

**Armor of God Fireside  
Presented by the Temple Riders Association  
(Suggested outline with 2 demonstration options)  
updated and edited May 2022**

Once a ward has contacted the TRA to present a fireside, the TRA leader (typically a chapter leader) and ward leader work out details. Let the spirit be your guide and tailor the presentation to the audience. Invite as many TRA members as possible.

The TRA will stage somewhere close to the location of the fireside. This spot should be easy for TRA members to find. The TRA leader should time the departure from the staging area to arrive at the meeting location at the designated start time. The ward leader should have reserved parking spaces for the TRA.

Ward contact will have their organization meet at the designated time on the outside of the building. It is important for the ward to have the group meet on time. This should be a "grand" entry, with lots of revving engines, different types of bikes and trailers, etc.

Once the TRA has arrived and parked, the ward leader should invite their group to look at the bikes. TRA members should engage the youth, explain their bikes, let them take pictures, etc. If a TRA member is comfortable allowing youth (or adults) to sit on their bike, help facilitate this. Adult leaders should also be engaged.

**AGENDA**

**Viewing of bikes** (15 minutes) If interest starts to wane, move inside. Ward leader and TRA leader should be monitoring this. Other ward leaders should help get youth to move inside quickly.

**Moving inside** (5 minutes)

Conducting - Ward assignment. (Youth usually will hold the opening exercises.)

Opening song and prayer - by ward.

Turn time over to TRA . (This does not need to be the chapter leader, but can be)

**History or Overview of the TRA** (5 minutes) - See suggested remarks below. These are not to be read word for word, but paraphrased.

**Dressing for the temple** (5 minutes) - by a sister. See below for suggested remarks to paraphrase.

**Putting on the Whole Armor of God** (12 minutes) - Based on Ephesians 6:11-18. See two different suggested demonstration options below.

**Testimony** (8 minutes) - See suggested remarks below.

**Questions and Answers** (5 minutes) - Conducted by TRA leader. Can refer questions to other TRA members. Brief answers are better so more questions can be asked. Keep it positive. We

hope the youth and leaders feel that it is possible to have a good time doing good things with good people, and still stay true to gospel principles. Turn time back to ward.

Closing song and prayer - by ward

Refreshments - by ward.

### **History of the TRA** - Suggested remarks (From TRA website)

In the spring of 1987 while at a Salt Lake City motorcycle shop, Frank Reese, founder of the Temple Riders Association (TRA), stood beside Betty Sessions, who ordered a part for a Honda Gold Wing. He asked if she belonged to the Gold Wing Road Riders Association (GWRRA) and she responded, "No, we don't like to ride on Sundays". Having similar views about riding on Sunday, they continued to chat while they picked up their orders and agreed to get together with their spouses and plan a "weekday" motorcycle ride.

As both couples were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and temple recommend holders, they decided to combine a visit to two temples of the Church with their motorcycle ride. Shortly thereafter, Frank and Catherine Reese, and Betty and Boyd Sessions left on a Friday morning and rode to the Ogden Utah Temple. After the temple session they rode through Ogden Canyon to Huntsville and over the panoramic Monte Cristo Highway to Bear Lake, Idaho, where they camped in a cabin owned by friends of the Reese's. On Saturday morning they traveled through scenic Logan Canyon to the Logan Utah Temple. After the temple session they rode back to their homes in Salt Lake City. Little did they know at that time what would happen in the future because of that first "temple ride".

This was such a rewarding experience that Frank and Catherine began to look for others who might enjoy weekday scenic rides to temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By the spring of 1988, the group of prospective "temple riders" had grown to the point that it was decided to create an official organization. The first Temple Riders Association bulletin (invitation) was sent on April 4, 1988 to 11 prospective member addresses. Six couples attended the "organizational meeting" early in May and became the "Charter Members" of the TRA. By February 1989 there were 51 names on the membership roster, mostly couples. Today, there are several hundred members of the TRA with chapters and riding groups throughout the United States.

### **Overview of the TRA**- Suggested remarks (from the TRA website)

The Temple Riders Association (TRA) has organized chapters throughout the United States. Our on-going objective is to find additional like-minded riders who prefer not to schedule rides on Sundays unless necessary\*, who maintain Christian standards, and who refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, profanity, and off-colored stories while participating with the TRA.

Many riders are members of [\*The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints\*](#) and as such are known to ride motorcycles to worship services in temples of the Church. Hence our name: The

Temple Riders Association. However, we welcome all riders, regardless of personal faith or religious belief.

TRA Members are as diverse as the bikes and trikes they ride. Honda, Harley, BMW, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Suzuki; we ride them all! Some bikes are brand-spankin' new, others quite old, and most are somewhere in between. We do not care what model of motorcycle you ride, if you're married, single, male or female. What is important is that you agree with the TRA concept, love to ride, and own a motorcycle.

