



Breastplate of Righteousness



THE MISSION AIM

The Breastplate of Righteousness protects the Christian soldier's heart from the attacks of Satan and worldly influences by inviting God's influence over it.



KEY VERSE

Proverbs 4:23: "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."



Pre-Mission Activity



Supplies Needed

- Option 1: Six plastic cups, a soft ball or ping pong ball, masking tape
- Option 2: Last week's copy of the five Gospel Truths (See attachment page 9)

Directions

DO: Choose one of the following options:

Option 1: On a table, set up the plastic cups in a pyramid (three on bottom, two in middle, one on top) and place a line of masking tape at the opposite side of the room (distance apart depends on the age/abilities of your recruits). As recruits come in, allow them the chance to try knocking down the plastic cups with the ball provided. You may want to designate a recruit to be in charge of setting the cups back up each time. Once everyone is there and has had a chance to try, pick one or two individuals to act a "guards" of the cups. As the other recruits stand on the tape and try knocking the cups down again, these "guards" are allowed to block and knock the ball away. Have a quick discussion about how it was easy to hit the cups, until they had protection.

Option 2: Review the five Gospel Truths that were discussed during the "Belt of Truth" lesson. You may want to have all the puzzle pieces from last week up OR leave some down for recruits to figure out on their own.



Mission Uplink 1



Have ready YouTube playlist: "Season 2 – Armour of God Episode 2: Breastplate of Righteousness"

Play "Armour of God (S2) Episode 2 (1/4)". Episode begins with the *Ready to Serve* theme song, followed automatically by the MISSION # 1 VIDEO. Pause the video when the MISSION # 1 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 1.

If using PPT for video, have AOG-Episode_1-Breastplate_of_Righteousness.pptx ready and play slide one. Pause on the MISSION # 1 CARD so you and your recruits can complete Mission # 1.



Mission #1



Supplies Needed

- Bible
- Have poster sheet with truth definition from Lesson 1 (Belt of Truth)
- Marker



Mission Assignment

SAY: Recruits, let's have a countdown for our first mission today. 3-2-1 (reading mission card from satellite uplink) "Attention, recruits! Before we can help Isaac understand how to win his spiritual battles, we need to help him understand more about righteousness and having a spiritual heart. Working together, I want you to create definitions for what righteousness and spiritual heart are that can be shared with Isaac. God bless!"

SAY: Wow, team! This task might seem like a big job to handle, but I think if we break it down into smaller parts, we can accomplish our mission! Let's start by looking at the word "RIGHTEOUSNESS". Can anyone see a word inside the word? (*Right*)

SAY: Great answer! Often larger words are built using what we call a root word. Usually root words can help us to better understand larger words. I want you to turn to an elbow buddy and take one minute to talk about what you think of when you hear the word "RIGHT".

DO: Allow partners to talk about what they think of when they hear the word "RIGHT".

SAY: 3-2-1, and eyes on me! Alright, let's share some of the ideas you came up with. What do you think of when you hear the word "RIGHT"? (*Possible Responses: opposite of wrong, right hand, being correct, doing what you should, knowing the answer, a positive thing, saying/doing what you have been told, turning to the right, a direction,....*)

SAY: Awesome ideas! We often think of right as meaning we are correct or doing the good/proper thing. So, if we show righteousness it means we are showing the good or proper thing in the way we live. The most important tool we can use to make sure we are showing righteousness in our living is our "spiritual hearts".

SAY: Sometimes it can be tough to always be righteous. Remember how Isaac is really involved in his church and seems to know what is right and wrong...but, he still used bad language at school? That is something that can happen to any of us. There is only one who is *truly* righteous; who never makes mistakes or does the wrong thing. Do you know who that is? (*God, Jesus*)

SAY: God is the only one who is 100% pure, 100% of the time! That is why it is so important that we allow him to surround and protect our heart. In order to understand what your "spiritual heart" is, it helps to think of our *actual* hearts! Speaking of hearts, who knows where your heart is located? (*Have recruits find their hearts by locating their heartbeat.*)

SAY: A lot of people associate their heart with feelings and emotions. But, the truth is that those things come from our brain. Let's take a few minutes to put our heart to work.



DO: Play "Countdown"

Instructions: Have the recruits find a space in the room where they can move. Start by giving the first instruction and allow recruits to do what it says moving on to number 10. When recruits finish, start back at the beginning- giving them the first instruction again, allowing them to do it, followed by the second instruction and time to do it. Continue in this pattern until all 10 steps are done together.

Steps: (Note: you may want to count out each step. i.e., "Jump 10 times, 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1."):

1. Jump 10 times.
2. Do 9 arm rotations.
3. Stomp 8 times.
4. Do 7 twists.
5. Touch your toes 6 times.
6. Do 5 neck rolls.
7. Run on the spot for 4 seconds.
8. Do 3 wrist rotations.
9. Do 2 jumping jacks.
10. Shout "hurray!"

SAY: Excellent work, recruits! Let's take a rest and think about what our heart just did for us. Does anyone know what the job of your heart is?

DO: Take some ideas from recruits.

