

Letters About Strength

Lesson Aim: To learn what it means to choose to wear the protective armor of God and be strong in the Lord as explained in the letters in the Bible.

PROPHETS AND PROMISES PART 1

THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, & THE WAY

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The Spirit Who Shows Us

THE WORD

New Testament Letters: Ephesians 6:10-11, 14-18, 1 Peter 5:8-10

GOT TIME? Letter: 1 Corinthians 15:58

What He has done: God gave His apostles the teachings about strength.

Key Verse: Ephesians 6:11

THE WAY

Christ Connection: 2 Chronicles 20:17

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105 (NIV)
The Books of the New Testament

For your own encouragement this week, read Psalm 28:7-8. Please join us in praying this week's **Teacher's Prayer:** "Thank you Lord, for protecting us from the schemes of Satan. Help the children stand their ground and understand how to use the armor of God. Amen."

PREPARE

Highlight in your Bible:

- ☐ Ephesians 6:10-11, 14-18
- ☐ 1 Peter 5:8-10
- ☐ 2 Chronicles 20:17

Read:

- ☐ Teacher's Guide
- ☐ At-A-Glance

MAILBAG

Create a list of today's New Testament letter scripture references, fold it and place it in the Teacher's Bible. Place the Teacher's Bible, Pen Pal Letter, 18 pieces of sturdy paper, 6 yards of yarn, 6 markers, 6 pairs of scissors, and 6 rolls of tape in any bag.

TEACHER TIP

Complete THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, and THE WAY. If time allows, choose a Got Time? activity or create your own activity to illustrate the Bible Story, the Aim, or the Bible Memory Verse.

PRESET

THE WELCOME

- ☐ Getting Started— Floor tape or chalk, four chairs

THE WORSHIP

- ☐ Scripture Reading—Psalm 28:7
- ☐ Bible Memory Verse Song—"New Testament Overture"
- ☐ Other related music
- ☐ Worship Illustration or Storybook Lesson 29

THE WORD and THE WAY

- ☐ Golden Bowl—pencils & note cards
- ☐ Bibles, highlighters
- ☐ Mailbag
- ☐ Daily Way Lesson 29
- ☐ Treasure Treat—Today's New Testament Postcard with a stamp or sticker of armor: shield, sword, helmet, etc.

GOT TIME?

Round crackers, cheese spread, plastic knives, drinks, napkins, plates, cups, sturdy paper cut to 2-inch squares, tape, sturdy cardboard, foam board, poster board or plywood approximately 6-feet x 4-feet, pencils, markers, glue or tape, sturdy paper, assorted craft decorating supplies, "New Testament Overture" song, player and poster, flashlight, Bible

Resources: The additional resources referred to in this lesson and supplemental materials are available at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net. To be a resource yourself, click on the Teacher's Blog tab to share your ideas with teachers worldwide.



1. THE WELCOME

(10 minutes)

Getting Started

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's

Meet & Greet Question: Which superhero has the best costume?

GAME: RACE FOR THE MESSAGE

PURPOSE: Children will run a relay race to help them understand how the armor of God can equip them to spread the good news about Jesus.

SUPPLIES: Floor tape or chalk, four chairs

PREPARE: Place the four chairs in the center of the play area. Use the floor tape or chalk to mark a starting line for each team equidistant from their team's chair.

SAY> Today we are learning what the New Testament letters say about strength. Believers can find their strength from God. One of the ways God gives us strength is an amazing, invisible protection called the armor of God. One of those special pieces of armor are the shoes of the gospel. The special shoes make our feet ready to go and tell everyone the good news about Jesus. Let's play a game where we pretend our shoes are shoes of the gospel as we share the good news!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Divide the children into four teams of equal size.
2. Ask one volunteer from each team to sit in the chair opposite their team's starting line.
3. Have the remaining children remove their shoes and pile them on the floor half way between their team's starting line and the chair. Mix up the shoes in each pile so it is challenging to find pairs.
4. Each team stands in a line behind their starting line.
5. On your signal, the first child in each team's line races to the pile of shoes, finds his or her shoes, and puts them on. Child then runs to the person sitting in the chair, tells them one fact about Jesus. (Some examples: "Jesus loves you." "Jesus forgives your sins." "Jesus came to save us." "Jesus was born in Bethlehem." "Jesus died on the cross." "Jesus is in heaven.")
6. After saying a fact about Jesus, that child runs back to his or her team line and tags the next child in line who repeats the process.
7. The goal is to be the first team to have each child complete the relay.

