

## **Messy Church at home**

### **June -God's armour**

Hello families,

I hope you are surviving lockdown! Here is this month's Messy Church with lots of activities for you to try as a family. I have tried to include things you will easily find at home. Do post pictures of your crafts on the Messy Church on Overslade Facebook page. Enjoy!

#### **Learn**

Read the story – it is part of one of Paul's letters to new Christians in the city of Ephesus teaching them to pray.

It can be found in Ephesians 6: 10-20 (see page 9)

Life can feel like a battle between good and evil at times and Paul asks the Ephesians to take this seriously and uses the picture of a soldier putting on his armour when going to fight as a reminder of how we can pray against evil things in our lives.

What do you see as the "enemies" in your life or the things you fight against? (this could include illness, unemployment, bullies..). You can ask God's help to fight them. (Save these ideas for activity 2)

Use a children's bible or see the story in resources below.

#### **Worship**

Here are some song clips to help us think about this month's theme.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwxPNXYtQ3s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTtO3rNBMBU>

#### **Create**

Have a go at some of these crafts – I have tried to include materials you are likely to have at home. Don't forget to check your recycling bins for useful materials. (Pictures of what your finished crafts might look like are in resources)

##### 1. Roman Soldier collage

You need: Outline of Roman Soldier, shiny paper, tin foil and sweet wrappers, coloured pencils or pens, glue

What to do: use the outline of the soldier to make a picture or collage. Label your drawing with helmet, sword, belt, shoes, breastplate.

Think about: Why did the Roman soldier need these pieces of equipment? What were they for?

## 2. Fight your enemies

You need; large sheet of paper, pens, water pistols, pea shooters or homemade catapults.

What to do: decide as a family what your “enemies” are and write them in circles on the paper (Don’t write down people’s names – think of things that harm us like poverty or racism or unemployment...) Shoot at them with your “weapons” at the same time praying “Please God protect us from ..... or Please God, help us find a way to deal with.....”

Think about: When we see things that are wrong in the world, what should we do?

## 3. Still standing

You need; clothes pegs, a chess board, balloon, cardboard tube, scissors, dried peas

What to do: Stand up 16 clothes pegs on white squares on the chess board. Make a pea shooter by cutting a balloon across the top of the wider section and stretching it over the end of a cardboard tube. Drop a pea into the tube, grip it with the balloon, pull the balloon back and release. The aim is to see how many pegs you can knock over- try timing one minute and challenge each other. (If your pegs don’t stand up, improvise and use chess pawns, or happy meal toys or whatever you can find!!)



Talk about: We often get knocked down, but we stand ourselves back up again and keep going!

## 4. The Shield of Faith

You need: cardboard packaging, newspaper or junk mail screwed up into balls.

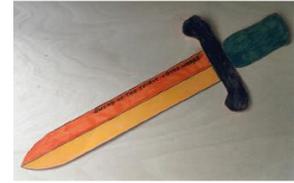
What to do: Make a shield using cardboard. Cut a long strip of card and tape to the back so you can hold it in front of you. Other family members can then make missiles out of screwed up paper and launch them at you while you try to defend yourself with your shield.

Talk about: We can think of the shield as God protecting us from bad things that come our way. We can pray that God will protect us.

#### 5. Sword bookmarks

You need: card, colouring pencils or pens

What to do: colour in the book marks and use in a book or Bible to hold your place.



Talk about: Paul compares the soldier's sword to God's words. We can read God's words – both promises and commands – in the Bible. Which Bible stories do you enjoy most and which stories do you find most encouraging when facing hard times?



#### 6. Fun with shoes

You need: as many shoes as you can find!

What to do: spell out these words using the shoes:

Jesus; News; peace; healing; love

Take a photo and maybe post on the Messy Church Facebook page.

#### 7. Make a helmet

You need; newspaper, tape

What to do: roll up the newspaper into a long tube. Bend into a circle around your head and tape together. Make two more tube and fasten them from front to back and side to side to make a cross shape. You now have a basic helmet.



Talk about: When might you wear a helmet? What does it protect you from? Why does your head, (your brain and your thoughts) need protecting? What happens if they are damaged? Why does Paul say a helmet is like salvation?

#### 8. "Putting on Jesus"

You need: white bin liners, scissors, felt tips

What to do: you are going to make breastplate, or bullet proof vest with your bin liner by cutting holes for head and arms and writing or drawing anything from the life of Jesus (miracles, stories, prayers, sayings, friends, key events in his life) on it. Now put it on as a way of remembering to put on Jesus as your special armour of life.



