Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36

Leader Guide

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36
- <u>In This Passage:</u> Jesus takes three of his disciples up on a mountain. While there, Jesus' appearance changes. His face shines like the sun and his clothes turn as white as light. Out of nowhere, Moses and Elijah show up. God speaks from the clouds and declares that Jesus is his Son. For the first time, the disciples can physically see that Jesus is God.
- <u>Bible Point:</u> Jesus is God.
- <u>Summary Verse:</u> "Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions" (1 John 3:18).

Dig Deeper

- <u>You'll Be Teaching</u>: *Jesus is God.* Kids may struggle with believing in God when they can't see him. They'll be encouraged knowing that the disciples only truly recognized Jesus as God when they saw him shining with God's glory. Use this lesson to help kids realize that Jesus is God; we can trust that because people who lived with Jesus got to see who he was.
- Think About: What has helped you see who Jesus is?

Dig In to Prayer

• Pray for kids to feel the kind of tangible connection to God that the disciples felt when they saw Jesus' amazing appearance.

Quick Tip

• Dig In lessons contain a lot of "doing," and that's intentional. Research shows that no matter how well we lecture or how excellent our content is, kids learn best by doing things for themselves. You'll see far greater life change when kids have meaningful experiences and then talk about their discoveries.

This Lesson at a Glance



Kids see how their faces change in the light.

Supplies

- Bible
- flashlights (1 per adult or teen helper—cellphone flashlights work well)



PRAYER

Kids discover what the word "hallelujah" means, as they praise and clap for God.

JESUS CONNECTION

Kids use modeling dough to explore the concept of the Trinity.

Supplies

modeling dough (1 handful per child)



SCRIPTURE SKILLS

Kids transform modeling dough from one thing to another.

Supplies

- Bibles
- "Hands-On Bible: Books of the Bible Poster Set" (purchase <u>here</u>)
- modeling dough (1 handful per child)



BIBLE MEMORY

Kids experience the difference between telling and showing how to do something.

Supplies

• "Life of Jesus Bible Verse Posters" (optional) (purchase here)

Easy Prep

 Tape the 1 John 3:18 poster on a wall so kids will be able to see it. If you don't have the posters, you'll need to write the verse in big letters.



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT

Older kids change a picture; younger kids color a picture of the Bible story.

Supplies

- "Jesus Is Transfigured" Activity Page (1 per reader) (download <u>here</u>)
- "Jesus Is Transfigured" Coloring Page (1 per non-reader) (download <u>here</u>)
- pencils
- crayons
- highlighters
- three-hole punch and binders (optional)



Partners transform each other into new objects.

*Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



BIBLE MESSAGE

Jesus Is Transfigured (Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36)

[10 min]

Supplies

- Bible
- flashlights (1 per adult or teen helper—cellphone flashlights work well)

Discuss

Say: In today's story, we'll discover Jesus shined brightly! But first...

Ask: • **Tell about something bright you've seen.** Have kids turn to a partner to share. Then ask a few kids to share with everyone.

Say: Let's see what happened when Jesus shined really bright.

Shine in the Light

Open your Bible to Matthew 17, and show kids the words.

Say: As I read, picture the scene in your mind.

Read Matthew 17:1-2.

Ask: • What do you think it looked like when Jesus' appearance changed? If needed, reread verse 2 to help kids reflect on this.

Say: Let's see if we can do something that helps us see how light changes our appearance.

- Shine a light on your face, then move the light around so the shadows and contours of your face change.
- Give each adult or teen helper a flashlight so they can give all kids a chance to try changing in the light.
- Make sure only leaders are holding the flashlights so kids don't shine them in each other's eyes.
- Kids can watch and see how everyone looks different as the light shines on them.

Ask: • What did you notice about how the light changed people's appearance?

Say: Well, maybe that's not exactly what Jesus looked like. But whatever he looked like, Jesus' friends, the disciples, didn't know what to do! Listen to this.

Read Matthew 17:5-6.

Say: Jesus' friends could see that Jesus is God. They were so amazed by him that they got scared! But Jesus told them not to be afraid. Then they walked back down the mountain together, with Jesus looking like his usual self.

People call this event the Transfiguration. That's a fancy word to say Jesus' appearance changed in a miraculous way. It was so special that Jesus told his friends not to say anything until later. Eventually, they told people so it could get recorded in the Bible, so people like us could read it and know that Jesus is God.



Pop Up and Praise God

Say: Today we're discovering that Jesus is God. Since Jesus is God, when we praise God, we're praising Jesus, too! When we praise, we say something nice about someone.

Ask: • What's something nice someone has said about you? Give a short example from your own life, then welcome a few responses. If kids struggle to think of examples, shower the group with a few compliments right now.

Sav: Like your friends praised you, we can praise God. You see, prayer isn't just about asking God for things. We're also praying when we're praising!