***Teacher Tips:**

- Brainstorm ideas of what to share about Jesus together before playing the game. Or, assign each team one of the suggested sentences and have each child on the team use that same fact.
- Small groups can play with two teams instead of four.
- Limited Space? All children are on the same team. Play the game twice; timing it each time. Challenge the children to beat their time on the second round of play.



2. THE WORSHIP

(15 minutes)

Worship Theme: The Spirit Who Shows Us

Today we worship the Spirit who shows us that God will protect us and help us stand against the evil schemes of the devil. God is more powerful than anyone or anything in heaven or on earth. We can praise Him as the awesome, mighty God who reigns over everything.

(Sing: "Awesome God" while collecting the offering.)

Worship Elements:

Designate a special corner or area for worship.

Select songs that focus on God's power and protection

Scripture Reading: Psalm 28:7

Lead a prayer to bless the offering: collect offering

Perform Worship Illustration or read Storybook:

Prophets & Promises Unit 6, Lesson 29

Unit 6 Song Suggestions:

- Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse Song:
"New Testament Overture"
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "To Him Who Sits On The Throne"
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "Not By Might"
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "Awesome God"
- "Jesus Loves Me"
- "Shout To The Lord"
- "Blessed Be The Name Of The Lord"
- "Here I Am To Worship"
- "Forever"
- "Worship You Forever"

Unit 6 Song Collection Suggestions:

- Songs 4 Worship Kids, Volume 1—Awesome God
- Worship Jamz—Volumes 1, 2, 3
- Hillsong Kids
- Shout to the Lord Kids 2

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG



"New Testament Overture"

Psalm 119:105 (KJV)

The Books of the New Testament

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
and a light unto my path!

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
and a light unto my path!

Go to Matthew, to Mark, go to Luke and John.

Go to Acts and the letter to the Romans.

Go to First, go to Second Corinthians, to
Galatians and Ephesians!

Philippians and Colossians,
First and Second Thessalonians,
First and Second Timothy,
then Titus and Philemon!

Go to Hebrews and go to James.

Go to First, go to Second Peter.

Go to First, Second, Third John.

Go to Jude, then go to Revelation!

(Repeat three times going faster each time.)

*Sheet music and recordings available at
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net.*



3. THE WORD

(5 minutes)

Paul tells the Ephesians to put on the armor of God.

Transition: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write their name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant. (Read Class Covenant.)

CLASS COVENANT

I will keep my  on my teacher,
my  in control,
my s on God's Word;
knowing God is my goal.

BIBLE TIMELINE

The New Testament letters were written from circa 37 A.D. to 95 A.D. The Bible Timeline Review activities will resume in Prophets & Promises, Lesson 32 when we complete our ten-week study of the New Testament letters.

(Teacher holds up mailbag.) Last time we found letters about weakness in our mailbag. We learned that in our weakness, God's power is clearly seen by others. Today we will learn how we can be strong in the Lord.

Paul and Peter wrote letters to help believers stand strong against the schemes of the devil. Those schemes are Satan's plans to tempt believers and make them feel alone or discouraged. Let's read the advice Paul and Peter gave about being strong in the Lord.



Let's play Find It First! Bring out your Bible; keep it right in front of you. (Hand out spare Bibles.) **Today's New Testament letters are in the mailbag.** (Teacher opens mailbag and removes Bible, opens Bible and takes out list of today's New Testament letter scripture references: Ephesians 6:10-11, 14-18 and 1 Peter 5:8-10.) **Let's see who can Find It First! Look for Ephesians 6:10-11, 14-18. Ready? Set? Go!** (Children race through the pages to find it first. The winner helps others find it.) **Let's highlight our Key Verse: Ephesians 6:11.**

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to His Word today. Who'd like to pray that for us? (Child prays aloud.) Be seated.

Listen carefully to what Paul wrote in his letter to his friends, the believers in Ephesus. As we read, let's count the pieces of armor. (Read Ephesians 6:10-11, 14-18.)

Now let's read what Peter wrote about standing firm in his first letter to other believers. (Read 1 Peter 5:8-10.)



4. THE WAY

(13 minutes)

We can put on the armor of God.

