

<p style="text-align: center;">The Bible Barn Unit 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chapter 29</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Letters about Strength</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8-10</p>

Ranger Reggie strode into Bible Barn and waved to the campers. "Hello campers! It's so good to see you! Welcome to the Bible Barn."

Safari Sam entered the Barn from the horse stalls and jogged down the center aisle. "Ranger Reggie, Ranger Reggie! You're standing on your own two feet! Are you healed?"

"Hi, Safari Sam." Ranger Reggie greeted his friend. He stood up tall. "I feel stronger!"

Safari Sam leaped onto the stage and stood next to Ranger Reggie. "You sure look stronger. I'll bet you're strong enough to carry a whole box full of mail!"

Ranger Reggie smiled. "We're about to find out because it's Mail Time!" He opened the mailbox and removed the Bible. "It's Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus! It says, 'Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.'"

"The full armor of God?" Safari Sam looked confused. "What is the full armor of God?"

"Why don't I show you?" Ranger Reggie suggested. He waved for a young camper to join them on stage. "You stand next to me and Safari Sam, you go over to that trunk and take out what I tell you."

Safari Sam opened the heavy wooden trunk with the leather straps and peered inside. "Wow, this is full of cool stuff!" he reached in to pick up something shiny that caught his eye.

"Just take out what I read in the Bible!" Ranger Reggie instructed. Safari Sam pulled back his hand and flashed a guilty grin at Ranger Reggie. "The Word of God tells us to put on the full armor of God. Listen to what it tells us. 'Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place...'"

Safari Sam picked up a shiny metal object that looked like a shirt with no arms. He also lifted out a leather belt with metal strips hanging from it. "This must be the breastplate and this belt holds it in place!" He waved for the camper to stand next to him. "Now hold still while I get you suited up," he said as he dropped the breastplate over the camper's head onto his chest and secured the belt around his waist.

"You look great!" Ranger Reggie approved. "The breastplate of righteousness protects your heart."

"Aha!" Safari Sam's eyes lit up with understanding. "That way if the devil ever tries to make you feel sad or weak, you can remember how right it is to be with God!"

"And your heart can be filled with his righteousness!" Ranger Reggie added.

"What about the belt?" Safari Sam asked.

"The belt represents God's truth!" Ranger Reggie explained. "No lies can ever harm us because we wrap ourselves in God's truth!"

Safari Sam nodded. "I like that! What's next?"

Ranger Reggie continued reading, "...your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."

Safari Sam held up shoes with "Good News" written on them. "Look! Gospel shoes!" He put the shoes on the floor in front of the camper. "Here you go, slip these on!"

"Perfect!" Ranger Reggie noted. "Now you will be showing others God's 'Good News' with every step that you take!" He found his place in the Bible and continued to read, "...take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one."

Safari Sam gave a heavy, round shield to the camper. "That makes perfect sense. The devil can't get past our faith!"

Ranger Reggie nodded. "Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

"Here's your helmet and your sword!" Safari Sam gave the metal helmet with the red plume and the metal sword to the camper who put on the helmet and bravely took the sword, even though it looked like the armor was getting a bit heavy.

"Sometimes Satan tries to make us doubt in our mind that God truly loves us enough to save us," Ranger Reggie explained. "The helmet protects our mind. No matter what lies the devil tells us we always know in our mind that God is with us!"

"And then we can use the sword to chase Satan away?" Safari Sam guessed.

"Precisely, there's no better weapon than the Word of God!" Ranger Reggie agreed.

"Because Satan tries to fool us with lies, but we know every word of the Bible is true. And Satan cannot stand against the truth of God's Word."

"He has to run for the hills!" Safari Sam added. He looked at the camper all decked out in the armor. "Well, you look like a real godly warrior!"

"Let's review! As we remove the armor from our brave volunteer, let's see if you can remember what each part of the armor means." Ranger Reggie took the belt and held it up. "You have the truth wrapped around you!"

Safari Sam took the breastplate and held it up. "And God's righteousness protects your heart!"

Jessica stepped out of the shoes. Ranger Reggie pointed at them. "The Gospel guides every step you take!"

Safari Sam took the heavy shield. "No attack can get past your faith!"

Ranger Reggie removed the helmet. "You know in your mind you are saved by God!"

Finally, Safari Sam took the sword. "And God's Word can chase away all lies and sin!"

"Let's hear it for our fearless warrior!" Ranger Reggie said and all the campers clapped for as the camper scurried back to join the rest. "Now campers, you all have that same armor and those same weapons available to you!"

"You may not have a trunk full of goodies like these. But we can all put on God's spiritual armor by praying and reading His word!" Safari Sam said.

"It's time to find out which animal is super strong! It's Creature Feature time!" Ranger Reggie announced. "Wild William, give us a clue!"

Wild William appeared in the doorway with a large shield covering him except his eyes. He peered over it at the campers. "So much stronger than the rest, he beats his fists upon his chest."

"It's gotta' be a gorilla!" Safari Sam announced confidently.

"Is it a gorilla?" Ranger Reggie asked. Suddenly, a huge black gorilla burst through the door from behind Wild William. The gorilla spied Ranger Reggie and leapt toward him. Ranger Reggie tried to run, but the gorilla caught him up in a tight bear hug. "Ow! Get your paws off me you dirty ape! Help! Can't breath!"

"Back! Back! Let go! Bad monkey!" Safari Sam pulled Ranger Reggie free from the gorilla and stood between them. He took the gorilla by the arm and led him to Wild William; who pulled the hulking animal out the door. Safari Sam turned to Ranger Reggie. "Ranger Reggie! Are you all right?"

"Now I'm going to smell like bananas all day!" Ranger Reggie huffed.

Safari Sam shook his head. "Wow, Ranger Reggie, you sure do suffer for your faith!"

"Suffer!" Ranger Reggie lifted a finger into the air. "That reminds of the letter Orville showed me!"

The campers and counselors called out, "'Hey Orville, come on down!"

Orville peeked over the edge of his perch on a rafter and dropped an egg into Safari Sam's hands. He opened the egg and read, "And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

"Of course!" Ranger Reggie announced. "It's Jesus that makes us strong! Just like the Apostles, we can always count on Him to restore our strength!"

"Amen!" Safari Sam agreed. He looked at the campers. "And I think it's time for the Camper's Code. Everyone stand and raise your right hand."

All the campers and counselors recited together, "I will love God with all my heart. I will love my neighbor as myself. I will be a light wherever I go!"

"Let's head over to the flagpole and sing our Camp Critter song," Safari Sam suggested. He turned to walk to the door and noticed Ranger Reggie standing next to the chest putting on the armor. "Ranger Reggie, what are you doing putting on the armor?"

"I'm protecting myself in case that gorilla is still out there," he explained and marched out the door, his shield raised and ready, with Safari Sam and the campers following him.