

LESSON 6: THE ARMOR OF GOD: SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

 Ephesians 6:10-12, 17; Luke 4:1-13



MUSIC VIDEO

[10 min]

Vast Voyage

Supplies

- “Vast Voyage” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Into the Bible” (watch or download [here](#))
- “We Can Trust Him” (Psalm 33:4) (watch or download [here](#))

Sing Songs to God

Sing the three songs in any order.



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

[10 min]

Jesus Is Tempted

Supplies

- “Jesus Is Tempted” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Discuss and Watch “Jesus Is Tempted”

Say: **In today’s Bible story, Jesus used a special weapon against evil—God’s Word! Let’s see how Jesus used this sword to fight evil.**

Watch “Jesus Is Tempted.”

Ask: • **Why was it important that Jesus knew the Bible?**

• **What’s one temptation or lie that’s hard for you to fight?**

• **How could you use the Bible to fight that temptation or lie?**

Say: **God has given us the most powerful sword ever—the Bible! It’s full of words of truth we can use to fight evil when we’re tempted to do something wrong or believe a lie. Just like Jesus, we fight evil with God’s Word.**



Supplies

- Bibles
- foam board (1 large piece)
- markers
- newsprint or bulletin board paper
- “Swords” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))
- scissors

Easy Prep

- Cut 3 large sword shapes out of foam board.
- Write out the following verses, one on each sword: Luke 4:4, Luke 4:8, and Luke 4:12.

Set It Up

Say: **We’ve been learning about God’s armor. We wear armor to fight a battle, but our battle isn’t against people. It’s against evil! Listen to this.**

Read Ephesians 6:10-12.

The last piece of armor we’re going to learn about is the only offensive piece of armor. It’s a sword! Let’s hear what the sword of God’s armor is.

Read Ephesians 6:17.

We fight evil with God’s Word. That’s an amazing sword to defeat evil! And Jesus shows us exactly how to fight evil with Bible verses. Let’s see what he did.

Make Posters

Say: **Remember, Jesus’ battle wasn’t against people. It was against evil powers! One day when Jesus was in the wilderness and hadn’t eaten for 40 days, the devil came to tempt Jesus.**

Ask: • **Tell about a time you really, *really* wanted something.** Share your own story first.

Say: **When we feel that way about doing things that are wrong, that’s called temptation.**

We're going to draw posters of the temptations Jesus faced. Make your poster look really, really appealing, like an ad for that temptation. You might even make up a fun slogan!

Have kids name some slogans they know for popular products, restaurants, or companies to get some ideas going.

Then have kids form three groups. (If you have more than 12 kids, form additional groups of four and assign the same temptation to multiple groups.) Give each group a Bible, a piece of newsprint or bulletin board paper, and markers. Assign each group one of the temptations. Each group will read its assigned verses and then draw an ad for the temptation. Allow plenty of time for kids to draw.

- Luke 4:3 (turn stones into bread)
- Luke 4:5-7 (worship Satan)
- Luke 4:9-11 (jump off the Temple)

Fight Evil With God's Word

Say: **Now let's see how Jesus fought evil with God's Word when faced with these really appealing temptations.**

Have groups take turns presenting their temptation posters, with one person holding each side and no one standing directly behind it. For each temptation, have a child from another group read the verse on the corresponding sword (verse 4 for stones to bread, verse 8 for worship Satan, and verse 12 for jumping off the Temple) and use the sword to stab through the poster.

Make It Personal

Give each child a "Swords" handout and a pair of scissors.

Say: **Jesus' temptations might seem a little different from the temptations we face. You've probably never been tempted to turn rocks into food. But they're actually more familiar than you might think! Let's see what Jesus' temptations can teach us about how we fight evil with God's Word.**

Jesus' first temptation was to turn rocks into bread. Remember, he hadn't eaten for 40 days! He was hungry! Eating a nice, rocky piece of bread probably sounded great. One temptation we face a lot is to focus on ourselves and do whatever feels good for us. But we fight evil with God's Word.