(Print the following text on a sheet of paper. Fold the paper and place it in an envelope to create the Pen Pal Letter. Take out Pen Pal Letter from mailbag, open the envelope. Remove the letter and read.)

Hey Pals,

Paul had seen plenty of Roman soldiers. On the streets, in the courts and prisons, he must have noticed the armor they wore. It protected them from the weapons of their enemies. Believers have an enemy, too. It is the devil, Satan. He wants us to feel discouraged and alone. He wants us to give up hope when times are hard. But God wants us to stand our ground. That means to not run away or give the enemy what he wants. What did Paul say would help the hearts of believers be strong in the Lord? (To put on the armor of God every day.) Let's play a game where we can do that right now!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Divide children into 6 groups. Give each group 3 pieces of sturdy paper, one yard of yarn, one marker, one pair of scissors, and one roll of tape from the mailbag.
 2. Assign one piece of armor to each group. Each group uses the supplies from the mailbag to create their assigned piece of armor and put it on a team member. The groups race to see who can finish first.
 3. One at a time, explain what each piece of armor represents. Have everyone brainstorm to describe a situation in which they would use each particular piece.
- **Belt of Truth: Just as a belt keeps the armor close and in place, truth keeps us close to Jesus.** (Sample brainstorm: Remembering something that is true about God.)
 - **Breastplate of Righteousness: Just as a breastplate protects a soldier's heart, living God's way protects our heart from wanting what is wrong.** (Sample brainstorm: Making right choices.)
 - **Shoes of the Gospel: To be ready to go, a soldier wears shoes. The Gospel of Peace means the good news that because of Jesus, God has made peace with us. It makes our feet ready to go and tell the good news about Jesus.** (Sample brainstorm: Telling others about Jesus.)
 - **Shield of Faith: Just as a shield protects a soldier from flaming arrows, faith protects us from the evil words and lies sent from Satan.** (Sample brainstorm: Lies Satan would have us believe.)
 - **The Helmet of Salvation: Salvation means being saved. Just as a helmet protects a soldier's head, knowing God's promise to save us protects our minds from the evil thoughts.** (Sample brainstorm: Good things about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit to think about.)
 - **Sword of the Spirit: Our only weapon is God's Word, our sword. When Satan tempts us, we can always fight back by remembering or reading what the Bible said about each temptation.** (Sample brainstorm: Fighting a temptation by thinking about a certain Bible story or verse.)

CHRIST CONNECTION

Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament and Us

Over 800 years before Paul told the Ephesians how to stand their ground against the devil's schemes, God told King Jehoshaphat to stand his ground and watch as God defeated the enemy. Check out the instructions the Lord gave to King Jehoshaphat.



FIND IT FIRST Everyone place your Bibles closed on your laps. Let's see who can Find It First! Let's find 2 Chronicles 20:17. Ready? Set? Go! Find it and highlight it. (Read 2 Chronicles 20:17.)

God has always helped us stand our ground against the enemy, so put on the armor of God! Believe and Be Strong!

Your Pen Pal

THE WAY *continued...*

GOLDEN BOWL

Revelation 5:8

The Golden Bowl contains names of classmates, a local church leader and a child in another nation.

The Bible says that our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. So I'm going to lift each one of you up to God's throne out loud as you pray for each person silently. Then we'll pray out loud the Lord's Prayer. (Matthew 6:9-13.) Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say out loud and the ones hidden in our hearts.

First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____ (read names in Golden Bowl).

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

TREASURE TREAT



Today your Treasure Treat is a New Testament Postcard. I'm giving you this stamp or sticker of armor to remind you to put on the armor of God and be strong in the Lord. (Place stamp or sticker in the corner box on the back of the postcard.) Take it home and create a special mailbox or mailbag where you can collect the remaining postcards. On your postcard, write where to find today's New Testament letters in the Bible. You'll find the scriptures listed in the Daily Way. Read these scriptures again to help you answer the postcard question.



DAILY WAY CHALLENGE

Did anyone bring in their completed Daily Way from last time? (Praise or reward those who returned Daily Way; collect in basket.) Take home this week's Daily Way. (Distribute Lesson 29 Daily Way 5-day Bible study.) Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Return it and place it in our class basket. When we fill the basket, we'll celebrate with a class surprise!



OFFERING OF ART

Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of yourself wearing the armor of God.

The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering to the teacher for display.



