



Listen to Him

Goal: To consider what it means to listen to Jesus and to shine with his light.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Luke 9:28-36

There are many layers—and questions—about the story of the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain. The church has seen the story in various lights, focusing often on it as an indication of Jesus' divinity and his status as the second person of the Trinity.

The transfiguration story is a manifestation of Jesus as a surprising Messiah. First-century Jews expected a royal warrior-king Messiah, represented in the Old Testament by David and Solomon. Instead, Jesus appears with Moses and Elijah, representing the Old Testament Law and Prophets. Jesus is transformed, "the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white" (Luke 9:29). A voice reminiscent of the voice at Jesus' baptism proclaims, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (9:35; see 3:22).

The divine sanction is of Jesus as a teacher to whom the disciples should listen and obey (see Deuteronomy 18:15). Jesus proclaims the will of God for him and his followers. By God's grace, we can hear Jesus' words to instruct and guide us. No other source or words can do the same.

The disciples reacted in fear but were reassured by Jesus. Surely they became gripped with gratitude. Through Jesus' words, they—and we—can know God: gratitude, indeed!

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

"Listen to me!" "Are you listening?" "Did you hear what I said?" These are familiar questions or directions children hear a lot as they grow up. Parents and teachers want children to grow up knowing how to make good and wise decisions. This is the same desire that God has for all God's children. In this story, we hear God reminding Peter, James, and John to listen to Jesus. We all are helped by being reminded to remember the things we have learned from the stories of Jesus.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Can't you just imagine what Peter, James, and John must have been thinking about when they heard God remind them to listen to Jesus? This would be a great way to enter the story with the children. If you had been there and if you heard God remind you to listen to Jesus, what stories would you remember? What do you think is most important to remember about what Jesus did and what he taught? Some children will need help remembering; some will readily recall stories they have heard at church and at home in their Bible storybooks.

*You are the light of the world, O Christ.
Shine in me and through me. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 14, 25, 26

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

blanket or mats

Grace Notes (GN) 1 and GN 2

snack

Guided Play

choice 1: copies of **GN 3**

Exploring

choice 1: copies of **GN 4**,
multicultural crayons,
waxed paper, yellow
and white tissue paper

choice 3: **SCM 14a**,
battery-operated
tealight candles
(optional)

choice 4: copies
of **GN 5**

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule.” Cut out and glue the arrow marker onto a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

Before the session, make several paper cup “telephone” sets for “Guided Play.” Make a small hole in the bottom of two paper cups and thread a string or fishing line between the cups. Tie a paper clip to each end of the string as an anchor in each cup.

Cut out the six figures and speech bubble on **GN 1** and **GN 2** for “Hearing the Story.”

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 1 requires more prep.

Welcoming and Guided Play



Welcome the children by name as they arrive and say, “You are God’s beloved child.” Prompt the response “Amen” or “Thanks be to God.” Be sensitive to any children who might be visiting for the first time. Explain to the parents/caregivers that the children will hear a story about how God tells us to listen to Jesus.

Introduce the activities and invite children to participate.

1. Seeking and Finding—Provide copies of **GN 3** and crayons.

Invite the children to look at the picture and color the items that they find. Invite conversation about mountains, using questions such as: Have you ever been up a very high hill? What was that like? How did you get up the hill?

2. Listening—Show the children how to use two paper cups connected with a string as a “telephone.” Have a child hold one cup to their ear. Hold the string taut and speak into the other cup. Say phrases such as “(Name), listen to Jesus” or “(Name), God loves you.” Take turns with each child. If you made several sets of cups, let children try speaking and listening on their own.

3. Drawing—Draw an outline of a mountain on mural paper. Add outlines for rocks, clouds, and grass. Invite children to select different parts of the mural to color. When they finish, take the mural to story time. More work on the poster will be done after the story.



- T** Give the children a signal when it's time for something new; sing a familiar song or repeat a phrase such as: "One, two, something new." Expect this to be difficult for some, especially if they are new to your group. It may be helpful to give a child a specific task.