Have kids cut out the sword with that temptation and Scripture response. Ask a child to read the response aloud.

Ask: • **Why is this Bible verse helpful when you want to focus on getting what you want?**

Say: **Another temptation is to get other people to focus on us. For Jesus, that temptation was to bow before Satan so all the kingdoms of the world could look to Jesus. These days, it seems like a lot of kids are “YouTube famous.”**

Ask: • **What’s your favorite thing to watch on YouTube?**

• **If you could be famous for doing something on YouTube, what would you want it to be?**

Say: **It’s not that it’s a sin to be famous, but when we’re tempted to make sure everyone’s focus is on *us* instead of God, that’s a problem. But we fight evil with God’s Word.**

Have kids cut out the sword with that temptation and Scripture response. Ask a child to read the response aloud.

Ask: • **How does this verse help you when you’re tempted to put the focus on yourself?**

Say: **Jesus’ last temptation was to show off and be impressive by jumping off a tall building but not getting hurt. We can be tempted to show off, too! But we fight evil with God’s Word.**

Have kids cut out the sword with that temptation and Scripture response. Ask a child to read the response aloud.

Ask: • **What’s the difference between being humble and being a showoff?**

Say: **When we face temptations like Jesus did, we can do just what he did! We can use Bible verses to fight off temptations, because we fight evil with God’s Word. Take your swords home so you’re ready to fight!**

Encourage kids to keep their paper swords and use them as Bible bookmarks.



Supplies

- Bibles
- “Bible Verses” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))
- pens

Set It Up

Say: **We’re learning that our sword is the Bible and that we fight evil with God’s Word. But listen to one of Satan’s temptations again.**

Read Luke 4:9-11.

Say: **Whoa! If the Bible is *our* sword, why is Satan using it? If the Bible is true, how can Satan use the Bible? Let’s dig in to that.**

Dig Deeper

Say: **Let’s start by reading some real words that come straight from the Bible.**

Give each child a “Bible Verses” handout, and have kids take turns reading the Bible verses aloud. (Note: These are horribly out of context on purpose; kids will find out the real meaning later.)

Ask: • **What do you think about the fact that these words come straight from the Bible?**

Say: **The Bible is always true. But sometimes people can pull out just a few words to twist them into what they want the Bible to say. That’s called taking the Bible out of context, and that’s exactly what happened with the verses you just read.**

Ask: • **Has anyone ever misunderstood something you said? Talk about that.** Share your own example first, especially if someone took something you said the opposite of how you meant it.

Say: **Taking Bible verses out of context is what Satan loves to do. Jesus told the Pharisees, who were out to get him, that Satan is the father of lies.**

Read John 8:44.

Say: **Since Satan hates the truth, he takes the truth and twists it into a lie. That’s what he did when he tempted Jesus using verses from the Bible. But we don’t have to fall for his lies! We fight evil with God’s Word, and we can find out the truth if we dig a little deeper. So let’s be detectives and find out what the verses we read are *really* saying.**

Have kids form five groups (a group can be one child), each taking one of the verses from the handout.

Say: **Your job is to solve the mystery of what your verse really means. To do that, you'll look it up in the Bible and then look for the BASIC clues. The word *BASIC* stands for five things found on your handout. What comes *before* and *after* is known as the context. You can find out what something really means by understanding the context.**

The *speaker* is also an important clue. If the verse is someone speaking, find out who's speaking! Is it someone we want to listen to? The Bible is true, so we know it's true that those words were spoken...but if a fool said them, the words that person said aren't true!

Intent means asking yourself, "What's the point God is trying to get across?" So after you've looked at the before, after, and speaker, you can try to understand the intent.

The last word is *culture*. Don't worry about that one right now; we'll talk about that later. For now, work together and jot down what you observe about your verse for the first four letters of BASIC.