PRAYER REQUESTS

As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write individual requests in your teacher's prayer notebook.



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG

Play the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse Song in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



5. GOT TIME?

If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.



SNACK, GAME, DISCUSSION AND CRAFT

SNACK: SHIELD OF FAITH CRACKERS

PURPOSE: Children will eat a snack while personally connecting to the story.

SUPPLIES: Round crackers, cheese spread, plastic knives, drinks, napkins, plates, cups

ASK> Today we are learning about the armor of God. Let's make shields of faith crackers. What does the shield of faith protect us from? (Satan's lies.) Besides putting our armor on, what should we do for each other? (Pray for each other.) Before we make and eat our snack, we need a volunteer to pray for our snack and for us.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Serve the snack and drink.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **"What is one way God makes you strong?"**

GAME: ARMOR RACE

PURPOSE: Review the pieces of the armor of God.

SUPPLIES: Sturdy paper cut to 2-inch squares, tape

PREPARE: Create a set of six armor tags for each team by pre-printing or writing the following titles on each paper squares: belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit.

ASK> Do you remember all six pieces of the armor of God? Let's see how quickly you can put the armor pieces in the correct place on your team's soldier.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Divide children into teams of four.
2. Each team is given a set of six armor tags to represent the armor of God.
3. Each team chooses one team member to be the team's soldier.
4. Remaining three team members are the armor bearers.
5. On your signal, each team's armor bearers attach the tags to the correct location on their soldier.
6. The goal is to be the first team to securely attach all six tags in the correct location of where the armor would be worn on the team's soldier.

ASK> What is your favorite piece of the armor of God? (Respond.) Talk with your team about why that is your favorite piece of armor. What is one thing that piece of armor helps you be strong to do?

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: CARE PACKAGE—ARMOR OF GOD FOR ALL

PURPOSE: For children to make a humorous armor board as a gift for a group of believers so they can pretend to put on the armor of God.

SUPPLIES: Sturdy cardboard, foam board, poster board or plywood approximately 6-feet x 4-feet, pencils, markers, glue or tape, sturdy paper, assorted craft decorating supplies (For example: paint and brushes, tin foil or shiny paper, cloth, leather strips, metal pieces, colored paper, etc.)

PREPARE: Choose the group of believers who will receive the care package. Draw or copy a life size outline of a soldier onto the 6x4 foot piece. Include a belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, helmet, and sword. Cut a large hole out of the board in place of the soldier's face. (Hole should be large enough for an adult to comfortably put his or her head through.) Write the following where children can see to copy: **Belt of Truth, Breastplate of Righteousness, Shoes of the Gospel, Shield of Faith, Helmet of Salvation, Sword of the Spirit, Put on the Armor of God! Ephesians 6:10-18.**

ASK> Today we learned what the New Testament letters says about strength. What did Paul say we should put on so we can be strong against the enemy? (The armor of God.) Let's make a fun gift to help other believers remember to put on God's armor! (Share information about the care package recipient(s) with the children. Allow them to ask questions so they truly understand where and to whom their gift will be delivered.)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Decorate the drawing of the soldier and the armor. (For example: Paint all or part of the soldier and the armor. Cut out and paste on cloth as a tunic. Use the tin foil or shiny paper to cover the breastplate, shield, helmet and sword. Glue on leather strips for the sandals. Glue metal pieces as studs on the soldier's armor.)
2. Use a marker or paint brush to write the six labels onto the correct armor pieces.
3. Make a sign on the sturdy paper: **Put on the Armor of God! Ephesians 6:10-18.**
4. Let each child take a turn "wearing" the armor by putting his or her head through the hole where the soldier's face would be. If possible, take photographs of each child "wearing" the armor before delivering the gift.

***Teacher Tips:** If possible, take some or all children with you to deliver the care package to the recipient(s). Take pictures for the children to share when delivering the package.

***Options:**

- Instead of creating a free-standing armor board, create a large paper banner showing a soldier with all the armor pieces labeled.
- Allow each child to create and decorate their own smaller version of the armor board by substituting a large poster board. Pre-print the soldier's helmet to scale and cut the hole large enough to fit a head through, but make the body of the soldier disproportionately small to fit on the rest of the poster.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

DISCUSSION: GOT TIME? LETTER—1 CORINTHIANS 15:58

PURPOSE: Children learn of a third letter about strength from the New Testament.