Transitioning to Story Time

When the children are ready to move into group time, call them to the story corner, singing "Thank You, Holy God"—SCM 25. Repeat words and phrases as appropriate.

Jesus Listened



Gather together in a circle on the floor and invite the children to cup one ear when they hear the words *listened* and *listen*:

Jesus listened when God spoke softly.
Jesus listened when God spoke loudly.
Jesus listened to the word of God.
Jesus told the people what God said.

We can listen too.
We can listen when Jesus speaks softly.
We can listen when Jesus speaks loudly.
We can listen to the word of God.
What does Jesus say to you?

Invite a conversation about what Jesus says to us (*love God, love each other, and so on*).

Listening



Instruct the children to find a place against a wall. Tell them that you will give them instructions to join you in the story corner and they need to listen carefully for their name. Use directions, such as "Quentin, take one giant step," "Emily, turn in a circle," "David, take two tiny steps," "Melissa, take a hop," and so on. Give directions until all the children have joined you.

Hearing the Story



Display the mountain mural from "Guided Play."

Explain that today's story is about Jesus and that it takes place on a mountain. Invite the children to describe a mountain. Explain that a mountain is a large part of land that rises up from the earth. It is bigger than a hill.

Open a Bible to Luke 9. Show the children where the story is in the Bible.





Read **SCM 14**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Call attention to the mural of the mountain. Ask the children to name who they need to add to the mural to tell the story they just heard.

Hand out the figures from **GN 1** and **GN 2** and have children color the people. If you have more than six children, invite others to add to the mural. Wonder with the children who each of the figures is (*Jesus with arms raised; Moses with stick; Elijah with long beard; and the disciples Peter, James, and John, as you choose*). Invite children to glue or tape the figures to the mural, high up the mountain. Ask the children what you should write in the speech bubble and where you should glue it on the mural.

EXPLORING GOD’S GRACE



1. Make Shining Jesus Pictures

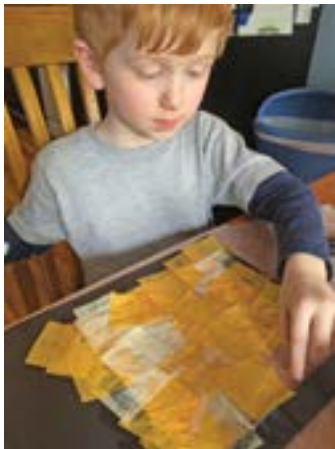


Before the session, make picture frames with approximately 7" square openings from black construction paper. Cut two approximately 9" squares of waxed paper for each child. Cut yellow and white tissue into 2" squares.

Distribute copies of **GN 4**, crayons, and multicultural crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of Jesus. Help them cut out the picture along the outline.

Place yellow and white tissue paper squares in bowls or on plates. Give each child a waxed paper square and a glue stick. Use the following instructions to make a shining Jesus.

- Place glue along each edge of the waxed paper, about an inch in from the edge.
- Place the black construction paper frame on the waxed paper to glue the frame to the waxed paper.
- Turn the frame over. Place glue on about a quarter of the waxed paper and then place the yellow and white tissue paper on the glued section. The tissue paper will adhere quickly so it won't be able to be moved. Tissue paper may overlap and be layered. Continue gluing tissue paper until the waxed paper is filled. Add glue on top of the tissue paper pieces as needed for layering.
- Place glue all over the colored side of the picture of Jesus. Glue the picture to the tissue paper side of the waxed paper.
- Place glue all over a second piece of waxed paper, especially the edges, and adhere it to the back (the tissue paper side) of the picture, sealing the tissue paper and the picture of Jesus.



Invite the children to turn their frames over and hold them up to a window or a light to see Jesus shining through. Encourage the children to take their pictures home and hang them in a window where the light can make Jesus shine.



2. Play “Jesus Says”

M MS B A

Remind the children that God told Jesus’ disciples to “Listen to him.” Wonder with the children why God would want people to listen to Jesus.