SAY: The main job of our heart is to provide our body with oxygen through pumping our blood. Your heart influences every other part of your body! Without your heart doing its job by providing blood to all other parts of your body, you couldn't have done all those other things with your body! Your heart has a HUGE influence on everything your body does, or does not, do.

DO: Have an older recruit read Proverbs 4:23 to the squad.

SAY: "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." It is important to protect our physical hearts for our health, but the Bible is talking about something even more important: our "spiritual hearts". If the job of our physical heart is to help the rest of our body function properly, what, do you think is the job of our "spiritual heart"?

DO: Allow for some time for discussion and ideas to be shared.

SAY: Just like our physical heart, our "spiritual heart" influences our entire body. Our "spiritual heart" impacts what we think, say and do. So, if your "spiritual heart" is in good condition and doing its job properly, then it will allow the rest of our body to say, think and do the right things. The condition of our "spiritual heart" affects our righteousness!



DO: You may wish to add the definition of righteousness and spiritual heart to the chart started last week with the definition of truth.

Righteousness: The ability to act in an upright (correct) way.

Spiritual Heart: The centre of our spirit that influences all our thoughts and deeds.

SAY: Great work, recruits! You certainly used a lot of brain power, and heart power, for that one! Let's take a break and check back in with the Recon Team.



Mission Uplink 2



YouTube: Play "Armour of God (S2) Episode 2 (2/4)". Pause the video when the MISSION # 2 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 2.

PPT: Click to advance to next slide. Pause video when MISSION #2 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 2.



Mission #2



Supplies Needed

- Coffee maker
- Coffee grounds
- two clear mugs
- Coffee filters

Note: If you cannot use a coffee maker for this demonstration, it can also be done by pouring water from a jug or kettle. The purpose is not to make a great cup of coffee, rather to demonstrate the filtering of what goes into our hearts!



Mission Assignment

SAY: Just like Michael said, it's important that we protect our spiritual hearts. So let's get to our second mission (reading mission card from satellite uplink). "Recruits, we need to find a clear demonstration we can use to help Isaac better understand what happens when he does not wear his "breastplate of righteousness". We've tried to explain it, but Isaac needs to see it. He needs your help!"

SAY: Alright recruits, I know a perfect example of how we can help Isaac to see what happens to our hearts when we don't protect them with righteousness! But, in order to do it, we need to go off-site. Follow me!

DO: Walk your recruits to the church kitchen to where you have access to a coffee maker or running water. (Because this can get messy, it is better to do this in safe area.)



SAY: (While holding up one of the clear mugs) **This coffee mug is a lot like our “spiritual heart”. It has space for storing coffee, just like our hearts have space to store our feelings and beliefs.** (While holding up a coffee filter) **This is a coffee filter and these (show coffee) are coffee grounds. What do you think the purpose of a coffee filter is? (To keep all the bits out of the coffee; to keep coffee from getting dirty/sludgy.)**

SAY: Turn to a partner and make a prediction about what will happen when I put this filter into the top, fill it with grounds and turn on the machine. (Will make a regular cup of coffee, grinds will stay out of the cup or pot.)

DO: Have recruits help you put in the filter, add some coffee and turn on the machine. Allow a cup to brew.

SAY: **What do you notice about the coffee that came into our mug? (It’s a regular cup of coffee; the coffee came out, but none of the bits.) This is like what happens to our “spiritual hearts” when we wear our “breastplate of righteousness”. As experiences we have influence our lives, they can enter our hearts. Watching certain movies, listening to different music, hanging out with certain people... these things can all influence the way we think and act. However, if we wear God’s righteousness each day, the negative influences have a much harder time getting through to our hearts, just like the coffee grounds had trouble getting through the filter.**

(If a few bits did make it through, you can mention the fact that as humans we are not perfect, and sometimes things still can get through...although, not as much as without.)

SAY: Let’s try that again, only we won’t use a filter.

DO: Repeat the experiment without using a coffee filter. (It will be messy. Do not forget to wipe out the coffee machine after!) Allow a cup to brew in the second mug.

SAY: Ewww! I certainly wouldn’t want to drink that cup of coffee!

SAY: **What is different about our two cups? (The second one has gross bits of coffee in it, it is not clear.) This is what can happen to our “spiritual hearts” if we don’t have our “breastplate of righteousness” on. Without righteousness there to help us know what is good and what is not, we allow all things to enter our hearts- good and bad! And as the saying goes, “Garbage in, garbage out!” If we allow our heart to get filled with all these bad things, it is those things that will impact what we think, say and do!**

SAY: **What do you think are the bad or negative things that Isaac has allowed to filter into his heart? (Behaviour of his school friends, peer pressure, the need to fit in...) Now, sometimes the only thing we can do to keep ourselves from making a wrong choice is to separate ourselves from those things that are influencing us and filtering into our hearts. For example, some people listen to music with a lot of swearing in it, so they get into the habit of using that language when they speak. Maybe the best thing for that person is to stop listening to that type of music.**

SAY: But, sometimes it is not as easy as that. For example, Isaac seems to have made a poor choice, because he is trying to act like his friends.



