

The Full Armor of God Playset

FAITH PARENTING GUIDE

Dear Parent,

The Full Armor of God playset will provide an opportunity for you to talk to your child about the presence of evil in the world, the concept of spiritual battle, and God's provision for us to stand with Him against the devil. The concept of spiritual warfare and the armor is complex, but the suggested activities will be fun for your child and will give you ample opportunity to share your faith and beliefs.

Children like to play dress-up. They want to pretend to be like the adults they observe—firefighters, auto mechanics, chefs, nurses, doctors, etc. Children recognize what type of work people do by the clothes they wear. So, too, it is for the Christian. Believers are identified with God and His work by the armor costume. This is not an actual suit of armor but evidences throughout the Christian's life that the armor has been put on.

Interaction and Playtime Ideas:

Read Ephesians 6:13–18 to your child:

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. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in

place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

1. Have your child put on all the pieces of *The Full Armor of God* playset. Discuss the purpose for a soldier wearing armor to fight in battle—protection. Talk about how the believer’s protection for spiritual battle comes from the armor of God. When soldiers go to battle, they follow the orders of their king or general—they don’t go on their own. Share that our king is God and we stand with Him in the battle against evil; we don’t fight alone.

2. Discuss each part of *The Full Armor of God* playset. What would happen to a soldier if he went into battle missing a piece or two? He would be wounded and have to leave the battlefield. In the same way, the Christian soldier needs to put on all the spiritual armor to be protected and able to stand firm. Talk about the spiritual words associated with each piece of the armor: truth, righteousness, gospel, faith, salvation, the Word of God. Some brief definitions are presented here to get you started. (The extent of your discussion will depend in part on the age of the child or children.)

- **Truth:** to be strengthened by God’s truth and to practice truth
- **Righteousness:** to reflect the righteous character of God by our actions
- **Gospel:** knowledge and acceptance of the gospel causes us to be ready to do the will of God, including sharing the good news
- **Faith:** our relationship with a faithful, all-powerful God protects us from the evil one

- **Salvation:** ultimate protection (salvation, present and future)
- **Word of God:** instrument by which God's power is shown

3. Even the best parents cannot shield their child from the evil in the world. A child can be exposed to all kinds of harmful and evil things. They may hear on the news of something bad that has happened to a child or a friend at school may be a victim. How can a child be aware of these things and not be fearful? Talk about how we stand beside God in the spiritual battle, and He has already won—Christ triumphed over evil when He rose from the dead.

4. Your child may know the story of David and Goliath. (If not, you will find it in 1 Samuel 17.) Talk about the fact that although the giant Goliath had real armor and weapons and David had no armor and only a slingshot for a weapon, David was not afraid. Ask the child where David got his courage. Make the point that, like David, we won't wear physical armor when we go out into our neighborhoods or schools, but we will always have the armor of God that the Bible promises us in Ephesians. Therefore, we do not need to be afraid.

5. To illustrate the idea of "stand firm" you will need a large playground ball (a basketball or volleyball will do) and a sturdy foot-stool or child-size chair. Carefully take the child by the hand and ask him or her to try to stand on the ball. This will be hard! Now, still holding the child's hand, ask the child to stand on the sturdy stool or chair. In a classroom setting, each child can try this in turn. Complete the exercise by discussing the fact that when we try to stand on the promises of the world we are on shaky ground like standing on a ball; but when we stand on the promises of the Lord, we can stand firm.

6. One of the greatest weapons a Christian has is prayer. The believer has power in Christ over all kinds of evil. Encourage your child to take his/her fears, failures, etc. to God in prayer.

7. For an additional activity, consider having the child or children march around the room while singing “Onward Christian Soldiers” or “I’m in the Lord’s Army.”

Additional Scriptures for Discussion:

You may also want to discuss some of the following Bible verses with your child in connection with this theme:

All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give all of you into our hands (1 Samuel 17:47).

Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle (Psalm 24:8).

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped (Psalm 28:7).

This Faith Parenting Guide is not an exhaustive resource on the subject. Please refer to your Bible, pastor, and church leaders for help or questions.

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