Invite the children to play “Jesus Says,” which is like “Simon Says.” The children are challenged to listen to Jesus, who is trying to show people the way to live.

When you say “Jesus says,” everyone is supposed to do the action you request. If you say the action without saying “Jesus says” first, the children are not supposed to do the action. If someone forgets, do not exclude any children if they do something Jesus did not say to do. In the case that someone forgets, say, “Jesus says, ‘Everyone gets a second chance!’”

Use the following actions to get started, then create others.

- ▼ Jesus says: Give someone else a hug.
- ▼ Jesus says: Give a friend a helping hand by shaking hands.
- ▼ Jesus says: Form a big circle together holding hands.
- ▼ Drop your hands. (*Jesus did not say this.*)
- ▼ Jesus says: Move to your right in the circle.
- ▼ Jesus says: Move to your left.
- ▼ Stop moving. (*Jesus did not say this.*)
- ▼ Jesus says: Smile at someone else.
- ▼ Frown at your neighbor. (*Jesus did not say this.*)
- ▼ Jesus says: Jump up and down.
- ▼ Jesus says: Sit on the floor where you are.

Consider inviting the children to take turns being Jesus and creating actions for the game.

3. Sing This Little Light of Mine

M MS A

Remind the children that just as the disciples saw Jesus shine brightly in the story, they can also shine brightly when they tell others about Jesus and care for others.

Gather the children in an open area. Post **SCM 14a**. Teach them the motions as listed below. Sing along using the hand motions.

Stanza 1: This little light of mine . . . (*hold index finger up*)

Stanza 2: Everywhere I go . . . (*move index finger around in circle*)

Stanza 3: All through the night . . . (*cup other hand over finger as if shading finger from light*)

If you have battery-operated tealight candles, give each child a candle and show them how to turn it on. Have them hold up their candles and do the motions with the song.

Say a personal word to each child. It might be no more than “I’m glad you were here” or “I’m sorry you have such a bad cold,” but let each child know you paid attention to him or her today.

Find the audio file for “This Little Light of Mine” at bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies.



Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wonder questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.

4. Coloring Page

C FM

Hand out copies of **GN 5** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture. Engage the children in conversation as they color using the following wondering questions.

- ▼ I wonder, “Has anyone been on a mountain?”
- ▼ I wonder, “How do we listen to Jesus?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What does Jesus want us to do?”

T *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities, such as squeezing your hands, stretching, and so on.*

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

LG FA

Have each child put away one toy or object. Invite everyone to sit around a table or on the floor.

Call the children to snack time, imagining that they are marching up a mountain and singing “We Are Dancing in the Love of God (Danzaremos en amor de Dios)”—**SCM 26**. Repeat words and phrases as appropriate.

Breathe deeply several times. Then ask, “What did you like best this morning?”

Listen attentively as they tell you. Then tell the children what you liked. You might say, “I liked the mural when we finished it.” Ask the children how they can listen to Jesus this week.

Then ask, “Who wants to be first to pray today? We can tell God anything. We can say what we like and what bothers us. God hears our prayers.”

