

the COVER UP



BELT OF TRUTH

Read Ephesians 6 verses 10 to 18

1/ Belts

What do belts do?

If your belt stopped working when you were standing up talking to someone, how would you feel?

If your belt stopped working when you were running along, what are the worst things that could happen?

2/ Truth

What is Truth? Is it just the opposite of Lies, or is it more than that?

What does it feel like when you are caught out having told a lie?

In what ways is Truth like a Belt?

Can a 'truth failure' lead to the same sort of consequences as a 'belt failure'?

3/ Truth & God

Read these verses, what is God's attitude to Truth?

Proverbs 12:19-22

Psalm 51:6

Psalm 52:3

Psalm 145:18

Prophecy about Jesus

Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash round his waist.

Isaiah 11:5

4/ More Truth & God

What does God promise to those who are truthful?

Psalm 25:5

Psalm 40:11

Psalm 15:1-3

5/ More than one Truth?

We live in a 'pluralistic society' (which means people believe lots of different things). Many people say there is no 'ultimate truth', that as long as it works for you that is fine. But the Bible teaches there is only one truth. See John 14:6 as an example of this. If this is true then we have a responsibility to filter out of our lives the things that are against God....and to tell others that God is THE Truth.

What sort of ideas and teachings do we need to filter out of our lives?

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BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Read Ephesians 6 verses 10 to 18

1/ Breastplates

What did breastplates (or bullet proof vests these days) do?
Which part of your body did it protect? What is important about this part of the body?
If your breastplate stopped working when you were under attack, what would happen?

2/ Righteousness

What is Righteousness? A more modern word might be 'being upright' or having integrity. What do these mean?
Describe how a righteous person (or someone with integrity) behaves
Can a 'righteousness failure' lead to the same sort of consequences as a 'breastplate failure'?

3/ Righteousness & God

Read these verses, what is God's attitude to Righteousness?

Deuteronomy 6:25
Psalm 23:3
Psalm 33:5
Psalm 89:14

Description of Jesus

And in the centre, the Son of Man, in a robe and gold breastplate, hair a blizzard of white

Revelation 1:13 (The Message)

4/ More Righteousness & God

What does God promise to those who are righteous?

1 Samuel 26:23
Proverbs 10:2
Proverbs 11: 4-6, 18

5/ How do we become righteous?

Genesis 15:6 says Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as **righteousness**. Read **Romans 3:22-24**. How would you say we become righteous?

Genesis 15:6 doesn't say 'believed in God but just believed God. What's the difference? Do you believe in God or do you believe God?

GOSPEL BOOTS

Read Ephesians 6 verses 10 to 18



1/ Shoes and Boots

In the days before cars/buses/trains/planes most people had to walk to go anywhere.

What do Shoes or Boots do for us?
What does walking enable us to do?
If your shoes fell apart on a long journey, what would happen?
If a friend came round and asked you to go out with them and you couldn't find any shoes, how would you feel?

2/ Gospel

Jesus told us to go to all the world with the Gospel.

If someone asks you about how you get to know Jesus, would you be able to tell them?

3/ Walking/Standing & God

Read these verses, what is God's attitude to our feet?

Psalm 40:2
Psalm 73:1-3
Psalm 119:101,105
Proverbs 4:26
Isaiah 52:7

Description of Jesus

His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace

Revelation 1:14

4/ More Feet & God

"The way we go" is described in the Bible as being led by our feet.

Mark 9:45
Luke 1:76-79
Romans 10:15
Hebrews 12:12,13

5/ Where are our feet taking us?

Which direction are you heading? You may have given your life to Jesus but do you spend more time walking towards Him or away from Him?
Are you ready to bring the Good News to others? Would you know how to do it?

What are the 'essential ingredients' of the Gospel? What would you tell someone if they asked how they could know Jesus?

