. Help kids to remember that while Satan is our enemy, Jesus holds the victory.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 23:4.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: PAPER PLATE PARROT



Provide every kid with a white paper plate, glue, markers, scissors, and colorful tissue paper. Direct kids to cut the paper plate into a $\frac{1}{3}$ section for the head and beak, and a $\frac{2}{3}$ section for the body. Instruct kids to glue the smaller section at the top of the larger section on top of one another. Lead kids to draw an eye and color in half of the smaller section black for the beak.

Direct kids to color in the rest of their parrots using the markers. Then lead kids to cut half-inch strips of tissue paper to be the parrot's tail feathers. Direct kids to glue the tissue strips on the body to create long tail feathers.

SAY “ Brazil has many colorful tropical birds, like these parrots you made. Many species of parrots live in the Amazon rain forest. Place your parrots somewhere in your home as a reminder to pray for the people of Brazil and the missionaries serving throughout the country. ”

OPTION 2: STAND FIRM



Form kids into groups of four and provide each group with a bowl filled with water and an orange. Instruct groups to place the orange in the bowl of water. Prompt kids to make observations about the orange in the water.

SAY “ Does the orange sink or float? [Allow responses.] The orange does not sink when it is ‘dressed’ in its peel. The peel not only helps the orange float, but protects it from taking in water. ”

Lead kids to peel the orange and as they do prompt them to think about how each part of the peel could represent a piece of the armor of God. Discuss what would happen if we removed the pieces of armor. Prompt kids to discuss what happened after the peel was removed.

SAY “ Without its peel, the orange sank. Likewise, without the armor of God we cannot stand firm against the enemy. Every day we can trust God and put on His armor. ”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, praising God that He has overcome evil through Jesus. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Dress for Battle!” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
2. What does this story teach me about myself?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?

FOLD



Unit 24 • Session 3

THE WORLD IS AGAINST GOD

Ephesians 6

WHY DO PEOPLE REJECT JESUS?

PEOPLE REJECT JESUS BECAUSE ALL PEOPLE ARE BORN WITH A SIN NATURE AND WANT TO PLEASE THEMSELVES RATHER THAN OBEY GOD.

“Be strong! God is strong, and He will give you strength.” Paul wrote these words in a letter to the church at Ephesus. Paul was in prison in Rome, and he knew from experience that the Christian life was not an easy life. In fact, the Christian life is like a battle. The battle is against evil.

“Put on the full armor of God,” he said. “It will help you stand up against the devil, who is trying to trick you.”

Evil is strong, but God is stronger. These are the pieces of God's armor: Truth is like a belt around our waist. Truth can stand up against lies. Righteousness is like armor on our chest.

Paul said, “Be ready with the gospel—like sandals on your feet.” We must always be ready to tell others the gospel.

Faith is like a shield. This evil one—the Devil—wants us to doubt God and believe lies. God gives us faith to help us trust in Him and obey Him.

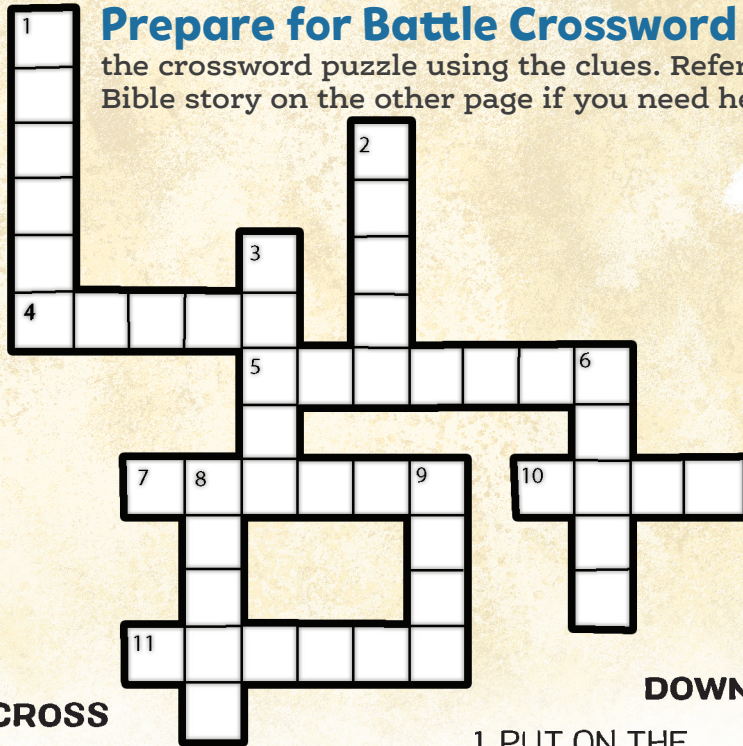
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We must remember to pray. God will show us how to be ready and how to live for Him.

Christ Connection: Paul told believers to be ready to fight a spiritual battle every day. People and powers who are against God will be against us too. But Jesus died and rose from the dead. He had victory over evil. We can fight the battle against evil, knowing Jesus already won the war.

