

# Anchor

**MEMORY VERSE:** We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, .... (Hebrews 6:19a)

**STUDY PLAN:** The objective of this lesson is to increase our understanding of the uniqueness of Christian hope and we will identify the character traits Christians cultivate to equip themselves to live in the world.



To earn the Anchor badge, you will need to do the following:

**Step 1: What is Christian hope?** My initials \_\_\_\_\_

We live in a complex world.

We hear negative reports from our cities, towns, and around the world – reports of incurable sickness, fires, tornadoes, floods, violence, shootings, hatred and war. Our own lives can be painful sometimes - we have a bad day at school, a fight with a friend, or tension with our parents or family. It would be easy to give up, to despair.

So why don't we just give up? Because we have hope that gives us a vision of the world as God meant it to be. **We don't look only at the brokenness of the world; we hope and work for a world where Christ's love reigns and people live in harmony.**

*What is the difference between hope and a wish?*

A wish is a desire for something that probably will not happen – "I wish I was taller. I wish I was funnier." or for something that will happen by magical intervention.

Hope is active and leads to action and an investment in the future we cannot see.

Christian hope is for a world where God's will is done A world where all the people are united and experience the joy of fully knowing and loving God and each other.

The symbol of the anchor that is on this badge is inspired by the Bible verse for this lesson. Christian hope for a better world is like an anchor that keeps us in place despite fads that come and go, or changing circumstances in our lives. Hope is an anchor that causes us to base our lives on what is important.

Hope is a small spark that we can fan to accomplish big things. We have hope because Christ shared his hope in us at the Last Supper when He shared the bread and wine as His body and blood. In the sacrament of Holy Communion, we receive forgiveness of our sins and are nourished even when our faith is flagging and the world calls us to other attractions.



**Action to work for a better world is anchored in hope.**



Existence can seem bleak and meaningless without hope. Hope purchases optimism for the oppressed, who otherwise believe it is futile to “fight City Hall”.

In Suzanne Robbins’, *The Hunger Games*, there is a telling exchange between President Snow, who fears that Katniss Everdeen’s victory will foment revolution in far-flung districts, and the game-master Seneca Crane, the one responsible to make the Games serve the needs of the oppressive empire.

President Snow says, “**Hope**. It is the only thing stronger than fear. A little hope is effective. A lot of hope is dangerous. A spark is fine, as long as it's contained.”

Seneca Crane asks: “So?” and Snow replies, “So, CONTAIN it.”

- Share your thoughts on President Snow’s concern about hope and its power.
- Why do you think President Snow said that?
- Talk about how to bring hope to a fearful situation.



Actions in the present fulfill long term hopes. For example, a teacher working with a small group of students in impoverished area may appear to be only teaching the students in front of her. However, it is her long-term hope that changing the lives of a few children will lead to better lives for their future families and their community.

- Talk about the hopes for your own lives. What plans do you have that are hopeful and will lead to a better world?



The anchor is a symbol of hope. Plan to give this craft to someone to remind them that God will keep them safe.

1. Purchase or find a used 5x7 inch frame. Remove the glass and save for another purpose. Leave the frame plain or write the verse from Ephesians on the frame using paint pens or Sharpie pens.
2. Insert fabric or patterned tissue paper into the frame.
3. Purchase or cut out an anchor shape from wood or heavy cardboard. Paint to coordinate with the fabric or tissue paper in the frame.
4. Attach the anchor to the backing.
5. Give this to someone to let them know you believe that God is with the during hard times.



