

Parent Guide

THEO™

Teaching Children God's Word

God's Grace Volume 2

LESSON 4 - Armor of God

In this lesson, Theo teaches us about the armor of God. In the book of Ephesians, Paul describes this armor as guarding against Satan's schemes and temptations. When Theo catches Scratch the cat chasing after his two mouse friends, Luther and Belfry, he shows how important armor can be—just look how the helmet keeps old Scratch away! The Bible compares Satan to a roaring lion, but Paul, influenced by the soldiers he saw as a prisoner of Rome, gives us ways to protect ourselves: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. It is important to remember that God protects us against all spiritual attacks. He's given us powerful armor to fight off Satan's temptations, as well as to endure trials. It's also important to remember Paul's call to pray for fellow Christians, for protection, and encouragement from God.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Ephesians 6:10-18 (armor of God)
Romans 13:12 (armor of light)
Hebrews 4:12 (Word of God is a double-edged sword)
1 Peter 5:8 (Satan like a roaring lion)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Theo's armored suit protect Luther and Belfry, the two mice, from Scratch the cat?
2. Imagine trying to play basketball without the basketball! What would your favorite sport look like without one of the key pieces of equipment?
3. Just like a sport needs all its equipment to work effectively, we need the full armor of God to fight off the enemy. What are some ways you can "wear" the armor of God daily?
4. Do you remember what the one offensive piece of armor is (hint: it's sharp and pointy!)? What does it mean to "use" this weapon? How can you keep it handy even if you don't have your Bible with you? Answer: "I have stored up your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).
5. Paul encourages us to pray for fellow Christians and against spiritual attack. How specifically can you pray for yourself and fellow believers to get through spiritual trials and temptations?

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Sit around a table and gather drawing paper, colored pencils, markers, or any other drawing utensils. Have everyone in the family draw a soldier and try to represent the armor of God. You might use certain colors to represent this armor, or symbols, or even words. Have everyone share their drawing and talk about how they chose to represent the pieces of armor. Take the opportunity to remind everyone of the importance of the armor, how it protects us against spiritual attacks, how God graciously provides this armor, and how being mindful of God's Word makes us strong. Now you can hang the drawing in the kitchen or in each bedroom as a reminder of each piece and the need to put on this armor every day!

FINAL THOUGHT

While the Bible describes Satan as a roaring lion, God provides armor to protect ourselves against Satan and his attacks. With the armor of God, God lovingly keeps us safe and protected every day.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your armor. Help us to wear it everyday and protect us from all wickedness. We pray now for spiritual protection and encouragement, for ourselves and for all believers all around the world.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

NIGHTLY DEVOTIONS

This lesson's devotionals will include various passages from the Bible. Read the passage each night and follow the devotional questions.

Day 1

Read Ephesians 6:10-18. Paul says to "put on the full armor of God." Reflect tonight on the pieces of the armor of God and how you can work to "wear" this armor. You'll notice that in verse 18, Paul says to pray for fellow Christians. Take some time to do this tonight.

Day 2

Read Hebrews 4:12. Paul describes the Word of God as “living” and “active,” and like a sword. This sword helps to cut through the darkness, our thoughts and attitudes of the heart, and to discern right from wrong. Think tonight about ways you can use this “sword” to battle temptations and to better know how to live.

Day 3

Read 1 Peter 5:6-11. It can be scary to think of Satan as a roaring lion, but take heart! God says you can resist the devil and that He will strengthen you! What are some ways God might strengthen you? Pray tonight for perseverance during difficult times and for God’s comfort.

Day 4

Read Romans 13:11-12. Paul tells us to throw off our deeds of darkness and dress in the armor of light. It’s important to live as “light,” or as disciplined children of God. It’s important to study God’s Word to learn more about living in the light. You might pray tonight for ways you can live more in the light this week.

Day 5

Look at Ephesians 6:10-18 again. Remember, God gives you the strength to resist temptations and Satan. You should pray for strength and rely on God in every circumstance and keep alert to the reality of the spiritual world around you. How do we do this? Hint: “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

Day 6

Tonight, reflect on the armor of God. Remember, Paul described this armor while he was in prison, and yet he was encouraged and strong in the Lord. God will comfort and strengthen you wherever you are in life. Thank Him tonight for His presence in your life and take some time to pray for strength for all believers all over the world.