### 9. "All kinds of prayer" pot

You need: paper or plastic cup, yogurt pot, jam jars or similar; pens; objects (see below)

What to do: The pieces of God's armour need to be supported by prayer. Collect the following to remind you of all the different types of prayer you can use:



Ear buds or earphones – some prayers are about listening rather than talking

A piece of card with 999 on it – to remind us of “emergency help” prayers

Heart shaped sweets (love hearts) – to remind us about thank you prayers to God

A knotted piece of string – to remind us to bring our problems to God

Something that looks like a tear drop – to remind us to bring things that upset us to God

A piece of card with a question mark on it – to remind us to bring our questions to God

A heart (made of material, clay, stone, card...) – to remind us to express our love for God.

Put them all in a decorated pot. You could add items of your own. You could challenge yourself to pick an item every day and say a prayer.

Talk about: You could show another family member and explain what all the items mean.

### **Pray**

Use the “All kinds of Prayer” pot. Pick an item and say a prayer.

Father God,

Thank you for the picture of the armour of God which reminds us how we can pray for you to protect us from all the things that attack us, threaten us and upset us.

Please help us all as we are threatened by Covid 19. Help us to stay safe and to keep others safe. We pray for all those we know who are ill and for all those taking risks to help us during this time.

Amen

### **Summary**

Paul wrote many of the letters in the New Testament to help new Christians to follow Jesus in the face of danger from the Roman authorities. He used a picture of a Roman soldier (he could probably see one from his prison cell) to help us remember how prayer can protect us from our enemies. (Why not google Roman Soldier to learn what their armour really looked like.)

Each piece is linked to a value

- The belt of truth
- The breastplate of righteousness
- The shield of faith
- The helmet of salvation
- The shoes of the good news of peace
- The sword of the spirit

We need to work out what this might mean for each one of us in our adventure of following Jesus. Prayer is an important weapon in our fight against evil. Activity 9 helps us think about the different kinds of prayer that are available to us.

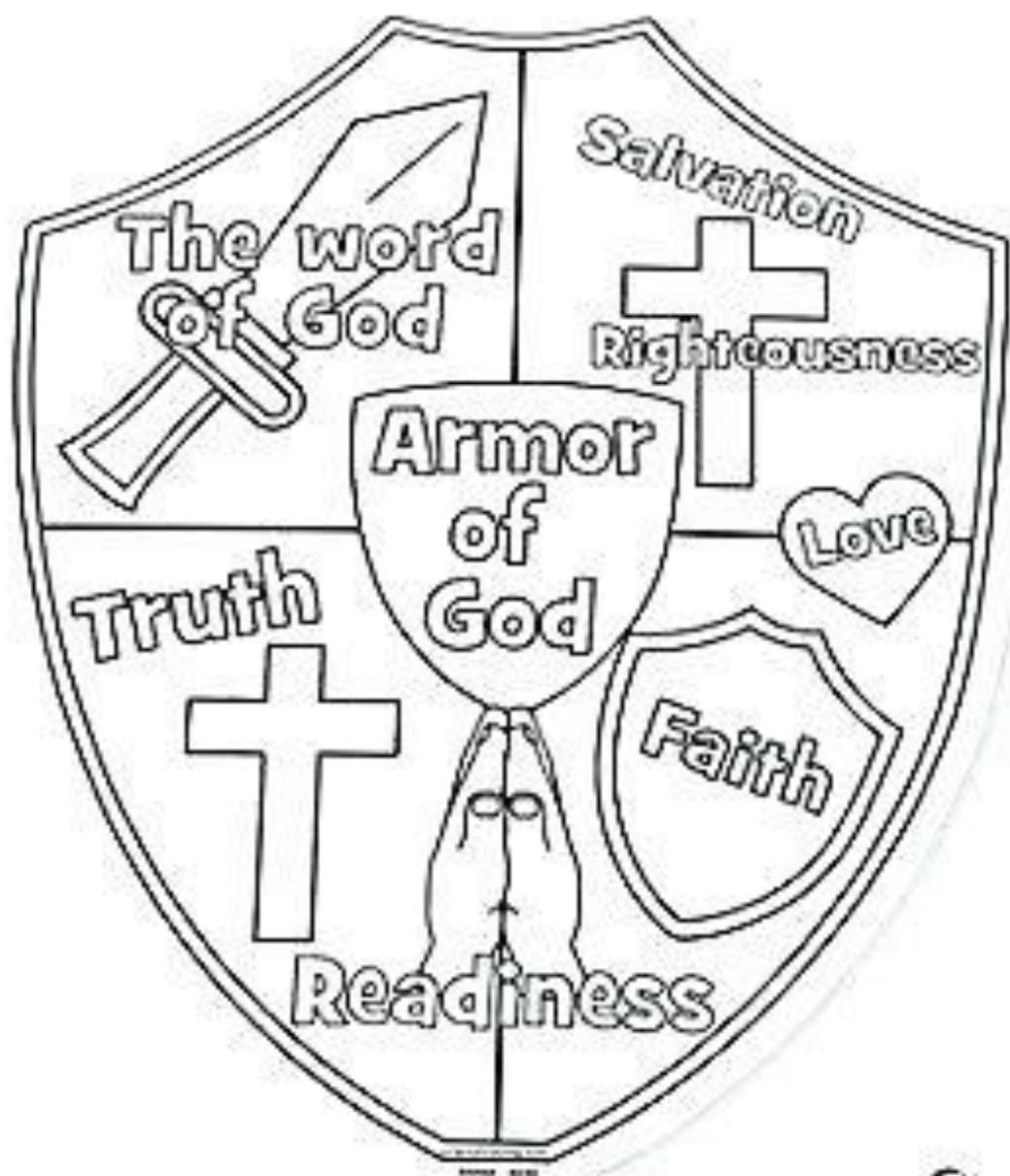
( In England we use the spelling armour. In America it is spelled armor)