Allow time for kids to work. Walk around and help as needed. For example, in Psalm 14:1 you can make sure kids understand that a *fool* says, "There is no God." First John 5:19 may sound scary, but if kids read verse 18, they can feel confident that Satan can't touch God's children. Encourage kids not to simply read the before and after words from the verse itself but to start at the beginning of the paragraph and go all the way to the end.

After several minutes, ask kids to share what they learned about what the verses really mean based on the BASICs they discovered.

Say: **Thank you for your observations! Now you can see how I was able to take words straight out of the Bible but make them sound like the *opposite* of what the Bible was saying! Satan loves to do that, so whenever you hear a Bible verse that seems confusing or doesn't match what you know about God, remember the BASICs to figure out what it really means.**

The C in BASIC stands for *culture*, and it means understanding the culture the words of the Bible were originally written to. For example, a lot of the New Testament was originally letters to churches in different cities, and those cities may have had things about their culture that the letters addressed in a way that doesn't make sense to us today. That's something you wouldn't know on your own or from reading even the whole Bible! But there are people who study the Bible and other history to know more about the culture. Then they write books

called *commentaries* that help explain the culture to us. You can look up commentaries online at websites like biblegateway.com.

Ask any kids who may have used commentaries to describe how they could be helpful.

Say: **God's Word is always true, and it's a powerful sword. But sometimes if we misunderstand what it's saying because of taking things out of context or not understanding the culture it was written for, it can be twisted into lies. That's what Satan loves to do, because he's the father of lies! But now we know how to find out the truth about what Scripture says. And we know this.**

Read James 4:7.

Say: **So remember, we fight evil with God's Word. We can hold on to the truth of God's Word and resist the devil when he tries to twist it. He will flee!**



OBJECT LESSON

Sticky Memory

[10 min]

Supplies

- Bibles
- paper
- markers
- painter's tape

Easy Prep

- Write out the following verses on pieces of paper, and tape them to different walls in the room.
 - Psalm 34:18: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted."
 - Joshua 1:9: "Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."
 - Romans 8:38: "Nothing can ever separate us from God's love."
- Spread out the rest of the paper and remaining supplies on a table.

Choose a Verse

Say: **We've been learning about the armor of God and how each piece helps us fight God's evil enemy. Today's sword of the Spirit is all about how we can fight evil with God's Word. One way we can do that is by having God's Word in our memories so it's with us always. Scientists have discovered amazing things about how memory works in our brains and ways we can make important things like God's Word really stick in our memories. Let's give some a try!**

- Point out the Bible verses you've hung around the room, and give kids time to each choose one that means the most to them and that they'd like to remember.
- After kids have decided on the Bible verses they'd like to remember, invite them to the table where you've spread out the supplies.

Use a Memory Technique

Say: **Science has shown us that we remember things better when a memory is linked to something we can experience with our senses: sight, touch,**

taste, smell, and hearing. Let's test it! Choose one of these ideas to help you memorize the Bible verse you chose.

- Allow kids to choose from the following:
 - Create a visual by drawing a picture that represents the verse.
 - Put the Bible verse to a musical tune or rhythm. Songs can get stuck in our heads whether we like it or not, and they're very effective for locking in memories.
 - Engage the sense of touch, and make hand motions to go along with the Bible verse.
- After everyone has chosen a memory-locking technique, allow time for kids to use them in memorizing their Bible verses.
- Then have kids form pairs and see if they can repeat their chosen verses without looking at them using the memory techniques they chose. Have partners affirm each other's tries even if they don't get their Bible verses exactly right. Help kids focus more on remembering the meaning of their verses than on getting every word exactly right.