LESSON 5- Redemption

Scratch the cat is at it again! In this lesson, Scratch captures Luther and Belfry, but just in the nick of time, Theo saves his mouse friends by sacrificing the fish he just caught. We learn that the word redemption is an ancient word from the marketplace that means “to purchase something.” Theo teaches us that in Ancient Rome, one out every two people was a slave. The only way to become a free person was if the slave or someone else purchased their freedom. The Bible teaches us that everyone is a slave to sin. We’re all sinners by nature, sold into the bondage of sin. But Jesus purchased, or redeemed, us from this bondage when he died on the cross. The Bible says that anyone who believes in Jesus Christ will be set free from the bondage of sin. Just like Theo saved Luther and Belfry from Scratch, Jesus saves us from sin.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Romans 6 (no longer slaves to sin)
Hebrews 9:12 (redemption through Christ)
Colossians 1:14 (saved from darkness)
Psalm 19:14 (pleasing God)
1 Peter 1:18 (eternal salvation)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to redeem something? How does Theo “redeem” his mouse friends
2. How do some people think of redemption? How do we, as Christians, think differently about it?
3. Imagine the joy of a slave in Ancient Rome that’s just been set free. When Jesus redeems us from sin, we experience a similar joy. How should Jesus’ redemption affect our happiness and attitude?
4. The Bible says that anyone who believes in Jesus Christ will be set free from sin. What do you think it means “to believe” in Jesus? How can we show our belief in the way we act and behave?
5. Jesus sacrificed himself to redeem us from sin. We have been purchased (redeemed) by His blood. How can we imitate Christ by sacrificing our wants and desires to benefit others?

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Gather paper and writing utensils. Remind your kids that Christ sacrificed His own life in order to purchase us, or redeem us, from our enslavement to sin. He did this because he loves us! Read 1 John 3:16-18. John instructs us to imitate Christ's sacrificial grace and says, "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." Have everyone write down ways that they might sacrifice something in their daily lives for the sake of someone else. They could give their weekly allowance to a local charity or give up their TV time to help someone else with a chore. Encourage your children to come up with a practical way to "sacrifice" for someone else. Now place their list somewhere visible, on the fridge or bathroom mirror, to remind everyone of what they want to do. Encourage and help your kids follow through with their ideas.

FINAL THOUGHT

We're all sold into the bondage of sin, but Jesus paid for our freedom from sin by dying on the cross. By simply believing in Jesus and confessing Him as Lord and Savior we are freed from sin.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for freeing us from sin. Because You love us, You sent Your son, Jesus, to die on the cross and forgive us. You've purchased us from the bondage of sin and we ask that You help us live with joy and obedience to You.

In Jesus' name, amen.

NIGHTLY DEVOTIONS

This lesson's devotionals include various passages from the Bible.

Day 1

Read Romans 6:6-7. Paul says that because we're united to Christ in His death and resurrection, we're no longer slaves to sin. We share in Jesus' death (meaning we died to sin) and we share in His life (meaning we now walk in the newness of life). Thank Jesus tonight for His gift of redemption.

Day 2

Read Hebrews 9:12. Notice how it is only because Christ sacrificed himself that we can be redeemed. We cannot earn it ourselves or make our own sacrifices. Because Christ, both wholly man and God, died, we're granted eternal salvation. Pray tonight that this great sacrifice from Christ would humble you and help you to obey Him

Day 3

Read Colossians 1:13-14. Jesus saved us from the "domain of darkness," or sin. What do you think your life would be like if you didn't know Jesus? Why do you think Paul calls being enslaved to sin, the "domain of darkness"?

Day 4

Read Psalm 19:14. How can we be sure that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts are pleasing to God? What practical ways to train your heart and mouth can you think of tonight?

Day 5

Read 1 Peter 1:18-19. If our redemption could be purchased with impermanent things like gold or silver, our redemption wouldn't be everlasting. But Christ gave His precious blood, purchasing for us an eternal salvation. Thank Jesus tonight for this permanent salvation!

