The belt of truth

Grades 1–5 • 60 minutes • Ephesians 6:10–14; John 8:31–32

What children are learning

Paul names truth as a soldier’s belt when he tells Christians how to stand firm. Children will practice checking something they hear about God against what the Bible says and answering honestly.

Before class

For you. Mark Ephesians 6:10–14 and John 8:31–32 for the reading, and Romans 5:8 for the belt activity. Ephesians 6:14 is the memory verse.

Print before class. Print pages 5 and 7 for each child. Keep an extra copy of page 7 to demonstrate. Print one family page (page 6) per household.

For the table. A Bible, the printed pages, a long strip of paper for each child’s pretend belt, and pencils or crayons.

Words children may ask about. Armor: protection used by a soldier. Truth: what is real and trustworthy. Stand firm: keep trusting and following Jesus.

Teach with care. A calm explanation and made-up examples keep the focus on truth. Classmates, neighbors of other religions, and people who disagree remain people to love rather than enemies to fight.

A note for the teacher. This outline is here to help you prepare and teach. As you teach, feel free to adjust the pace, change an activity, or spend more time on a child’s question as the Holy Spirit leads you.

When the children arrive, begin on page 2. Teach pages 2–4 in order.

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0–5 min · Welcome the children

Begin. Say, “A friend tells you the class trip is canceled. They heard it from someone who heard it from someone. How could we find out what’s true?”

5–10 min · Worship and opening prayer

Worship together. Sing a familiar song of praise. If you are leading without music, invite each child to finish “God, thank you for…” aloud or quietly.

Pray. God, thank you for bringing us together. Help us hear what you want to teach us today. Amen.

10–23 min · Open the Bible together

Lead into the reading. Paul names the pieces of a soldier’s armor as he tells Christians how to stand firm against evil. Listen for what he calls the belt. Then listen to what Jesus asks his followers to do with his teaching.

Read aloud. Read Ephesians 6:10–14; John 8:31–32 aloud from your Bible. Pause briefly before you ask the first question.

Background for you. If the children need more of the story, use the details below from Ephesians 6:10–14; John 8:31–32.

Paul wrote to Christians about living as God’s people. Near the end of Ephesians, he told them to be strong in the Lord. Their strength would come from God, not from pretending to be powerful. He used the picture of a soldier’s armor to explain how God equips his people to stand against evil.

Paul made an important distinction: people are not our enemies to attack. Then he began naming the armor, starting with truth pictured as a belt. Believers need what is true about God and what he has done in Jesus. Lies can confuse us, but God is trustworthy.

Jesus told his followers to continue in his teaching and know the truth. We learn his teaching by reading Scripture with help. We can also practice honesty: admitting a mistake, checking a story before repeating it, and refusing the lie that our worth depends on winning. God’s truth holds us steady.

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23–31 min · Talk about what you heard

Ask. In John 8, what did Jesus ask the people who believed him to keep doing?

Listen for. To keep following his teaching. Paul calls truth a belt. Remembering what God says helps us recognize a lie and keep following Jesus.

Keep talking. If you hear that God loves only people who win, where could you look to check that claim?

Connect to Jesus. Jesus brings us God’s truth and grace. Following him includes trusting his words and speaking honestly.

31–47 min · Truth holds us steady

Give out the materials. Give each child an activity sheet. Point to each heading as you read it aloud. What did I hear? / What does the Bible say? / What could I say?.

Try it together. Give each child a paper strip. Draw a buckle at one end and write “truth” on the strip. Say, “Let’s check something that isn’t true: ‘God only loves winners.’” Point to the first box. At the second box, read Romans 5:8. At the third, ask a partner, “What would you tell the person who said that?”

For younger children. Read the three questions to a child. They can point to the right box while you read Romans 5:8 aloud.

For older children. Ask a partner to pretend they heard that God loves only winners. Explain how Romans 5:8 helps you answer.

Tidy up. Keep the pencils or crayons out for page 5. Ask children to set their finished work beside them.

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47–51 min · Give children a moment to respond

Offer the student page. Hand out page 5 and read the choices aloud. Each child can answer one. Take a spoken answer, or give them a quiet minute to draw or write.

51–55 min · Remember a verse

Read and echo. Read Ephesians 6:14 in your Bible. Invite everyone to echo one short phrase at a time. Ask which word or phrase they would like to remember.

55–60 min · Take it into the week

Ask. What could you say the next time you hear a claim about God and you’re unsure it’s true?

Pray together. Lead the children in a prayer about what they learned today.

Example prayer. God, thank you for being trustworthy. Help us recognize truth and speak honestly with love.

At the door. Send home each child’s work. Give one Family Connection page to each household.