

Armour of God – Shield of Faith

God has given you His whole armour, to protect you from head to toe. What have we look at so far?

The belt of truth

The breastplate of righteousness

The Shoes of the gospel

This week let's look at the shield of faith

Read Ephesians 6:11-16

Put on all of God's armour so that you will be able to stand safe against all strategies and tricks of Satan. For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies—the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world. So use every piece of God's armour to resist the enemy whenever he attacks, and when it is all over, you will still be standing up. But to do this, you will need the strong belt of truth and the breastplate of God's approval. Wear shoes that are able to speed you on as you preach the Good News of peace with God. In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan.

Game (you will need a paper plate or plastic one and old newspapers)

Collect some old newspaper and screw up into balls.

Give everyone a paper/plastic plate

Use the plate like a shield, choose one person to throw the newspaper balls at the others. Try and shield yourself from the paper. Count the number of times you get hit or if you get hit you need to sit out.

Swap places and play again.

Did you enjoy that. Have you ever played with nerf guns or water guns? Do you like hiding and having things to hide behind?

Have a chat

Over the past few weeks we have talked about a soldiers armour. They seem to wear a lot of metal armour so they should be ok, they should be well protected shouldn't they, there shouldn't be any weaknesses/places where things that hurt them could get through?

No matter how well protected the soldier may seem there is always a weakness somewhere and all their enemy needs to do is find that place and bring them down.

- So, what piece of armour would they have? A shield
- What makes a shield different to the other pieces of armour?

That's right a shield isn't fixed to a certain part of the body. It can cover weaknesses in the soldiers armour (just as you moved your plate when you played the game) and it can help protect against things that are fired at them.

What the soldier needs to do is know how to use their shield to protect them from danger.

So what is the shield of faith?

The soldier uses the shield to protect them from danger, we need to do the same thing with the shield of faith. To stop us doing and saying the wrong things.

Why do you think God uses a shield to represent faith?

The shield of faith moves to cover our doubts and struggles – where we struggle to do the right thing or we don't know the answer to a question.

Sometimes we can have things happen at school/at home/work where we find it hard to resist what we really want to say and do. We need to use our shield of faith to stop things that are fired at us.

Can you think of some examples?

- A friend starts to say unkind things about someone else – what do you do? Join in or say no?
- Your brother/sister gets hurt when you play fight – what do you do? Say that you don't know what happened, you were doing something else or admit to what you did?
- Our friends want us to stay out late and we have promised our parents we will be back at a certain time – what do you do. Go along with your friends and not go home or go home as you have agreed?

To wear the shield of faith we need to communicate, spend time with Jesus, talk to him, let him talk to us. Talk to him about what's going on in your life and listen to him.

When we face challenges or hard times we only need the smallest bit of faith for Jesus to take care of us. When we grow in our relationship with Jesus our faith grows as well. The shield is there to intercept (stop) behaviours, attitudes and things that reduce our time with God. It defends us against sin and Satan.

The shield of faith is not only our faithfulness to God, but it is also God's faithfulness to us. When we are faithful, it means we completely trust that God will protect us in our war against Satan. He will never leave us. Even when we sin and doubt God, he is still there to protect us. When we believe that, we are picking up the shield of faith.

When we take up the shield of faith, we don't do it through our own strength, but through God's strength.

The bible is full of stories of God's faithfulness and people having great faith. Can you think of some more?

David had faith to fight Goliath

Noah had faith that God would protect his family during the flood

The disciples had faith that Jesus was God's son

Song

Song to Heads, shoulders knees and toes

Sing it through , then remove one piece of armour at a time; last time sing it with all the armour back in and really fast

Now work on adding actions for each of the pieces of armour

Belt, breastplate, shoes and shield,

Helmet and sword,

Belt, breastplate, shoes and shield,

Helmet and sword,

This is the armour of our Lord,

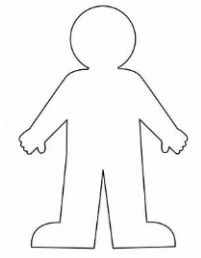
Belt, breastplate, shoes and shield,

Helmet and sword.

Craft

If you have a roll of spare wallpaper draw around someone and each week draw on a piece of God's armour

Or draw an outline like the one below and draw on the armour each week

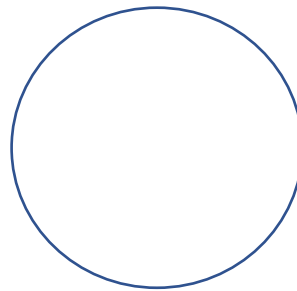
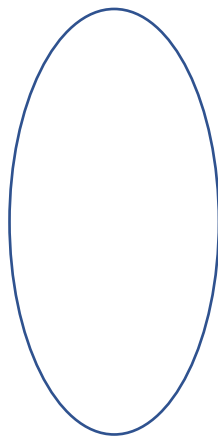
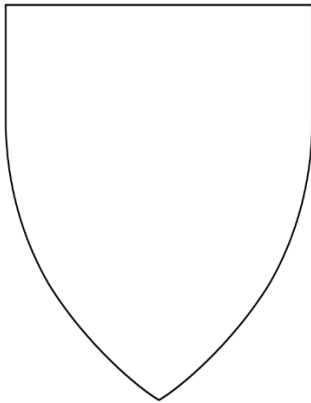


Write some things down that can challenge your faith e.g. being teased for your faith, for going to church or Sunday school

Make a shield

Decide on a shield shape and decorate. Include the word 'Faith' on it.

If you have some cardboard you could make a large shield and play the game again using your shield.



Prayer

Pray that God will help you remember that the armour is there and what it's used for so you can fight the bad with the good. That the Shield of Faith helps us to fight off the attacks of the enemy and reminds us that we have Jesus on our side, that we spend time with Jesus, talk to him, let him talk to us and listen to him. Amen