SAY: Does this mean that he can never spend time with those friends again? (*No, he just needs to be more careful about how he behaves.*) In **Philippians 4:7**, it says “and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” With God as our filter, we are able to live in the world around us - spend time with friends who might not be Christian, see people making choices that may not be right - without becoming like it! If Isaac makes sure he trusts in God’s righteousness and wears it everywhere he goes, he will know when a choice he is making is right or wrong, and will have the courage to do what is right!

SAY: We need to get back to our room, so we can send this example of how to show what the breastplate of righteousness does to the Recon Team.



Prayer Huddle



YouTube: Play “Armour of God (S2) Episode 3 (3/4)”. Pause the video when the PRAYER HUDDLE CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the prayer huddle.

PPT: Click to advance to next slide. Pause video when PRAYER HUDDLE CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the prayer huddle.



Supplies Needed

- Optional: Quiet worship music

Directions

SAY: Excellent work, recruits! Before we go into our final mission for today, I want to take some time to pray together. Today we are going to do a buddy prayer. This means that each of us is going to partner up with another recruit and we are going to talk to God with them. This is simply a time for conversation with your partner, you and God. There are no “Dear Gods” or “Amens” just talk like you would to a group of friends. I want you to sit with your partner and take turns sharing the things in your life that have an influence on the choices you make. It might be things, people or activities, whatever! Share those things that you think are having a good influence on your choices and behaviour and the things you think are having a bad influence on your choices and behaviour. Pick a partner, find a place around the room and you can begin.

DO: Give recruits two to three minutes to share with each other and God. You may want some quiet music playing in the background to help make recruits more comfortable with talking out loud. You may need to be a partner with a recruit, or mingle amongst groups.

Say: God has heard what you’ve shared with your buddy. Thank you for opening up to him today.





Mission Uplink 3



YouTube: Play "Armour of God (S2) Episode 1 (3/4)". Pause the video when the RTS SHIELD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the Field Mission Project.

PPT: Click to advance to next slide. Pause video when RTS SHIELD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the Field Mission Project.



Field Mission Project



Supplies Needed

Part 1:

- Coffee filters (one per recruit) with the sentence starter: "(Name), you need your "breastplate of righteousness" to protect your heart against...." (The recruits will add the rest.)
- Pens
- Envelopes

Part 2:

- Golf tees (one per recruit)
- Sheet of paper
- Marker

Mission Project

Part 1:

SAY: Before we go today, I want to write a letter to someone really important. That someone is you! It can be easy to think of the things in our lives that are influencing us in the wrong way and decide to remove it from our lives or ask God for help to fight it. But, it is much harder to stick with your decision when you actually go out and live your life. So, today I am going to give each of you a coffee filter and a pen. I want you to write or draw a picture of those things you need God's help to remove from your life or protect your heart from. Maybe its video games, certain movies, friends and the choices they are making... whatever it is, put it on this coffee filter. I am also going to give you an envelope and I want you to put your name and address on the front. In a few weeks, I am going to mail these letters out to you as a reminder of why you need to always wear your "breastplate of righteousness".

DO: Pass out the coffee filters and envelopes. Allow them time to write/draw. Some recruits may need help spelling or thinking of what to put down. Collect envelopes from recruits as they finish. You and your leaders should also complete this activity.

Part 2:

SAY: Finally, I want to give you a little something to remember where you can turn when you are facing your own spiritual battles; trying to decide right from wrong.

DO: Hand each recruit a golf tee.



SAY: Does anyone know what these are? (*golf tee*) The reason I gave each of you a golf tee is because it is small enough to hide away in a pocket, backpack, or even tie onto a string to wear. It is a secret way for you to remember the word G.O.L.F.!

DO: Write the initials G.O.L.F. vertically on the board or chart paper. Followed by what each initial stands for:

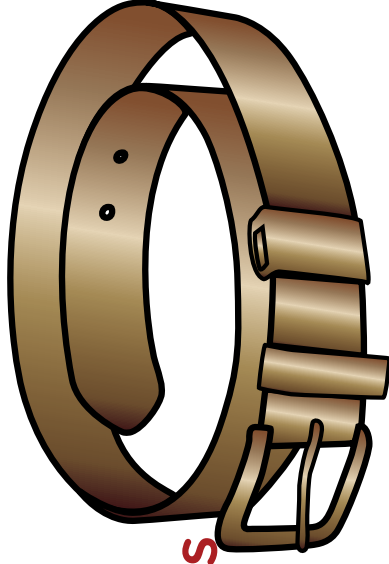
God
Our
Life
Filter

SAY: GOLF: God Our Life Filter. This tee is meant to remind you that God and his righteousness are your heart's filters against those things that are a bad influence on the way we live, think and act. Whenever you are stuck wondering what to do; just remember GOLF. God is there to help you make those good choices, even if they aren't always the easiest ones! Awesome work today, recruits! Don't forget- always be ready to serve!

NOTES



Belt of Truth - Gospel Truths



God is real - Romans 1:20

Sin separates us from God - Romans 3:23

God sent Jesus to take away the consequences of sin (death) - Romans 6:23

God is on our side - Romans 5:8

God gave the Holy Spirit who helps us make good choices - Romans 8:6