The word *hallelujah* means "God be praised." We sing that word in praise songs, and we read it a lot in the Bible. Today, as we pray, let's shout "Hallelujah!" and say nice things about God.

Here's what we'll do: We'll make popcorn praise! Everyone will crouch down low, like this. Crouch down, with feet on the floor, ready to jump up. Allow time for kids to crouch down, too. Now we'll praise our way around the room. When it's your turn, pop up and praise God. You could shout things like "God is great!" "God helped me feel better!" or "God made elephants!" Then crouch down again. If you aren't sure what to say, just shout, "Hallelujah!"

After someone praises God, we'll all clap and shout, "Hallelujah!" Then it'll be the next person's turn. We'll "pop" and praise all around the room.

Shout the first praise, and have kids respond with "Hallelujah!" Then motion for the next person to go. Help direct kids when it's their turn. If time allows, "popcorn praise" around the room again!

Say: Jesus is God. And we praise you, Jesus, for all these things. Hallelujah!

[5 min]

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JESUS CONNECTION Three in One

[10 min]

Supplies

• modeling dough (1 handful per child)

<u>Tip</u>

• The idea of the Trinity is a complex and challenging concept to present. Keep your language simple! You don't have to ensure kids understand every theological nuance. You're simply introducing the idea and trying to put it into kid-friendly terms.

Explore With Modeling Dough

Say: Today we heard how Jesus' friends saw something amazing—and probably pretty confusing for them. Jesus was teaching them about who he is. Jesus is God. Jesus is also God's Son, and in today's story God announced that Jesus is his dearly loved Son. Hmm, that sounds like it doesn't make sense. Let's try to understand it using something we're all comfortable using!

Hand each person a small handful of modeling dough.

Say: This isn't a perfect way to explain a hard thing, but it might help us understand it better. Roll your dough into one ball. Pause and lead kids in doing this.

We'll imagine this whole thing is God. Now take that ball and divide it into three equal pieces. Pause and lead kids in doing this.

Hold up one of the smaller pieces. **The Bible tells us about God the Father.** Hold up another of the smaller pieces. **The Bible also tells us about Jesus,**

God's Son. Let kids share with a partner anything they've learned or know about Jesus.

Hold up the last of the three pieces. The Bible also tells us about God the Holy Spirit. This is a special helper God gives us.

Each of these three are one God. Lead kids in pressing the pieces back together to make one ball.

Talk About It

Ask: • Why do you think we need God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit? This is a challenging thinking question. Welcome kids' thoughts without judgment, and encourage them to think about the "bigness" of God! If kids seem hesitant to share aloud, let them first share in small groups. Then take responses from each group.

• How do you feel when you don't understand something about God?

• Who helps you when you have questions about Jesus?

Say: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit each help us and teach us something about our one, big, amazing God! God knew we could never totally understand him or his ways. Jesus walked on earth—100 percent God and 100 percent human. He understands how it feels to hurt, to be hungry and tired, to be made fun of, and to need sleep. Jesus is God, but he's also a close friend—someone who loves you so much.

Lead kids in shaping their dough into hearts as reminders of God's love for us!



SCRIPTURE SKILLS Transformed

[10 min]

Supplies

- Bibles
- "Hands-On Bible: Books of the Bible Poster Set" (purchase here)
- modeling dough (1 handful per child)

Tips

- It may take a while for kids to find the Bible verse. That's okay! This activity is primarily about building Bible navigation skills.
- If you have a lot of non-readers, have some picture Bibles on hand for them to flip through as older kids look up verses. They won't look for anything specific, but they can look at the pictures to practice paging through Bibles.

Explore Matthew 17:2

Say: On the mountain, Jesus' friends were able to see Jesus for who he really is. Jesus is God, and they saw his appearance change so he looked like God, instead of just like a human. Let's find that Bible story for ourselves.

Make sure kids all have Bibles. Younger kids can sit with older kids so they can observe the skills of using their Bibles even before being able to read.

Say: Our Bible verse is in the book of Matthew, chapter 17, verse 2. Let's find the book of Matthew. That's in the New Testament—which is the later part of the Bible. Open your Bible kind of near the back. Allow time.

- Point to the book of Matthew on the poster so kids can see the name and what books come before and after it.
- Mention that the chapter numbers are the big numbers, and help kids find the big 17 in Matthew.
- Mention that the verse numbers are the small numbers, and help kids find the small 2 in Matthew 17.
- When everyone has found the verse, ask someone to read Matthew 17:2 aloud.

Say: *Transformed* means changed. Jesus's appearance was transformed from looking like a regular man to looking like God. Jesus is God.

Make a Transformation

Say: Jesus' friends saw his appearance change. Maybe he looked more like the way he looks in heaven. Let's use this dough to help us think more about things that change.

Give each child a handful of modeling dough. Encourage kids to make a caterpillar with the dough.

Say: Caterpillars transform into something else. Try transforming your caterpillars into butterflies.

