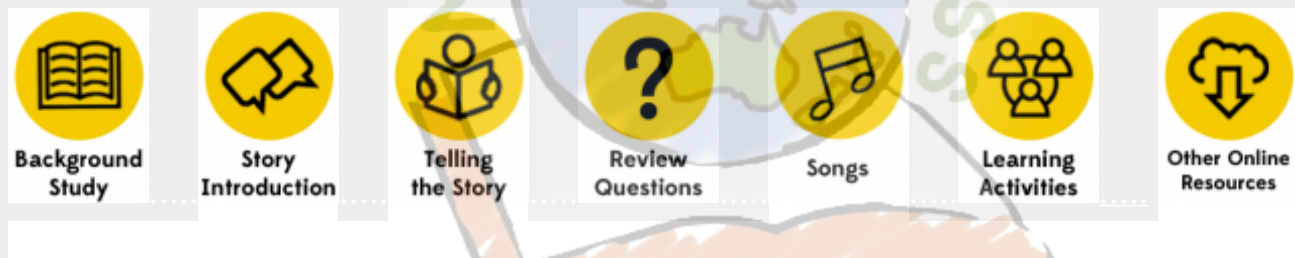


Transfiguration

Scripture Reference: [Matthew 17:1-13](#)



Suggested Emphasis: God wants us to listen to the words of Jesus.



Story Overview:

Jesus took Peter, James, and John up onto a mountain to be alone. These disciples witnessed an amazing event. As they watched, Jesus transfigured (changed appearance). His face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light. Although they had been long dead, Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus and the three of them spoke together. Finally, a cloud enveloped them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son . . . listen to him."

Background Study:

You can also read about this event in Mark 9:2-13 and Luke 9:28-36. Transfiguration means “transformed”. Jesus was transformed into a glorious image in which his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light. This image was nothing like Peter, James and John had ever seen before. It showed them that Jesus truly was from God. This was an actual demonstration of the fact that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:13-20).




Moses and Elijah would have been two of the greatest Jews that had ever lived. For Jesus to stand with them showed his importance. Then, the voice of the Lord came from a bright cloud and God put the words of Jesus above those of Moses and Elijah (verse 5). Moses and Elijah lived under the Old Law. Jesus had new words to say. The Lord told the disciples to “Listen to Him.”

This story also explains the purpose of John the Baptist. He prepared the way for Jesus to come. He did this by preaching and softening the hearts of the people. Mark 9:11-13 says that Elijah (John the Baptist restores all things. So Moses represents the Old Covenant Law and the Promise of Christ. Elijah represents the Prophets and one preparing the way of the Messiah. As the Lord himself explained who Jesus was: “My Son”.

Since Jesus had just been in the region of Caesarea Philippi this tall mountain could have been Mount Hermon since it is nearby. Some think that it was Mount Tabor but that was further away. Since Jesus often went off by himself at night to pray and considering that the disciples were sleepy (Luke 9:32) this story could have happened at night.

It is interesting that Peter wanted to build shelters for Moses, Elijah and Jesus. Maybe he wanted to make a place like the tabernacle in the Old Testament. Or perhaps he wanted them to stay for a while (Luke records that he brought it up when Moses and Elijah were about to leave - Luke 9:31). Either way, can you imagine a mere building holding the glory that they were witnessing? Peter never forgot this event. He wrote about it later in

his life in 2 Peter 1:16-18

-  [What happened before this story?](#)
-  [What happens after this story?](#)
-  [List of all Bible stories and themes on this website.](#)

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Way to Introduce the Story:

Ask the class to share some of the things they like to listen to (favourite music, TV, singing, conversations on the telephone, sports on the radio, etc.) What times have you had to listen very carefully? (Instructions, rules, directions, etc.) Ask the children to be very quiet and see if they can hear a very small object like a pin when you drop it onto the table.) In today's story we are going to learn about a time when God told the disciples something they should listen to.

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The Story:

The disciples had seen Jesus do many miracles. He healed a man that could not walk. He made a dead girl come back to life. He fed thousands of people from just a few fish and loaves of bread. He even walked on water. Yes, Jesus was amazing.

One evening some of the disciples were about to learn something even more amazing about Jesus. They were going to learn what God thought about Jesus. In fact they were going to SEE what God thought of Jesus.

Jesus asked Peter, James and John to follow him up onto a mountain to pray. Even though the disciples were very sleepy they followed him just as he asked. Suddenly, as they were walking, Jesus began to change right before their very eyes. Everything became bright. Jesus' face began to shine brighter than light and lightning. His clothes became lighter

than any colour on earth.

Then two other men appeared beside Jesus. One of the men was Moses and the other was Elijah. Peter, James and John could hardly believe their eyes. They did not know how this could be possible. Moses and Elijah had died a long, long time ago. Now the two men were standing here with Jesus. And they were having a conversation with Jesus. They were talking about how Jesus was going to die.

Soon Moses and Elijah started to leave but Peter tried to stop them. "Please wait, I would like to build three nice shelters so that you can stay with us," Peter said.

While Peter was speaking to them a bright cloud came down and covered them all. Wow! Can you imagine standing in a bright cloud with Moses and Elijah and Jesus? Moses was one of the greatest people in the Old Testament. He was the one that led the people out of Egypt. He was the one that God gave the 10 Commandments to. Do you think he was the most important one there?