The TRA hosts many activities throughout the year including rides, dinners, and events of a more spiritual nature, including- as our name suggests- visiting temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The TRA tries to schedule enough rides--both "temple" and "scenic"--to provide an opportunity for everyone to ride with us. Since its inception, members of the TRA have ridden to many temples, to every state in the US, to Canada, and to Mexico. And, of course, that geography has now expanded to include other countries as well.

### **Dressing for the Temple** - Suggested remarks (done by a sister)

The following information is mainly for the ladies benefit. The men generally have a very small challenge to ride from the trip starting point in their dress slacks, white shirt, and acceptable footwear. On arrival at the Temple they can remove their leather jacket, gloves, and helmet, then add a tie and a sport coat if desired, and be entirely presentable. The ladies have a bit more work to do.

Perhaps one of the easiest ways to make the RTT (Road To Temple) transformation is found in the judicious choice of the road gear. Choosing a modest and comfortable top is the first step. For ease of riding the bike for a few minutes or a few hours, select leg wear that is safe and modest as you would for a scenic outing. Now - add a skirt that won't showcase any extra wrinkles that may be added as you travel. You can either wear it bunched around your waist as you ride, or put it in a saddlebag or temple bag to slip on in the parking lot. Either way, once the skirt is in place the riding jeans can be modestly removed as you stand behind the bike on something, like a plastic bag, to keep your feet clean and dry. Then it's just a matter of removing your riding socks or changing them to knee-hi nylons (or wear them underneath) and your boots to shoes, touching up make-up using a compact or bike mirror, fixing "helmet hair", and then stroll up to the temple doors.

Just a note, some temples have a restroom in a visitor center, or vestibule just inside the front door, where patrons can change from traveling clothes. A prior phone call to the temple can provide this information.

(The sister doing this part does an actual demonstration, which is generally fun for the youth.)

## Putting on the Whole Armor of God:

(Set Up: Have two complete sets of motorcycle gear lent by TRA members: chaps, vest, boots, coat, helmet and gloves. Prearrange to have two youth, a young man and a young woman, preferably smaller, as it will be easier to clothe them, help with demonstration. Have a TRA man and woman assigned to help the youth put on the clothing at the appropriate time.)

### Option 1: Suggested remarks based on Ephesians 6:11-18

*(Experience has demonstrated that it is difficult and confusing to try to relate each piece of protective motorcycle clothing, one piece at a time, to each protective piece Paul references in Ephesians. However it is a key part of the AOG presentation to have the youth understand that to stay protected against any unforeseen dangers they need to make sure they do all they can to have the whole armor in place all the time.)*

Read the verses in Ephesians, emphasizing slightly the key protections mentioned. Then have one young man and one young woman (preselected) come up to help.

Tell those at the fireside that before we start riding anywhere, we always have a prayer asking for Heavenly Father's protection. In addition, we put on certain pieces of protective clothing, or "armor". Then have the YM & YW helpers put on all of the gear assisted by the adult TRA members as needed.

Explain that **boots** are to protect and support our feet and ankles and to make it easier to get a non-slip grip on the road to support the bike when stopped.

**Gloves** are to keep hands from being stung or hit by bugs or pebbles flipped up.

**Vests** might be used as an extra layer of insulation from cold weather or additional padding.

**Chaps** (these are good for a lot of laughs as the helpers try to figure out how in the world they work, usually followed in a while by a TRA member providing needed guidance) are to keep knees, hips, and legs protected from being hit by bugs, rocks flipped up, cold wind, and road rash if there was an accident.

Leather or armored **jackets** provide safety and warmth for the upper body and vital organs.

The **helmet** protects not only our good looks (smile), but our most vulnerable and important organ - our brain. Emphasize again that we hope we will never need to use this armor, but if we need it all of a sudden, it will be too late to go back and have a "do over".

Now read Ephesians again, putting more emphasis on the spiritual protections and blessings we are promised from putting on the Whole Armor of God. Emphasize again that when we start each day, we never know what will happen, and what kind of temptations and dangers the Devil will have waiting to snare us with at any moment. When that happens, as it surely will, it may not be possible to go back and ask for a "do over" either. We need to be prepared ahead of time for whatever may be in store. If we aren't we may have things bruised, broken, scraped and scratched that are of much more eternal importance than our physical being.