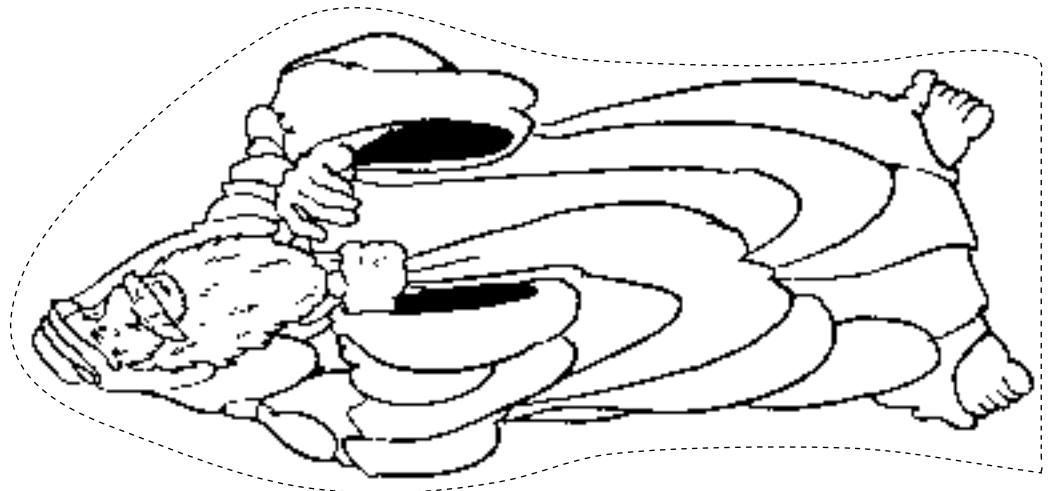
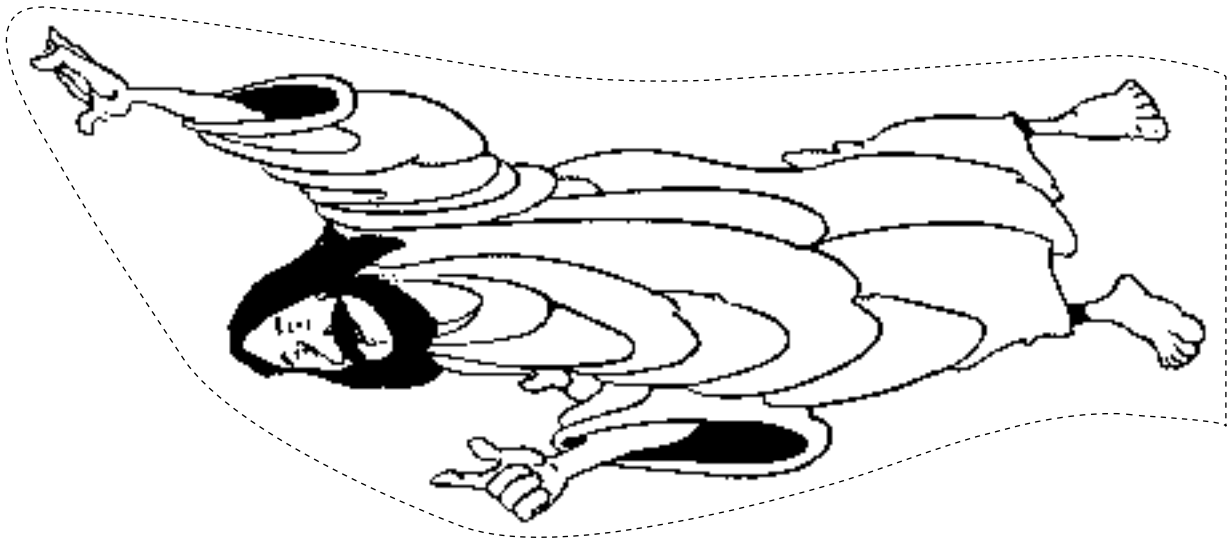
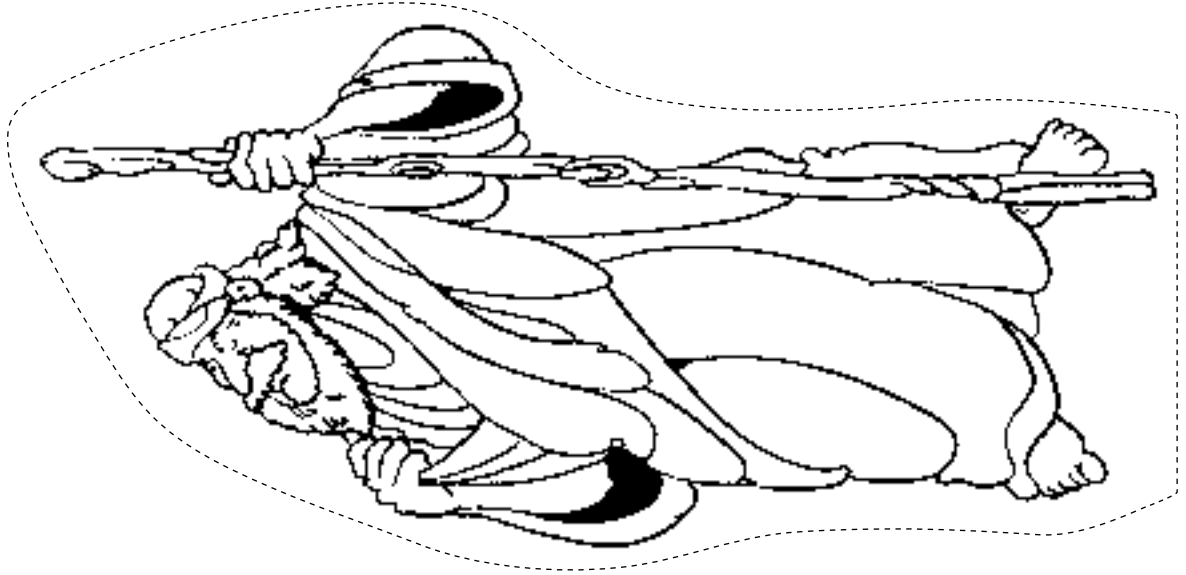
Close prayer time with an echo prayer:

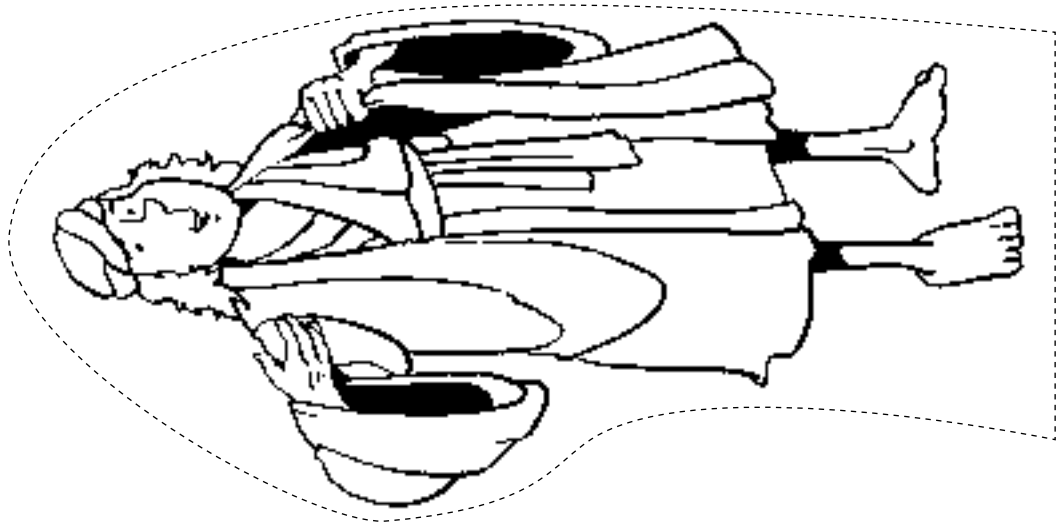
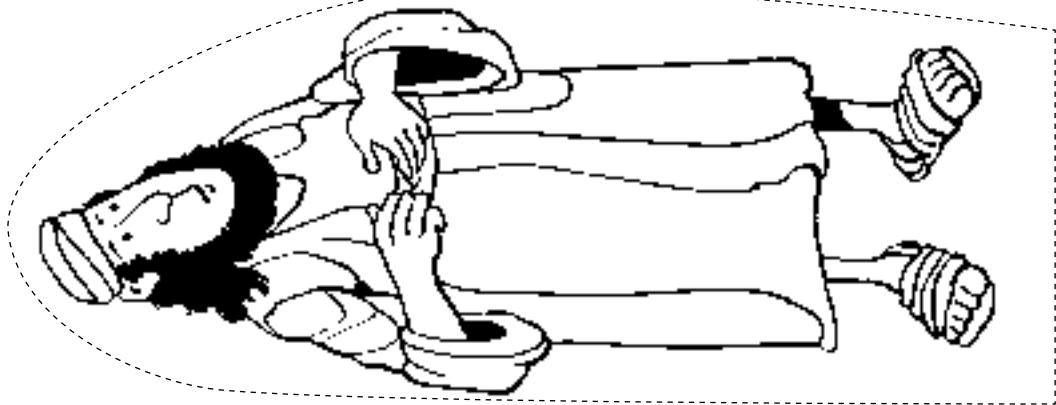
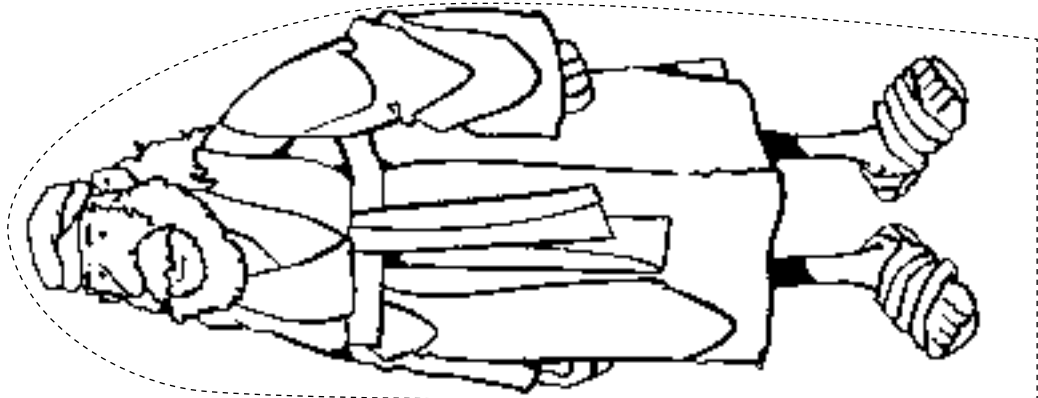