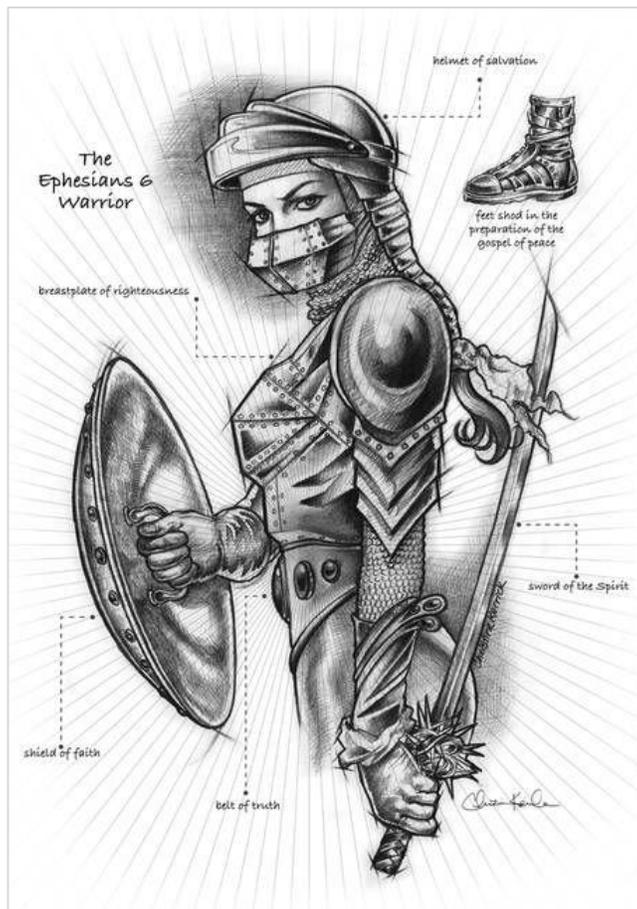
**Step 2: Time to suit up! Put on the armor of God! My initials \_\_\_\_\_**

The journey of faith begins with baptism. On this journey, persons of faith grow as they follow the example of other Christians, experience Christian love and kindness, study the Bible and the traditions of the church, and practice Christian principles.

In Ephesians 6:13-16, Paul lists some of the spiritual qualities of Christian character. Using terms familiar to early Christians, Paul lists the “equipment” needed to protect a Christian as she does her utmost to withstand evil influences and stand her ground.

*Stand fast I say.*

*Fasten on the belt of **truth**, for a breastplate put on **integrity**, let the shoes on your feet be the gospel of **peace** and, with all these, take up the great shield of **faith**, with which you will be able to quench all the burning arrows of the evil one.* Ephesians 6:13-16.



Paul uses competitive terms, even sports terms, as analogies in his writings:

*Run the race. Stay the course. Fight the good fight.*

Read all the questions below first, and then dig into a good discussion.

- What do you think of these types of analogies? Do they work for you?
- What kind of analogy would you write to describe “gearing up”?
- What would you put in your backpack or purse to be ready for “combat”?
- What type of “combat” are you preparing for?
- Have you had to compromise your behavior to fit in? Why do you think this happens? Is it because your peer group is challenging who you are now or is there a bigger force which desires to put you off track from the righteous woman you are to become?



Do any of the following:

1. Draw yourself wearing the armor of God, but use your own style! (For example, maybe your shield is a heavy necklace or medallion, maybe your breastplate is a cool jacket. Have some fun!)
2. Write about a person you admire whose way of life is an example of putting on the “armor of God”.



**Step 3: You're never fully dressed without Compassion** My initials\_\_\_\_

You have hope. You have faith. You are dressed in your spiritual armor. Does this mean you have convictions? Yes. Does it mean you have to hate or fear those that are different than you? No!

Compassion is the ability to show concern, leniency, kindness, tolerance, kindness and care for others. We cannot limit our compassion to only those who are just like us.

Jesus showed compassion to those who were different than Him and to those who disagreed with him. He set aside His own grief to help others. He put others first. He did not fail to help those who asked him for help.

COM = TOGETHER

PASSION = SUFFERING

Compassion is deliberate. Compassion can be powerful.



It can be a struggle to avoid being a self-righteous Christian. Or simply too busy with our own day to be present for others.

Talk about some examples that you have experienced of true compassion.

Three possible steps of engaging in compassionate behavior are:

1. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. What are they feeling?
2. Listen for a what the person needs.
3. Help with the options for solutions.

How can these steps help you to put compassion into action?



Do any of the following:

- Search for an informative video online on the topic of compassion, such as:
  - TEDxSeattle video "Reimagining compassion as power" by Tim Dawes
  - TEDxCreativeCoast video "How to have a good conversation" by Celeste Headlee
- Research and learn about Emotional Intelligence. Make a list of practices you can engage in or behaviors you can change about yourself to improve your emotional intelligence.