**Leader Copy | Shelter | October 26, 2016**

**Creational Text – Large Group**

 **Intro –** Each of the leaders show up wearing different protective gear. Maybe raincoat and boots, football helmet, haz-mat suit, dust mask, sunglasses, steel-toed boots, welding mask, snow suit, bullet proof vest (?), a shield, lifejacket, catcher’s mask, etc.

 Have a little quiz with the kids. Hold up a paper with a danger written on it (rain, collision, chemicals, dust, sun's rays, heavy weights, bright light, cold temperatures, bullets, arrows, drowning etc.)

 When the kids match the person with the danger, have the leader wearing the corresponding gear come up and hold the sign.

 *"The world is full of dangers and as you can see here on stage, there are many ways we protect ourselves.*

 *The Psalms talk about finding protection too. They use images like a tower, a stronghold, a fortress and even mother hen's wing. These are poetic ways to explain the safety and security we have in God. The writers use trustworthy things on earth* ***to point to*** *the* ***ultimate*** *trustworthy thing: the love and power of God.*

 *You see, even the most powerful armies on earth can't protect us against everything, but in God nothing can harm us. We'll explore this more in your small groups.”*

**Creational Text – Small Group**

Of the protective gear on stage, what kinds have you used? What other kinds of protective gear can you think of?

 Do you wear a seat belt when you are riding in a car? How about on a roller coaster?! How would it feel to ride without it on? (Ask your leaders if they always wore seat belts as kids)

 Can you think of any dangers for which there is no protective gear?

**Scriptural Text – Small Group**

**Psalm 91**

1 Whoever dwells **in the shelter** of the Most High

 will rest **in the shadow** of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the Lord, “He is my **refuge** and my **fortress**,

 my God, in whom I trust.”

3 Surely he will save you

 from the fowler’s snare

 and from the deadly pestilence [disease].

4 He will cover you with **his feathers**,

 and **under his wings** you will find refuge;

 his faithfulness will be your **shield** and **rampart**.

5 You will not fear the terror of night,

 nor the arrow that flies by day,

6 nor the pestilence [disease] that stalks in the darkness,

 nor the plague that destroys at midday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,

 ten thousand at your right hand,

 but it will not come near you.

8 You will only observe with your eyes

 and see the punishment of the wicked.

9 If you say, “The Lord is my **refuge**,”

 and you make the Most High your **dwelling**,

10 no harm will overtake you,

 no disaster will come near your **tent**.

11 For **he will command his angels** concerning you to guard you in all your ways;

12 **they will lift you up in their hands**,

 so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

13 You will tread on the lion and the cobra;

 you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

14 “Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him;

 I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

15 He will call on me, and I will answer him;

 I will be with him in trouble,

 I will deliver him and honor him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him

 and show him my salvation.”

 Many of the images of safety and protection have been highlighted in bold. Pick one of the images above and draw it!

 \*optional\* When you are done, line up the images in order of might! (Maybe a tent on one end and angels on the other)

 I don't know about you, but I don't run into lions or cobras on a day-to-day basis. I wonder if the Psalm writer is using those scary things to suggest all kinds of other scary things in life.

 What are the “lions” and “cobras” in your life?

 Does God provide protection from those things?

**1 Peter 1:3-5**

 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who **through faith are shielded by God’s power** until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

 In the new testament we learn of even an even greater comfort and power. Not only will God protect us, but he does it through HIS mercy through the resurrection of Jesus!

Do you ever feel not good enough or feel like you don't do enough? *(if they do, that's ok! We AREN'T good enough, that is why God sent his Son.). We have joy in the fact we never need to fear that God doesn't love us though, (see the next question.)*

 What does God promise in these verses? *God has given us new birth. We are shielded by God's power. Our inheritance is kept for us. Our inheritance will never spoil or fade,*

 When we enter into a new birth through faith in Jesus, what can destroy our inheritance? *Nothing! - We are secure forever. Not even death can tear us away from the love and protection of God.*

**Connections – Small Group**

* Does having God's protection mean bad things won't happen to us? Why or why not?
* Which promises of God comfort you the most?

 Prayer - Ask for any prayer requests and pray together.