- Help kids make butterflies from their dough. (It's okay if they don't look a lot like butterflies.)
- Next, encourage kids to make apples from their dough.

• After kids make apples, direct kids to transform their dough into pies.

Ask: • What are some other things that are transformed from looking one way to looking another? If time allows, have kids make something else that transforms based on the discussion.

• Why do you think it was helpful for Jesus' friends to see his appearance transformed?

Say: There are lots of things that look one way and then change to look different. We can learn more about those things when we see them before and after. Jesus looked like a regular human most of his time on earth. But the friends got a chance to see him look different. They got to see that even though Jesus was a human, Jesus is God.



BIBLE MEMORY Let's Not Merely Say

[10 min]

Supplies

• "Life of Jesus Bible Verse Posters" (optional) (purchase here)

Easy Prep

• Tape the 1 John 3:18 poster on a wall so kids will be able to see it. If you don't have the posters, you'll need to write the verse in big letters.

Explain, Then Show

Say: The Bible is one big book that's filled with a bunch of little books. Let's learn a Bible verse that comes from a little book called 1 John.

First John 3:18 says, "Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions."

Jesus is God. Jesus didn't just *tell* people he was God; he *showed* people with his actions, too. In today's Bible story, Jesus showed his friends he was God when his appearance changed into something that looked amazing! And God *told* them Jesus is God when he announced it from heaven.

Let's explore the difference between saying something and showing something. First, I'll *tell* you how to do something, then I'll *show* you!

Form pairs with someone who's about your height. One person will hold up their right arm, and the other person will hold up their left arm so both sets of fingers are almost touching. Then each partner will bend their arm a little. Next, you'll put your other hand down and touch fingers. Allow time for kids to try to follow your spoken directions. If needed, repeat the directions again. It's okay—and expected—if kids don't understand what to do!

Say: Hmm. This is confusing. Let's say the verse together again, then I'll show you what to do! Refer to the poster as needed, and say the verse together. Okay, I'll show you what to do. Do this! Show the action below with a partner.



Talk About It

Ask: • What did you notice about what I asked you to do?

• Was it easier to follow my spoken directions or do what I showed you to do? Tell why.

• Why is it easier to believe someone loves you when they *show* you love?

Say: It helped to have an example to see and follow! The same is true for showing God's love. It helps to not just *talk* about God's love but *show* it with actions.

Now it's your turn! First, tell your partner how to do something, then show them!

Allow time, encourage everyone to say the verse together each time a partner shows what to do.

Say: Jesus is God. Jesus said he was God, and he showed he was God, too! And Jesus also showed us an example of how to share God's love with others. Let's follow his example and show God's love by our actions!



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT Changed

Supplies

- "Jesus Is Transfigured" Activity Page (1 per reader) (download here) •
- "Jesus Is Transfigured" Coloring Page (1 per non-reader) (download here) •
- pencils •
- crayons •
- highlighters •
- three-hole punch and binders (optional)

Tip

WARNING! Don't just print and distribute! <u>Here's why</u>.

Older Kids: Do an Activity Page

Say: In today's Bible story, Jesus' appearance changed! He started shining to show that Jesus is God. Let's see what happens when you change a picture.

Distribute the activity pages and pencils. Kids will change the picture and then compare their finished products with friends.

Ask: • How did you decide what to change about your picture?

• Why do you think Jesus changed his appearance by shining like the sun, instead of [some of the things kids changed about their pictures]?

Say: We can all change the way we look in simple ways. Maybe you put your hair up or let it down. Maybe you change your clothes. And you've all changed by growing up from little babies! But Jesus changed in a totally different way. He shone like the sun! That was so amazing and so special; it showed us that Jesus is God.

Younger Kids: Color a Coloring Page

Distribute the coloring pages and crayons. Say: When Jesus and his friends were on the mountain, Jesus started shining! It was amazing and showed that Jesus is God. Let's color Jesus so he glows!

Allow time for kids to color the picture using highlighters so it glows.

When kids finish coloring, three-hole-punch their pages and put them into binders, if desired.

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Make a Transformation

Say: We learned about a time Jesus' appearance was transformed—changed to look totally different.

Ask: • If you could transform into anything else, what would it be? Why? Say: <u>Jesus is God</u>. He didn't transform into God—he always was, always is, and always will be God. But his appearance transformed when his friends got to see the glory of God shining through him!

Let's do a little transforming with this game.

- Form pairs and ask each pair to decide who's oldest—that's the partner who'll come see you for an assignment.
- Tell those kids what they'll transform their partners into by moving their partners' bodies around. This transformation will happen silently, and the younger partners will guess what they are being transformed into.
- Suggested transformations: turtles, fire hydrants, flowers, sheep, chairs, books, bridges, trains, doughnuts, the number 3, crocodiles, and doors.
- If you think your younger kids are able to transform their partners, have partners swap roles!
- Let the game keep going as long as needed to fill time until parents begin to arrive.

[10 min]