Prepare for Battle Crossword | Complete the crossword puzzle using the clues. Refer back to the Bible story on the other page if you need help.

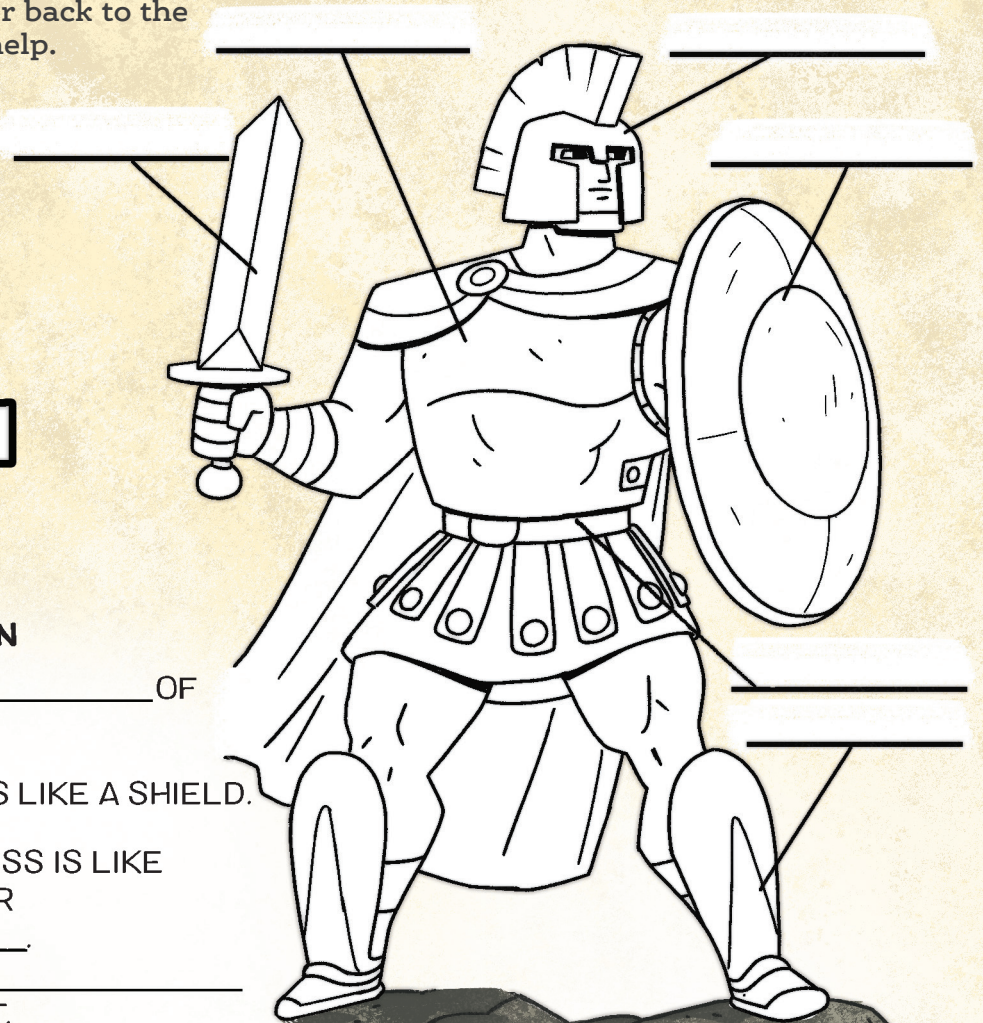


ACROSS

DOWN

- 4. _____ IS LIKE A BELT AROUND OUR WAIST.
- 5. PAUL WROTE THE LETTER OF EPHESIANS TO THE CHURCH IN _____
- 7. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS LIKE A _____
- 10. THE GOSPEL IS THE _____ NEWS OF JESUS.
- 11. BE READY WITH THE _____—LIKE SANDALS ON YOUR FEET.

- 1. PUT ON THE _____ OF SALVATION.
- 2. _____ IS LIKE A SHIELD.
- 3. RIGHTEOUSNESS IS LIKE ARMOR ON OUR _____
- 6. TAKE UP THE _____ OF THE SPIRIT.
- 8. PAUL TOLD BELIEVERS TO PUT ON THE FULL _____ OF GOD.
- 9. THE CHRISTIAN BATTLE IS AGAINST _____



Dress for Battle | Label each piece of armor used in the battle against evil. Read Ephesians 6:10-17 for help. Then color in the soldier.



NAME:



The World Is Against God

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- Paul wrote that the Christian life is like a battle. The battle is against evil.
- Paul told believers to put on the full armor of God. He explained why each piece is important and how it helps Christians fight evil.
- Paul told believers to pray at all times and to continue to share the gospel.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Paul told believers to be ready to fight a spiritual battle every day. People and powers who are against God will be against us too. But Jesus died and rose from the dead. He had victory over evil. We can fight the battle against evil, knowing Jesus already won the war.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 53:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why do people reject Jesus? People reject Jesus because all people are born with a sin nature and want to please themselves rather than obey God.