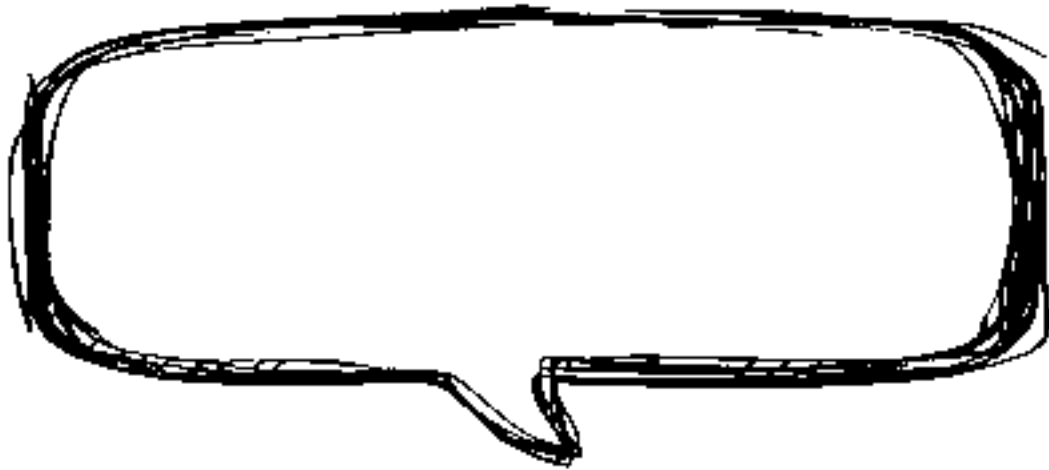
Thank you, God, for hearing our prayers. /
 Help us be good listeners to Jesus. /
 In Jesus’ name, we pray. /
 Amen. /