Day 6

Reflect on the meaning of the word "redemption." We once were slaves to sin, unable to free ourselves, but Christ, through His sacrifice freed us from the bondage to sin because he loves us. Redemption is an incredible gift and though it's free, it transforms the way we live. Now, we aim to please God and obey him. Pray tonight that you would live in light of your redemption. Ask Jesus to help you live in a manner worthy of His great gift to you.

LESSON 6 - New Birth

In this lesson, Luther and Belfry overhear Theo talking about being “born again.” Theo teaches us that we must be born again if we are to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Being born again means being given spiritual life through our belief in Jesus Christ. We are all born in this world spiritually dead, or separated from God, because of our sinful nature, but through Jesus’ forgiveness we are born anew into spiritual life. The moment we place our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and accept His forgiveness, something miraculous takes place. We’re made spiritually alive by the Holy Spirit and are connected to God! Theo tells us how Jesus explained to Nicodemus that being born again means being born from above by the power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot earn salvation just by doing good works and behaving ourselves, but need to believe in Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit in our lives.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

John 3:1-15 (story of Nicodemus)
Romans 6:4-8 (we live with Christ)
2 Corinthians 4:6 (light of the knowledge of Christ)
Titus 3:3-5 (God’s mercy)
1 Peter 1:23 (born again of imperishable seed)
1 John 5:3-4 (everyone born of God overcomes the world)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How are we born again? What do we receive by being born again?
2. At the end of this lesson, Belfry tries to put himself into a bird’s egg in order to be “born again.” Is this the right way? Is there any way other than faith in Jesus that we can be born again?
3. Why do we need to be born again in the first place? What about our spiritual lives requires us to be born again from above?
4. What characteristics might a person who has been born again have? How will they act?
5. By putting our faith in Jesus we are born again. How might we continue to put our faith in Jesus? What are some things you can do better to continue to grow in faith?

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Let's draw again! Draw a picture of yourself as if you weren't born again. How might you show that you're spiritually dead? How might it look to be separated from God? Now draw a picture of yourself today, but try to depict what it means to be born again as a Christian. How might you show that you're spiritually alive? How can you show that you believe in Jesus and that the Holy Spirit has miraculously given you new life? Share your drawings with the family and talk about why you depicted each scenario as you did.

FINAL THOUGHT

Because we are born into this world spiritually dead, we must be born again through our belief in Jesus Christ. Through our faith in Jesus, we are born again by the Holy Spirit into spiritual life and are no longer separate from God.

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for Your free gift of salvation. May we continue to put our faith in You, and walk in newness of life. Help us to act in such a way that we reflect the spiritual life You've given us.

In Your name we pray, Amen.

NIGHTLY DEVOTIONS

This lesson's devotionals include various passages from the Bible.

Day 1

Read the story of Nicodemus, John 3:1-15. Even though Nicodemus was a very religious man, he struggled to understand what it meant to be "born again." Jesus tells him we must be born of the Spirit. Reflect tonight on how your life should reflect being born again. How does a born again person behave?

Day 2

Read Romans 6:4-8. Paul says that, as Christians, we die with Christ and we live with Christ. This new life is our second birth—a birth into eternal life. We cannot allow our previous, sinful selves to get the better of us. Pray tonight that God will help you walk "in the newness of life."

Day 3

Read 2 Corinthians 4:6. Think about this: the God that created the world also shines in our hearts. God gives us knowledge of Him and of His Son so we might glorify him. This happens once we're born again. Think tonight about God's glory and power and praise Him in your prayers.

Day 4

Read Titus 3:3-5. Paul describes our fallen selves (the way we were without Christ), and our born again selves (the way we are now). How are they different? Thank God tonight for His mercy, for redeeming us even though we didn't deserve it. Pray that you would live tomorrow in such a way that glorifies Him.

Day 5

Read 1 Peter 1:23. Peter says we're born again of imperishable seed. This means our second birth is everlasting! Think about God's eternal salvation, and how powerful and good He is to make this possible for us.

Day 6

For our final devotion this week, look at 1 John 5:3-4. By being born of God we can overcome the sin of the world. But we must keep His commandments to love God and our brothers and sisters in Christ. Notice how John says that these commandments aren't burdensome. That's because God helps us to obey. If you're born again, pray tonight for a strong faith in God and for help obeying His commandments. Walk in the light of your second birth.