

STAND FIRM

A STUDY OF THE ARMOR OF GOD



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MISSION

3

MISSION 3: THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (EPHESIANS 6:14)

The Uniform: God's Armor

After Basic Training you started receiving your armor. What was the first piece? The Belt of Truth! What do you remember about truth? (Allow your students to respond.) God is truth and His Word is truth, which is more than we can say for our lying enemy, the devil!

The next piece of armor is the Breastplate of Righteousness. That's a mouthful, isn't it? So, what is a breastplate? It is a piece of armor that covers and protects the back, chest and stomach, and all the vital organs inside of the body. It is a little like a bulletproof vest.

Now that we know what a breastplate is, what is righteousness? To explain righteousness, let's think about a courtroom. Imagine God as the judge and you are on trial with Jesus as your lawyer. Your disobedience and rebellion are brought against you. God, the judge, finds you guilty of sin, but Jesus, your lawyer, steps in and receives the punishment you deserve. You decide that your response must be total surrender to the One who gave Himself for you and in that moment you are made right with God. The death of Jesus covers your sin. This doesn't happen because you did anything; it is all an act of God. Because of your surrender to God and faith in Jesus Christ, you decide to live in obedience, doing things that please God. The good things you do don't make you okay with God; your faith and trust in Jesus make you right with God, or righteous. So, righteousness is living right with God, doing good things because you believe in and follow God. This is impossible without the Holy Spirit that God gives us at the moment we place our trust in Him.

Why do you think Paul compared righteousness to a breastplate? Faith in God that saves and pardons you also protects you from the lies of the enemy and keeps you from being wounded by sin and walking in it. If we are clothed with the righteous-

OBJECTIVES:

- To be reminded who the enemy is
- To be prepared to stand firm
- To continue issuing equipment
- To be sure of enlistment

FROM THE INSTRUCTION MANUAL:

(Memory Verse)

God made [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

(2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV)

ness of God and if we are living in obedience to what the Bible tells us, we will be safe. Remember, the Bible is Truth (John 17:17) and keeps the Breastplate of Righteousness in place.

Combat Intelligence: The Enemy

What do you remember about the enemy? The devil is a liar. He is the father of lies and he accuses us before God. In the Garden of Eden, he lied to make Eve doubt what God said. In the story of Job, when God bragged about His servant Job, Satan accused him of being faithful to God only because of his good health and the things God had given him.

Satan will try the same tricks to deceive you. He will take God's word and twist it to make you doubt God. He will accuse you and will even remind you of the sin you have already asked forgiveness for.

The Battle Plan: Be Prepared to Stand Firm

Once you are issued the breastplate of righteousness, though, you need to make sure to keep it on by living the way God teaches you to live. Then you won't be lion food! (1 Peter 5:8) Living right before God brings protection and peace to your life. When you mess up and sin, though, don't believe the lie that it has ruined you forever or that God will never love you again. First John 1:9 says, "But if we confess our sins to God, he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away." Run straight to God, agree with Him that what you have done is sin, and ask for His forgiveness.

Remind yourself that the enemy may want to destroy you, but that God will love you forever. "God does not condemn. God does not accuse. God convicts of sin and seeks to lead us to repentance. Satan is the accuser...He accuses you night and day before the throne of God (Revelation 12:10). But do not fear because Jesus sits at the right hand of the throne of God where He lives to make intercession for you (Hebrews 12:2, 7:25)."¹

The Swearing-In: Have you enlisted?

What do you remember about righteousness? Where does it come from? Righteousness is given to us by God the moment we trust Him for our eternal salvation. Have you received the righteousness of God? Have you trusted Him with your life? Why not today?

