



Wearing the Armor of God—Really!

Sketch

[Please provide: narrator, 4 actresses, a copy of this sketch for narrator and actresses, a girdle, corset, or very wide belt (*belt of truth*), small lightweight disposable cookie sheet with the Ten Commandments printed on a piece of paper taped to it (*breastplate of righteousness*), wide ribbon, hot glue gun and glue sticks, swim fins or fuzzy slippers (*shoes of the Gospel of peace*), round metal trash can lid or big pot lid (*shield of faith*), large metal colander or strainer (*helmet of salvation*), golf club (*sword of the Spirit*), knee pads (*prayer and supplication in the Spirit*) small table with 4 chairs, 4 Bibles, two coffee cups, cell phone for Joan]

To begin: Print the Ten Commandments on a white sheet of paper and tape it to a lightweight cookie sheet. Center a wide piece of ribbon in place on one of the short sides of the cookie sheet and hot glue each end to the cookie sheet so it can be worn around the neck like a sign board. Sally will wear the girdle, the cookie sheet, the swim fins, the metal colander, and the knee pads. She will carry the garbage can lid and the golf club.

Narrator: This is the story of a somewhat confused lady who understands the message given to us in Ephesians 6:10–18a and who attempts to take this message quite literally. However, she must improvise her armor based on what she has on hand. Let's hear more about this armor now, as described in Ephesians 6: *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.*

Let's listen in now to Mary, Joan, Sally, and Liz, four Christian women, as they gather for Bible study.

Scene 1

Mary and Joan sit at a small table and enjoy some coffee while waiting for everyone to gather for Bible study. Four Bibles sit on the table in front of them. Their quiet time is interrupted when Sally enters the room – dressed in her full armor of God!

Mary: [Turns around suddenly to see Sally as she enters the room.] Joan, you are NOT going to believe this!

Joan: Mary, what is it?

Mary: It's Sally. [Whispers to Joan.] I think something strange has happened to her.

Joan: [Turns around and sees Sally.] Uh oh! I think you're right.

Sally: [Walks up to Mary and Joan at the table.] Hi ladies! How's it going? I'm really enjoying our study on the armor of God. I'm sorry it's coming to a close.

Mary: [Stutters.] Uh, uh, oh, me too! I've learned so much about the struggles we face against the devil and the world and how God has given us the means to fight back.

Sally: [Nods in agreement.] Exactly! That's why I've put on my armor of God. I'm ready for anything now! [Slowly turns around in place to show off her outfit.]

Joan: Uh, Sally, I'm not sure that God intended for us to literally wear a visible suit of armor.

Mary: [Quietly to Joan.] Look, I'll keep her occupied while you call the hospital, OK?

Joan gives Mary the thumbs up sign, gets out her cell phone, pretends to dial 911 and talk into the phone.

Mary: [Turns her attention back to Sally.] So, Sally, would you mind telling me more about your suit of armor? And where on earth did you get that belt?

Sally: Sure, I'd love to tell you about it. I'll even make a suit for you and Joan if you'd like! [Points at the girdle.] Oh, do you like my belt? I found it at the local thrift shop. I'm sure they have more if you'd like to get one. But, I digress. Of course this is my *belt of truth*. Remember how we learned that Roman soldiers' belts were important because they attached their weapons to them? Well, for us, the truth we find in God's Word is the foundation for the other tools God helps us use to fight against the devil's attacks.

Mary: [Points to Sally's cookie sheet "breastplate."] Uh, so, I guess that's your *breastplate of righteousness*, huh?

Sally: Well, of course! Remember, we learned that righteousness is to have good standing before God which comes through faith in Jesus. It's a gift of God's grace. Psalm 119:172 says, *My tongue will sing of your word, for all your commandments are right*. But, it's so hard to do that when temptation is around every corner.

Mary: Sally, don't you think that being in God's Word, asking for His forgiveness, and demonstrating true repentance for your sins as you trust in Jesus might do the same thing? And, you wouldn't have to wear that "breastplate!"

Sally: [Thinks for a moment.] Hmmm, you might just have a point there, Mary. [Takes off the "breastplate" and sets it on the table.] Whew, that's much better. With the Holy Spirit's help, I'll just be diligent in my study of God's Word and ask Him for discerning eyes so that I'm conscious of the worldly temptations surrounding me.

Joan: [Returns and speaks quietly to Mary.] The folks at the hospital didn't seem too concerned. They said to call back if she gets violent.

Mary: [Nods to Joan.] So, Sally has been telling me all about her new outfit.

Joan: Oh, really? [Looks quizzically at Sally's shoes.] I have to say your shoes are very, uh, interesting.

Sally: These aren't just any old shoes. These are *shoes of the ... gospel of peace*. A soldier wouldn't go barefoot into battle and likewise, we Christians need to have a firm footing based on the Gospel message – the glorious GOOD NEWS of salvation.

