

Big Idea: Jesus calls us to prepare for victory.

Primary Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18

Supporting Scripture: Isaiah 59:17; Philippians 3:14

CAPTURE (Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?)

- Think about a time you were unprepared: a test, game, or presentation.
 - Not a good feeling, right?
- In 2011, a man named Jimmy Chin was part of the first team to climb and ski down Mount Everest.
 - Everest is already challenging, but skiing down is next level.
 - Preparation was key for survival: three years of training, studying weather patterns, testing gear, and physical conditioning.
 - One mistake could mean falling nearly 30,000 feet, which is fatal.
- Jimmy and his team made history by being thoroughly prepared.
- Their story shows how the right preparation makes the impossible possible.
- Life's challenges are just as real as the dangers of Everest: peer pressure, self-doubt, and anxiety about the future.
- In Ephesians 6, Paul talks about the spiritual armor God gives us.
- Just like Jimmy needed every piece of gear, we need every piece of God's armor to stand strong in our faith.

SCRIPTURE (What does God's Word say?)

- Let's dive in and see how God equips us for victory, starting in Ephesians 6:10.

¹⁰ A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. ¹² For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:10-12 – NLT)

- Paul wasn't talking about fighting people, but about the spiritual battles we face daily.
 - These are moments when doing the right thing feels impossible or standing up for what's right seems futile.
- The believers in Ephesus knew this struggle well, facing real dangers: persecution, arrest, beatings, exclusion, and loss of livelihood.
- Paul emphasizes that there's an even bigger, often unseen battle taking place.
- How do we stand strong?

¹³ Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. (Ephesians 6:13 – NLT)

- Paul uses the example of a Roman soldier's armor, something his audience saw daily.
 - Roman soldiers wore armor designed for survival, not just appearance.
- Spiritual armor is like that: it's not optional; it's essential for standing strong in battles.
- Paul doesn't just tell us to "put on armor." He explains exactly what that looks like.
- Just like soldiers wouldn't go into battle without the right gear, we can't stand strong in faith without God's protection.
- Each piece of God's armor is crucial for fighting the spiritual battles we face.

¹⁴ Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. ¹⁵ For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. ¹⁶ In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. ¹⁷ Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. (Ephesians 6:14-18 – NLT)

- The armor Paul describes isn't just a metaphor; it's essential for real spiritual battles.

- Without the armor, we're like a soldier going into battle in gym shorts and flip-flops—unprepared.
- The armor represents:
 - Truth
 - Righteousness
 - Peace
 - Faith
 - Salvation
 - The power of God's Word
- The only offensive weapon is the sword (God's Word).
- This shows we're meant to not just survive, but to push forward, standing strong in our faith.

INSIGHTS (What might this Scripture mean?)

1. The battle is real.

- Paul wasn't exaggerating. Spiritual battles are a guarantee.
- It's not a matter of 'if' but 'when.'

¹²For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12 – NLT)

- The Ephesians faced real persecution, but Paul reminded them:
 - Their true enemy wasn't Rome or their families. It was spiritual forces at work.
- Spiritual battles today:
 - Pressure to fit in.
 - Temptation.
 - Fear.
 - Doubt.
- Think of it like ocean currents. The biggest danger isn't the waves but the hidden pull dragging us away.
- Paul isn't trying to scare us. He's showing us how to prepare.

2. God's armor fits every battle.

- God's armor isn't random. It's designed exactly for our struggles.
- Isaiah 59:17 shows that God Himself wears armor.

17 He put on righteousness as his body armor and placed the helmet of salvation on his head. (Isaiah 59:17a – NLT)

- God isn't just giving us armor. He's sharing His own armor with us.
- Like a parent giving their child a bike helmet, God's armor is for our protection and success.

3. Victory is guaranteed.

- You know when someone says, "It's going to be okay" but they don't really know?
- Paul's words aren't empty. They're a promise.

13 Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. (Ephesians 6:13 – NLT)

- Paul doesn't say, "Maybe you'll win." He says, "You WILL be standing."
- Why? Because Jesus already won the war.
- Let's make sure we understand the armor that's available to us:
 - **The Belt of Truth** – The foundation holding everything together. Without it, we're vulnerable to lies about ourselves, others, and God.
 - **The Breastplate of Righteousness** – Protects our hearts. Not about perfection but living with integrity and honoring God.
 - **The Shoes of Peace** – Keep us steady. True peace comes from the Good News of Jesus, helping us stand firm in any situation.
 - **The Shield of Faith** – Blocks attacks of doubt, fear, and temptation. Faith reminds us of God's promises when life feels uncertain.
 - **The Helmet of Salvation** – Guards our minds. Protects our identity in Christ and keeps us from believing the enemy's lies.

- **The Sword of the Spirit (God's Word)** – Our only offensive weapon. We fight back against darkness with the truth of Scripture.

ACTION (How could we live this out?)

1. Check your gear.

- Just like Jimmy Chin wouldn't climb Everest without checking his equipment - we need to check our spiritual armor.
- Ask yourself daily:
 - Truth: Am I believing what God says or what others say?
 - Faith: Am I trusting God or myself?
 - God's Word: When was the last time I actually opened my Bible?

2. Train daily.

- Just like athletes train daily, we need consistent spiritual training to stand strong. Growth takes small, intentional steps.

¹⁴ I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. (Philippians 3:14 – NLT)

- Here's how to train daily this week:
 - Start Your Day Right – Before checking your phone, take 30 seconds to pray:
 - “God, help me stand strong today.”
- Check In Throughout the Day – When stress, doubt, or temptation hit, pause and pray instead of reacting.
- End Strong – Before bed, reflect:
 - Where did I struggle? Where did I see God at work?
 - Thank Him for victories and ask for strength where needed.
- These small daily habits build spiritual endurance and help us stand firm in victory.