SUPPLIES: Bible opened to 1 Corinthians 15:58

SAY> The armor of God strengthens our hearts to stand against Satan's schemes. Let's check out Paul's advice about standing firm from his first letter to the Corinthians. (Read 1 Corinthians 15:58.) **What does Paul say to do about the work of the Lord?** (To always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord.) **What are some examples of ways you can give yourself fully to the Lord's work?** (Respond.)



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES:

"New Testament Overture"

Sheet music and recordings available at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net

Psalm 119:105 (KJV) and the books of the New Testament sung to the tune of The William Tell Overture: Allegro Vivace

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path!
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path!

Go to Matthew, to Mark, go to Luke and John. Go to Acts and the letter to the Romans.
Go to First, go to Second Corinthians, to Galatians and Ephesians!

Philippians and Colossians, First and Second Thessalonians,
First and Second Timothy, then Titus and Philemon!

Go to Hebrews and go to James. Go to First, go to Second Peter.
Go to First, Second, Third John. Go to Jude, then go to Revelation!

GAME: LIGHT MY PATH

PURPOSE: Children learn the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse.

SUPPLIES: "New Testament Overture" song, player and flashlights

DIRECTIONS:

1. Children choose partners.
2. Give each pair a flashlight. (Pairs may take turns if there are a limited number of flashlights.)
3. As the Bible Memory Verse plays, one partner moves the flashlight beam across the floor as the other partner walks the path highlighted by the beam. Make sure the partner moves the beam slowly enough that the other child can walk in it.

ASK> How did you know where your partner wanted you to go? (By following the lighted path.) Psalm 119:105 says "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." When we read God's Word in the Bible, it's like He is shining a light for us to see how to follow the right path—His path. The Bible helps us know God and how to follow Him.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

GAME: NEXT BOOK

PURPOSE: Children learn the New Testament books in order.

SUPPLIES: "New Testament Overture" song, player, and poster

SAY> The Bible is made up of 66 different books. The New Testament has 27 books. Let's learn the books of the New Testament to help us find scripture verses quickly. How fast can you learn all the New Testament books in order?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Play the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse one time. Have children sing along as they learn the words.
2. Play the song again. This time stop the song during the list of the books of the New Testament.
3. Children call out the name of the book that comes next. They can refer to the poster if necessary.
4. Play again as time permits.
5. As children learn the books, challenge them by taking away the poster and choosing one child to respond each time you stop the song.

GAME: THE BIBLE IS HOT, HOT, HOT!

PURPOSE: Children learn the New Testament books in order.

SUPPLIES: "New Testament Overture" song and player and poster, Bible

DIRECTIONS:

1. Seat children in a circle.
2. Play the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse as children quickly pass the Bible around the circle.
3. Stop the song during the list of the books of the New Testament.
4. The child holding the Bible when the song stops is to open the Bible and find the last New Testament book sung in the song as quickly as possible.
5. Play again as time permits.
6. As children learn the books, challenge them by timing the child searching for the book. Encourage children to cheer for each other and try and get a faster time each time they are selected.

***Teacher Tip:** For an added challenge and to protect the Bible during this game, use a hard cover Bible and tie it closed with a sturdy ribbon or enclose the Bible in a zipped cover or large zip top bag.

DISCUSSION: ALL GOD'S WORD

PURPOSE: For children to recognize there are different versions of the Bible, but it is all God's truth.

SUPPLIES: Different versions of the Bible opened to Psalm 119:105 (NIV, KJV, NLT, NIRV, The Message, etc.)

SAY> Have you ever noticed that even when people speak the same language, they use different words to say the same thing? In the English language, "soda," "soft drink" and "pop" are all words used for the same type of fizzy drink. People who are from different areas use different words and so do people of different ages. In the same way, Bibles use different wordings to say the same thing. For example, in some Bibles Psalm 119:105 uses the words: "Thy word" while other versions use the words: "Your word." Both are true!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Read a version of Psalm 119:105 aloud.
2. Read a different version of Psalm 119:105. Point out the differences.
3. Read a third version of Psalm 119:105. Point out the differences again.
4. Take a vote to determine the children's favorite version.
5. Read and sing the Bible Memory Verse song according to the King James Version.

***Teacher Tip:** Compare Bible versions of other famous passages such as Psalm 23 and John 3:16.