Talk About It

Say: **I wonder if the scientific discoveries about memory and our senses are right.**

Ask: • **How helpful was the memory technique you chose?**

• **What other memory tricks do you know?**

• **How could the Bible verse you chose help you through a hard time?**

Say: **Remembering Bible verses is a lot more important than earning a reward. We memorize Bible verses because then we can take our sword with us everywhere we go. God's enemy likes to lie to us, so when we have God's Word in our hearts, we can see through the enemy's lies and fight evil with God's Word.**



CRAFT

Swords of the Spirit

[20 min]

Supplies

- “Sword of the Spirit” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))
- jumbo craft sticks (5 per child)
- scissors
- glue sticks
- cups (1 per child)
- permanent markers



Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

Make a Set of Swords

Show kids the sample craft you made. Give each child five jumbo craft sticks and a “Sword of the Spirit” handout. Set out the remaining supplies to share, and have kids follow these directions to make a set of swords.

- Cut out the swords on the handout.
- Glue the swords to the front and back of jumbo craft sticks. Be sure to match the swords (notice the handles are different!) so you have matching swords on both sides of each craft stick.
- Decorate the cup with permanent markers. Include the point: We fight evil with God's Word.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Which sword do you think you'll need to use the most?** Share your own example first. By modeling that you also struggle with temptation, you can help kids be more open in sharing.

• **How can the verse on that sword help you when you face that temptation?**

Say: **Satan wants us to think that going against God's plan is the best way. But you know what? We don't have to fall for his lies and tricks! We have an amazing sword that has a response to every single temptation he throws our way. So pick up your sword every day and remember that we fight evil with God's Word.**

Have kids take their sword sets home and read one daily so they're ready to fight off the enemy's temptations.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Play Ball!

Supplies

- plastic Wiffle ball bat
- Wiffle ball or small Nerf ball
- plastic cones or chairs
- music player (optional)
- upbeat music (optional)

Easy Prep

- Create a baseball diamond by placing cones or chairs in a diamond shape in your playing area.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Play Wiffle Ball

- Divide into two teams. Have one team spread out in the outfield and the other team bat first.
- With an adult or teen helper pitching, play a version of baseball, but instead of getting outs, play until all team members have a chance to hit the ball and run all the bases. Then trade places so the other team hits and runs.
- Play as time allows, making sure each child bats at least once.

Talk About It

Ask: • **How is a bat like or unlike the “sword of the Spirit” Paul writes about in Ephesians 6:17?**

Say: **Like a baseball player uses a bat to hit a baseball out of the ballpark, we fight evil with God's Word. God's Word is the sword of the Spirit. It's a tool to help us blast temptations out of here!**

Ask: • **When has something from the Bible helped you get rid of temptation?** Share a story from your life to begin.

Say: **We fight evil with God's Word and tell temptation, “You're out!”**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Temptation Knockout

Supplies

- disposable 8- or 9-ounce cups
- markers
- tennis balls or large sponge balls (1 for every 2 kids)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Knock Cups Out

Say: **In our Bible story, Satan tempted Jesus, and Jesus quoted Bible verses to stand firm and not give in to temptation. What are some things that we're tempted to do? Let's write ideas on these cups.**

- Give each child a cup, and have him or her write a temptation on the outside of the cup. Examples could include telling a lie, picking on a sibling, or copying someone's homework.
- Have kids sit in wide circles of no more than 10 kids, with their cups in the middle of the circle.
- Give a tennis ball to every other child in the circle. Those kids will throw the balls toward the cups, trying to knock them completely out of the circle by hitting a cup so it goes between two kids. Whoever retrieves the ball can throw it.
- Have kids throw the balls until all cups have been knocked out of the circle.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music as kids play.
- Play again if time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **How are the tennis balls in our game like God's Word?**

Say: **God's Word wins! It's stronger than any temptation we may face.**

When we're tempted to lie, we can remember that John 8:32 says, "The truth will set you free." Or when we want to pick on someone, we can remember 1 John 4:7, which says, "Dear friends, let us continue to love one another." We fight evil with God's Word. So know the Bible so your sword is ready.