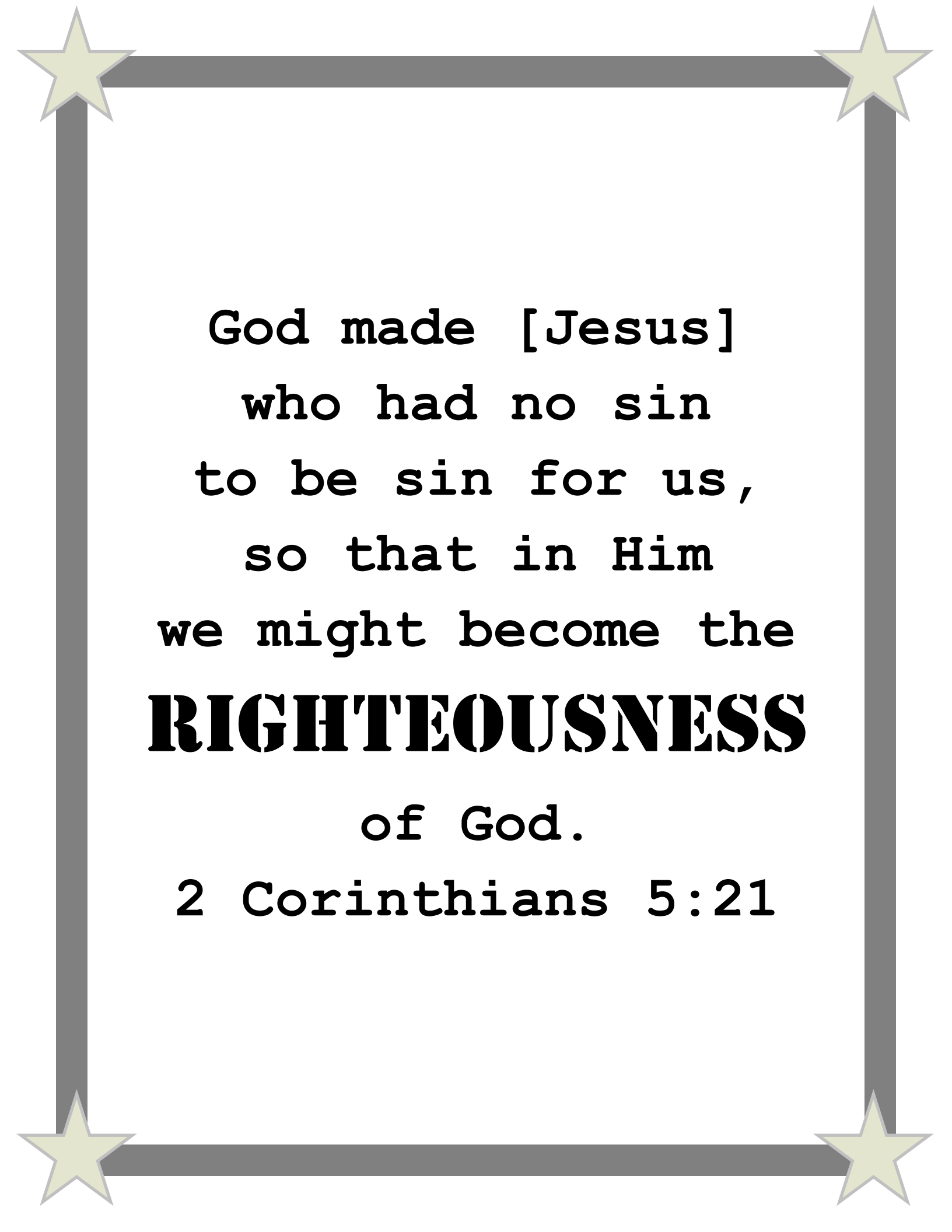
Once that righteousness is received from God, it is lived out in your life through obedience to God's Word. What things do you know that you should be doing? What things do you know you shouldn't be doing? How can you put that into practice in your life?

¹ Arthur, Kay. Lord, Is It Warfare? Teach Me to Stand. 1991. Waterbrook Press. P. 225.

ACTIVITIES



- Make Breastplates of Righteousness. Use paper grocery bags or cardboard boxes.
- Continue memorizing Ephesians 6:10-20 (Spiritual Basic Training). Do a verse or phrase at a time and make up hand motions that will help your students remember.
- Run Relay Races to enforce the idea of Basic Training.
- Learn and sing "The Battle Belongs to the Lord" and "I'm In the Lord's Army," "Be Bold," and "Trust and Obey."
- Review the Plan of Salvation. Make bookmarks, bracelets, crosses, wordless books or whatever will make the plan of salvation clear to your students.
- **Extra Training:** Read Ephesians 5:1-13. What would it look like if we imitated God? Did you know that believers of Jesus Christ were first called Christians in the city of Antioch (Acts 11:26)? This was originally an insult for being "Christ-people." The believers in Antioch earned this name by the way they lived their lives. They had a reputation for believing in and imitating Christ. How about you?
- **Extra Training:** Read Ephesians 4:1, 17-32. Make a list of the things you should "take off" and the things you should "put on" as a believer of Christ.
- **Extra Training for older students:** Read Romans 1:16-32. Talk about the results of 1) not acknowledging God, 2) continuing to sin, and 3) encouraging others to sin. Then read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, especially from the Amplified Bible.
- **Extra Training:** Let's look at two different battles with two very different outcomes. Contrast Achan (Joshua 7) and Jehosaphat (2 Chronicles 20).



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who had no sin
to be sin for us,
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RIGHTEOUSNESS
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2 Corinthians 5:21

WORD SEARCH



r r e n d e r t h e r e n e m
s u r r e n d e r f i s t s i
o g b d s a r m o a m u h t o
d h r t l t r u s t y r e j h
s t e o t n e m u h e d e e t
a u a m a n b e p e t s n s I
r r s t a n d f i r m u e u a
y t t e r r l t t o b r m s f
d f p t s e m a o f a r y i y
n o l t i s o p d l o h t s b
y t a a r u b d n i s n d t k
n l t s t c e f y e b o m r l
s e e d f c y i v s d e h u a
e b g v i a e r o m r r a t w
o r i g h t e o u s n e s s h

stand firm

the enemy

father of lies

accuser

breastplate

righteousness

surrender

walk by faith

obey

WORD SEARCH

Answers

r r e n d e r t h e r e n e m
s u r r e n d e r f i s t s i
o g b d s a r m o a m u h t o
d h r t l t r u s t y r e j h
s t e o t n e m u h e d e e t
a u a m a n b e p e t s n s I
r r s t a n d f i r m u e u a
y t t e r r l t t o b r m s f
d f p t s e m a o f a r y i y
n o l t i s o p d l o h t s b
y t a a r u b d n i s n d t k
n l t s t c e f y e b o m r l
s e e d f c y i v s d e h u a
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