And Elijah was one of the greatest Prophets of the Old Testament. Even though a wicked queen tried to kill him Elijah kept preaching about God. Do you think Elijah was the most important person there?

Then everyone heard a voice. This was not a voice like any they had ever heard. This was the voice of God. The Lord said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!" NOW who do you think was the most important one there? That's right, Jesus.

The disciples were so afraid at hearing the voice of God that they fell down on the ground. They fell flat on their faces. Jesus told them to get up. He told them not to be afraid.

When the disciples finally looked up they saw that everything was back to normal and

Jesus was standing there alone. Now they knew that Jesus was even more special than they had thought before. He was the Son of God. The disciples knew that they should always do what God said and listen to the words of Jesus.

Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download these illustrations and the slideshow.](#) Be selective. Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

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Review Questions:

1. What does “transfigured” mean? Changed or transformed
2. What two Old Testament men appeared on the mountain with Jesus? Moses and Elijah
3. Whose voice did the disciples hear coming out of the bright cloud on the mountain?
The voice of God
4. Jesus was God’s son. What did God tell the disciples to do? Listen to Jesus

Song Suggestions:

- [I’m All Wrapped Up, Tied Up, Tangled Up Song](#)
- [Read Your Bible, Pray Every Day Song](#)
- [God is Listening When We Pray \(Song\) English/Cebuano](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

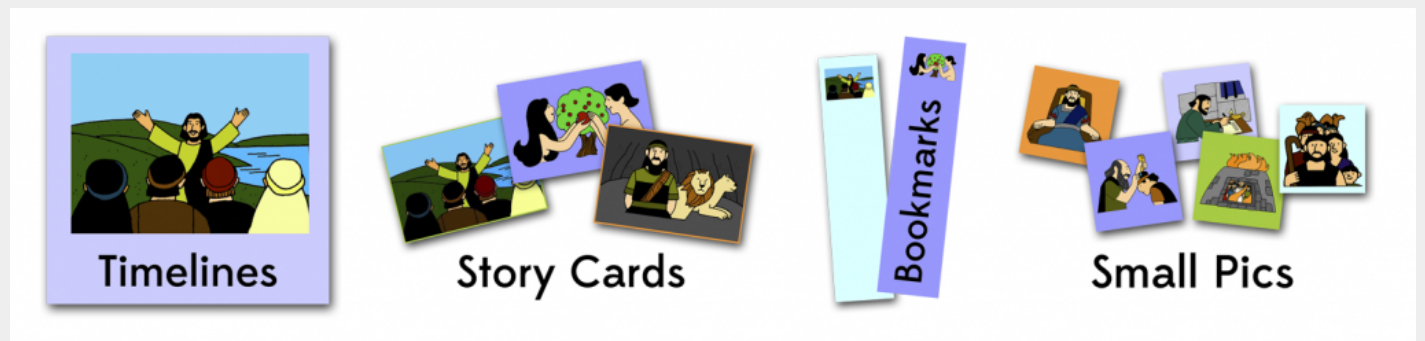
Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- For older children you can write the word “transfiguration” on the board or on a piece of paper. Give them a certain amount of time (a few minutes) to think of as many new words as possible using the letters from the word. If you want to keep score then children score a point for every word they have written that no one else has written.
- God said to listen to the words of Jesus. Invite a very good reader to come to class today and read from the word of God while the children listen. Perhaps you could ask them to read the Scriptures containing the stories you have studied in the last few weeks. End up with today’s transfiguration story.
- Continue memorising the memory verse from last week (Hebrews 11:6). Talk about what it means. Give each child a large piece of paper to write the verse on. Then hand out paints, markers, stickers, etc. so that they can decorate the verse with borders and artwork.
- Older kids might enjoy having a “Post-Transfiguration Press Conference”. Assign each child a part as one of the characters in today’s story. You can hold a pretend microphone and ask each person what happened up there on the mountain. Be sure to ask who and what they saw and what they heard. Ask them if it was true that they had been sleeping. Ask them if they were afraid.
- Listen to Him: Provide a New Testament which had the words of Jesus in red. Let the children take turns passing the bible around and reading words of Jesus.
- Glue story pictures onto a story board. [Click here for Transfiguration story template.](#)
- Bring the story to life by making a “coke float” or “spider drink”. Fill each child’s cup with 3 spoonfuls of ice-cream (one each for Jesus, Moses and Elijah) and pour cola over the top to create a “cloud” as in the story. [Photo and instructions here.](#)

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "Transfiguration" in A4 size paper](#)

[Click here for "Transfiguration" in letter size paper \(USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and worksheets about the transfiguration \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [A number of activities from http://sermons4kids.com/](http://sermons4kids.com/)
- [A number of activities at http://transformingkidsministry.com](http://transformingkidsministry.com)
- [Activity: Bee themed lesson with activities to teach how to "bee" like Jesus from http://kidsbibledebjackson.blogspot.co.nz](http://kidsbibledebjackson.blogspot.co.nz). The printables were created to study the [Book of Romans](#) but could be adapted to today's lesson on listening to Jesus.
- [Lesson plan and activities at http://ministry-to-children.com](http://ministry-to-children.com)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynanz/jesus-ministry/>

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