Joan: That's fine Sally, but the Holy Spirit is already working in you a firm footing in the Gospel. Every time we read or hear God's Word, the Holy Spirit works in us to help us to understand it and to live it. From the time we are baptized, the Holy Spirit continues to work in us to grow and strengthen our faith. When we celebrate Holy Communion, Christ Jesus strengthens us through the bread and wine, His body and blood. Wouldn't it be more practical to remember all this by saying a prayer every time you put your normal shoes on? Perhaps you could pray that as you go out the door, your shoes would lead you to someone who needs to hear the Gospel message.

Sally: [Sighs in relief.] Why Joan, that's brilliant! Honestly, these swim fins are really hot and they're making my feet sweat. I think I'll just switch back to my comfy shoes.

Mary: [Clears her throat.] Moving right along, Sally, I suppose you want to tell us about that shield you're carrying? Let me guess – it's the *shield of faith*, right?

Sally: [Wields the garbage can lid shield.] Of course it is! Our faith in Jesus is our firm foundation. He is constantly with us as He deflects those fiery arrows that the devil flings our way.

Mary: That's true, but, that trash can lid isn't really going to help against the devil's temptations, is it?

Sally: OK, you've got me on that one. That's a relief because this thing is HEAVY! [Sets shield on the table.] I'm feeling much better now that I know I don't really need to WEAR all this extra stuff to *put on the armor of God*. God does that for me in Holy Baptism. [Pauses and sighs.] Right now, I sure could use a cup of coffee. Let's grab a cup while we still have a few minutes before Bible study begins.

Joan: Great idea Sally! You can tell us more about your "outfit" while we enjoy our coffee.

[Joan and Mary pick up their coffee cups from the table and exit with Sally for just a moment.)

Scene 2

Sally, Joan, and Mary re-enter and sit down at the table. Liz enters a short time after and sits down with the others.

Liz: [Incredulously] Sally, is that a COLANDER on your head?! Let me guess, it's the *helmet of salvation*, isn't it?

Sally: Wow, Liz! You are very astute. Mary and Joan have been a little slow to catch on but you're right on target.

Mary: [Indignantly] I'm not slow! Just confused! Why on earth would you want to walk around with a colander on your head?!

Sally: Well, the Bible tells us that we have been freed from sin, death, and the devil's permanent grip on us through Jesus' suffering and death. Through His death on the cross and His resurrection, Jesus conquered our enemies and gives us the sure and certain hope of forgiveness of sins and eternal life through faith in Him alone. The salvation God gives us through faith in Christ is like a helmet with which God equips us to protect our minds from yielding to the discouragement and despair our sins cause.

Liz: Sally, do you really need that colander to protect your mind from discouragement and despair? Don't you think you could just post some uplifting Bible verses about Jesus' death and resurrection around your house or on the bathroom mirror instead?

Sally: What a marvelous idea, Liz! I can put this colander back in the cabinet now. [Removes the colander from her head and sets it on the table.] Thank goodness! I wasn't sure if I'd ever be able to fix spaghetti again!

Joan: Okay, Sally, what's your explanation for how that golf club acts as *the sword of the Spirit*?

Sally: That's an easy one, my friends! My late husband, John, God rest his soul, used to play golf quite a bit. He enjoyed it but never got very good at it. All the time he'd talk about how he "sliced" the ball. I never fully understood that, but if a golf club can "slice," it should make a good sword!

Joan: [Laughs] That's a good one, Sally. But you do realize that in the context of our Bible study, if you're going to carry a weapon, you'd be better off with your Bible.

Mary: Exactly, Joan! In our Bible study, we've learned how the sword is the only offensive weapon mentioned in this passage from Ephesians. The *sword* with which God equips us is His Word. There is no one or no thing that the Word of God, coupled with His Spirit, cannot defeat.

Liz: Sally, I know you are a true prayer warrior. And, I'm thinking that, of all those visible pieces of armor you've put on today, those knee pads are the one thing you can actually use. I've heard you spend a lot of time on your knees in prayer.

Sally: Oh Liz, I'll have to tell you, I'd be thrilled to still be able to pray on my knees. I might still be able to get down on my knees, but there's no telling how I'd get back up! But on my knees or not, I pray to our heavenly Father all the time. I know that He hears and answers my prayers. I know that God "defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil" (Explanation to The First Article of The Apostles' Creed, *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, CPH © 2017, p.16).

Mary: [Looks at her watch.] Ladies, it's just about time for our Bible study to begin. I have to say, Sally, your suit of armor definitely provided us with some good discussion. I'll never read Ephesians 6 again without thinking of you!

Joan: My friends, let's begin our time in God's Word with prayer. [The sketch ends as all four women bow their heads and fold their hands to pray.]

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