## **Option 2: Suggested remarks based on Ephesians 6:11-18**

When we ride motorcycles, we do not have the protection that comes with a 4 wheeled vehicle. Sometimes these 4 wheeled vehicles are called cages because they encircle you with metal. This is good in case of a wreck, but not good when you want to feel the wind and freedom that comes from riding a motorcycle. Because our motorcycles lack the inherent protection of a car, we need to add protection by wearing protective gear.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians from Rome giving them good advice for daily living. Near the end of his letter he exhorted the saints to also protect themselves.

He said:

*10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

*11. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.....*

*14. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

*15. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

*16. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

*17. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*

Let's look at each piece of armor individually:

*14. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, ...*

The word *girt* means "to put a belt, girdle, etc. around the hips or waist". To have your loins girt about with truth means that you have wrapped yourself in truth, that you will not be carried about by every wind of doctrine, that you will be steadfast and immovable. "Gird up your loins" also means to secure your robes, so you are ready for action. The Lord wants us wrapped in truth and ready for action. Isn't it interesting that the Lord has placed this first in the armor of God.

We as motorcycle riders girt ourselves with leather **chaps**. They protect us from cold wind, and rocks that are kicked up in the road. The leather is heavy enough that it doesn't flap in the wind which can cause a rider to fatigue.

**(Have the adults help the youth put on the chaps. Pause while they are dressed)**

*14. .... and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

The breastplate covers your chest and protects your heart and lungs and other vital organs. Righteousness, both in thought and deed, protects the core of our spiritual lives. How does one put on the breastplate of righteousness? To me this part of the armor comes from keeping the commandments and doing good work. This is righteous living. We are promised blessings as we keep the commandments.

We as motorcycle riders wear heavy leather **vests** to protect our hearts and lungs and other vital organs.

**(Have the adults help the youth put on the vest. Pause while they are dressed)**

*15. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

Preparation? That implies that we need to do something before to get ready. Shod means to wear shoes. Our feet point us in the direction we are going to travel. If we have our feet pointed to follow the Savior and follow His example, we will be prepared. If we have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace that would mean that we had been keeping the commandments and we are following the Savior.

We as motorcycle riders wear heavy **boots** to protect our feet and ankles from rocks and other road debris and in case we have to put our feet down while traveling at high speed.

**(Have the adults help the youth put on the boots. They do not need to be laced up. Pause while they are dressed)**

*16. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

A shield is the most versatile and effective means of defense in our battle. Our faith, if it is built upon Christ and His gospel, can defend us against the adversary's numerous onslaughts, just as a shield, if it is made of the right material, will withstand volleys of fiery darts. Our "shield of faith needs to be built out of reverence, courage, chastity, repentance, forgiveness and compassion. You learn how to assemble these items at church, youth activities, camps, firesides and especially in the home.

Because we need two hands to drive our motorcycles, we don't use a shield, but we use our heavy **jackets**. They protect us from things that can come our way.

**(Have the adults help the youth put on the coats. Pause while they are dressed)**

*17. And take the helmet of salvation, ...*

The helmet is to protect the head. Focusing our minds on Christ and His salvation will protect us from unworthy thoughts, keep our eye single to the glory of God and guide us in our decisions.

Here we put on our **helmet** to protect our head.

**(Have the adult help the youth put on helmets. Pause while they are dressed)**

*17. ....and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

A sword can block the sword strokes of others that come against you. It also may give others pause before attacking you. It can act as a deterrent. The Lord said: *Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men.* The word of God can strengthen, protect and comfort all of us.

We don't generally carry a sword as we ride our motorcycles, but we do put on **gloves** to protect our hands. They keep our hands warm and protect against bugs and rocks. They also give a better grip on the handlebars and better control. And if the worst happens and we go down the gloves will protect our hands from being torn up when we hit the pavement.

Now can you see what it looks like to put on motorcycle protective gear?

**(Have the adults help the youth put on gloves. Pause while they are dressed)**

Does \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ look protected?  
Are they going to be safe from all hazards? If you put on the armor of man, will you be protected from all hazards? How did that work out for Goliath?

If we have on the armor of God, is that all we need to do? The Apostle Paul said that after putting on the armor of God we should be:

*18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*

As motorcycle riders, we need to be diligent about watching the road, watching for others around us and watching for hazards in the road. Hitting some debris in the road in a car may cause a loud thump, or maybe even a flat tire, but hitting debris on a motorcycle may cause the motorcycle to go down with disastrous results. Likewise as followers of Christ, we need to always be watching for the wiles of the devil and his fiery darts.

I hope you can see the need and the advantages of putting on the whole armor of God and being spiritually prepared, and that we can ever be watchful of the temptations that may beset us.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Testimony** - Suggested remarks

Have one of the TRA members (or a spiritual youth leader if TRA members are few) bear their testimony of an experience relating to being protected by keeping the counsel given by Paul in Ephesians.