Resources



Put on the  
whole

Armour  
of GOD.  
EPHESIANS 6:11



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## **Bible readings**

*Ephesians 6:10-20 Easy-to-Read Version (ERV)*

*Wear the Full Armor of God*

<sup>10</sup> To end my letter I tell you, be strong in the Lord and in his great power. <sup>11</sup> Wear the full armor of God. Wear God's armor so that you can fight against the devil's clever tricks. <sup>12</sup> Our fight is not against people on earth. We are fighting against the rulers and authorities and the powers of this world's darkness. We are fighting against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> That is why you need to get God's full armor. Then on the day of evil, you will be able to stand strong. And when you have finished the whole fight, you will still be standing.

<sup>14</sup> So stand strong with the **belt of truth** tied around your waist, and on your **chest** wear the **protection** (breastplate) of right living. <sup>15</sup> On your **feet** wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong. <sup>16</sup> And also use the **shield of faith** with which you can stop all the burning arrows that come from the Evil One. <sup>17</sup> Accept **God's salvation as your helmet**. And take the **sword of the Spirit**—that sword is the teaching of God. <sup>18</sup> Pray in the Spirit at all times. Pray with all kinds of prayers, and ask for everything you need. To do this you must always be ready. Never give up. Always pray for all of God's people.

<sup>19</sup> Also pray for me—that when I speak, God will give me words so that I can tell the secret truth about the Good News without fear. <sup>20</sup> I have the work of speaking for that Good News, and that is what I am doing now, here in prison. Pray that when I tell people the Good News, I will speak without fear as I should.

# The Armor of God

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Ephesians 6:13

Based on Ephesians 6:13-17



Z N B Y Y D L A A S E Y G Y I  
 B G Z N R S Y F H P H V D O R  
 J B N O W B M F B W E I I Y D  
 U O W D Y H U H U P A A E L J  
 X S P M E F E E T L M I C L B  
 S T A N D V G L H W L X S E D  
 S U K M P J A M R F Y V N T D  
 A D B U C K L E D L Q C N G Q  
 L N M N N H A T M A E Y S O A  
 V D U D B W H J T M J E Y S A  
 A I O T X E W F F I D S M P R  
 T P Y W P R L M A N L U Q E R  
 I K A R M O R T I G J D P L O  
 O U P B R E A S T P L A T E W  
 N N S P I R I T H M C T U J S

HELMET	ARMOR	SPIRIT	SWORD	STAND
WAIST	SALVATION	BELT	FEET	FAITH
FULL	GOD	EVIL	FLAMING	PEACE
GOSPEL	BREASTPLATE	SHIELD	BUCKLED	ARROWS