SHIELD OF FAITH

Read Ephesians 6 verses 10 to 18

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1/ Shields

Why do soldiers (and riot police) carry shields?
What can a shield do extra to protection already provided by body armour?
In what ways are shields even more useful when joined with those of the soldiers either side of you?

2/ Faith

What's the difference between faith and hoping?
How can faith be a protective thing in our Christian lives?
How can faith be strengthened by working with those around us?

3/ Faith/Shield & God

Read these verses. What do we learn about faith from them?

Psalm 3:3
Psalm 5:12
Psalm 7:10
Psalm 18:2
Psalm 115:9-11

Description of Jesus

Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Proverbs 30:5 (John 1 tells us the Word is Jesus)

4/ How does the shield work?

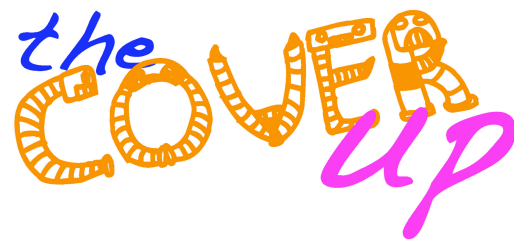
(some of these verses do not mention shields but are about protection)

1 Peter 1:3-5
Ephesians 6:16
Psalm 27:1
Proverbs 18:10

5/ Faith, what's yours in?

When watching Doctor Who as a kid I used to hide behind a cushion. I believed if I couldn't see the monsters, they couldn't hurt me. What do you run to when there is trouble, danger or something frightening? The thing we run to is the thing we have faith in.

How do we develop faith in God first, before other things? How do we support each other and hold the shields together?



HELMET OF SALVATION

Read Ephesians 6 verses 10 to 18

1/ Helmets

Which activities involve wearing helmets?
What does a helmet protect? What happens in this part of the body?
What might be the result of an accident if you forgot to wear your helmet?

2/ Salvation

What does the Bible say we are saved from?
Helmets protect our minds, so in what ways does salvation protect our minds?

3/ Salvation & God

Read these verses. What do they teach us about salvation?

Exodus 15:2
2 Samuel 22:3
Psalm 37:39

Description of Jesus

"my eyes have seen Your salvation"

Luke 2:30 (Simeon is looking at Jesus and praising God for what he sees)

4/ How do we receive salvation?

Psalm 119:155
Acts 4:12
Romans 1:16
1 Thessalonians 5:7-9
Acts 16:31
John 10:9

5/ Salvation thinking

The Gospel protects our brains and our minds. That means we need to guard our thinking with God's Word (see for example 2 Corinthians 10:5).

How do we 'guard our thinking with God's Word'? What do we need to guard it against?



SWORD OF THE SPIRIT / WORD OF GOD

Read Ephesians 6
verses 10 to 18

1/ Swords

The only 'attack' weapon in the armour.

What was the purpose of a sword?
What would you aim it at?

How could you also use it for defence?

A good swordsman would spend hours practising. He knew his life might depend on it

2/ Spirit/Word of God

Who is the Holy Spirit?

What is the Word of God?

In what ways can you use the Word of God like a sword to attack?...to defend?
What do you need to do in order to be able to use it effectively?

3/ The (S)Word of God

Read these verses, what do we learn about words?

Psalm 64:3
Revelation 1:16 (about Jesus)
Proverbs 12:18
Hebrews 1:3
Hebrews 4:12

Description of Jesus

**He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood,
and his name is the Word of God.**

Revelation 19:13

4/ Using the Word of God

Read these verses and consider together the effect of God's Word

Psalm 18:30
Proverbs 30:5
Isaiah 40:8
John 1:1
Acts 12:24
2 Timothy 2:15

5/ Using the Word as a Sword

You need proper training and lots of practice to be a sword fighter. You need to get to know your sword until it is almost a part of your arm.

Is God's Word something you spend a lot of time with and use effectively, or do you get bored and not bother with it? How could you become a better (s)wordsman/woman for God?