As the children leave, bless each one: “(Name), you are a beloved child of God. The grace of God is with you.”



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).





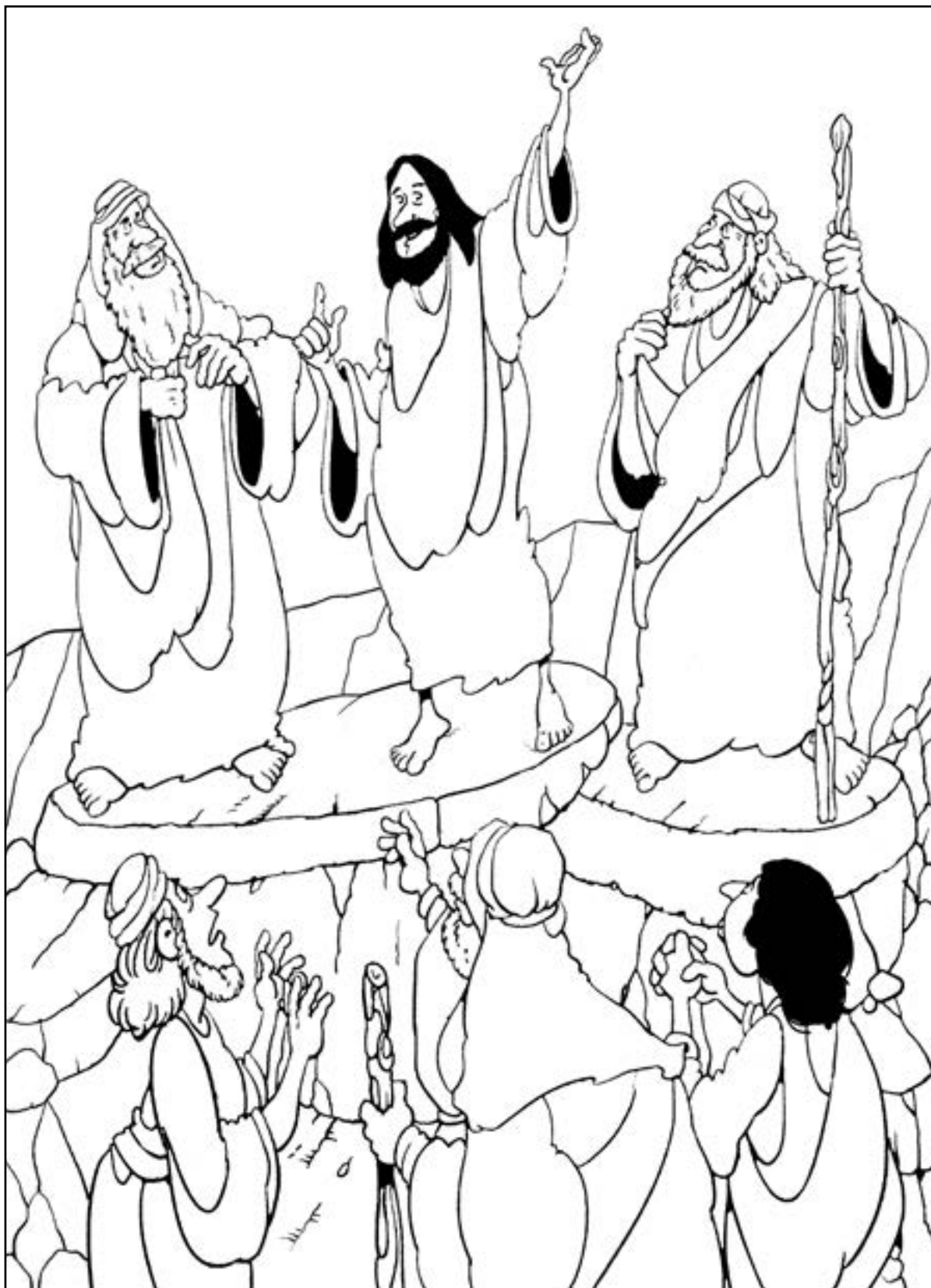


FIND





Listen to Him



God said, "This is my beloved child. Listen to him."